HubbuB: February 2020

The workflow is at the heart of a seamless data service

Lately, we have been looking at the whole issue of documenting our contributors and having a checklist of activities that are either required, recommended or optional, to get an archive to the stage of being thoroughly integrated into the Archives Hub. Obviously this does not affect you in a direct way - it is all of our work behind the scenes. But it should help to minimise the workload and make the actions that you need to take clear and logical. There are a large number of items on the checklist, from simply the name of repository and adding a logo, to being on the mailing lists, attending training, getting an Editor login and setting up pipelines.

It is all part of our drive towards the most efficient set up possible, so that we get your data onto the Hub quickly, and we know exactly where each of you are in the process. One of the challenges for us is that a repository might have a burst of enthusiasm, and then, often due to staff shortages and other pressing priorities, may go silent for a couple of years. We want to be able to pick up at any time, whomever originally worked with that repository, to be able to take the next steps.

Dealing with Sensitive Data

Jane Stevenson has been working with some colleagues at the Universities of Bristol and Bath Spa, discussing the challenging question of how to accession and provide access to content that may raise issues under legislation such as the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008, the Human Tissue Act 2008, the Obscene Publications Acts 1959 and 1964, the Video Recordings Act 1984 and 2010 and the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981. It is felt that Universities in particular should play a role in ensuring that controversial collections that may carry a high risk should be protected. Materials might include photographs depicting violence, or works of art with challenging sexual elements. There is some evidence that Universities avoid these types of materials because of the risks inherent in holding them. We are looking at exploring this area further. Please let us know if you have an experience here, or anything you would like to share.

Broken links meant broken dreams
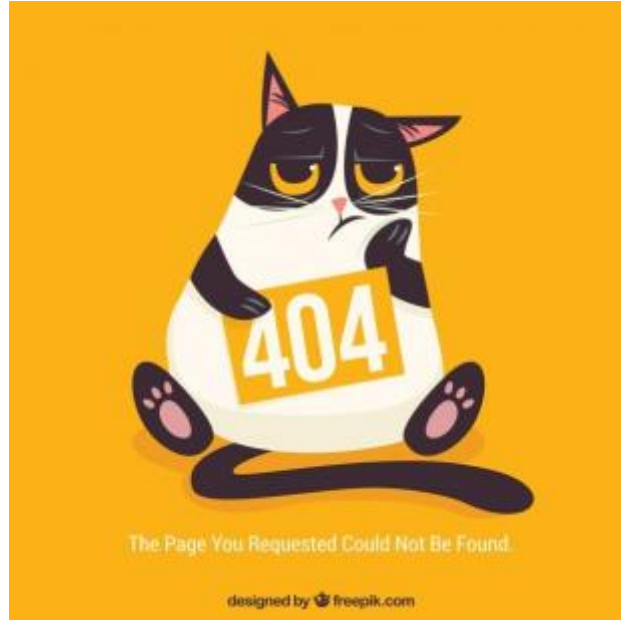
Well, OK, it's not that bad. But when digital content is offered, and the researcher finds a 404 page at the end of a link, it is quite disappointing. Hence, our suppliers, Knowledge Integration, are going to implement a link checking service for us. Your digital content links will be checked regularly, and we hope to generate automatic reports that we can send to you. We also hope to disable the links if they are not responsive for a certain period of time. They can always be reinstated, but it is better not to have them visible if they do not take the user anywhere.