Trello
Reviewed by Becky Briggs Becker, Reviews Portal Editor-at-large

Trello is a web-based application that archivists can use to visually organize and prioritize projects. Originally created by Fog Creek Software in 2011, Trello struck out as its own company in 2014 and was later sold to Australian software company Atlassian in 2017.[1][2] Trello fits within Atlassian's existing suite of productivity software applications such as Jira, a software development tracking application, and Confluence, a team collaboration and wiki product.[3]

The application functions like a whiteboard with sticky notes attached to it. These virtual sticky notes, or cards, are organized under columns called "lists." After creating lists, users can create cards that they can easily move between list columns. Cards display their list location, description, comments, and activity by default. Users can customize cards to include project members, labels, checklists, due dates, and attachments. The board-list-card format lends itself to being customizable and adaptable to any project. Users with a free account can create an unlimited number of personal boards, lists, and cards attached to their Trello account. This makes Trello a flexible online tool for archives professionals handling arrangement and description, research and reference, outreach and programming, and other tasks and projects.

Archivists who juggle multiple archival arrangement and description projects for their institutions will appreciate Trello's customizable boards, lists, and cards for tracking these projects. The web tool is great for Kanban, agile, and lean project management systems where projects have fluid phases that finish at different times. For example, users can use a combination of Trello and any one of the project management systems to manage large collections that require multiple processors to complete assigned series; collections that require additional preservation treatments; collections that contain sections that will be digitized; and collections that will be transferred in phases to the institution. Users can assign titles to lists that reflect stages in archival processing, such as "To Do," "In Process," "Ready for Review," and "Done." As another example, users can also create checklists to outline more granular steps in the process: Processing Plan, Arrangement, Finding Aid and

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[1] Michael Pryor, "A Special Announcement: Trello Is Now Part of Trello, Inc.," Trello Blog – Organize Anything, Together, last modified July 24, 2014, accessed June 29, 2019, https://blog.trello.com/trello-is-now-trello-inc.

[2] Michael Pryor, "Trello Is Being Acquired by Atlassian," Trello Blog – Organize Anything, Together, last modified January 09, 2017, accessed June 29, 2019, https://blog.trello.com/trello-atlassian.

[3] Atlassian, "Products," accessed June 29, 2019, https://www.atlassian.com/software.

Description, and Review. While Trello is a logical solution for archival processing projects, it can be applied to other project-heavy aspects of daily archival work.
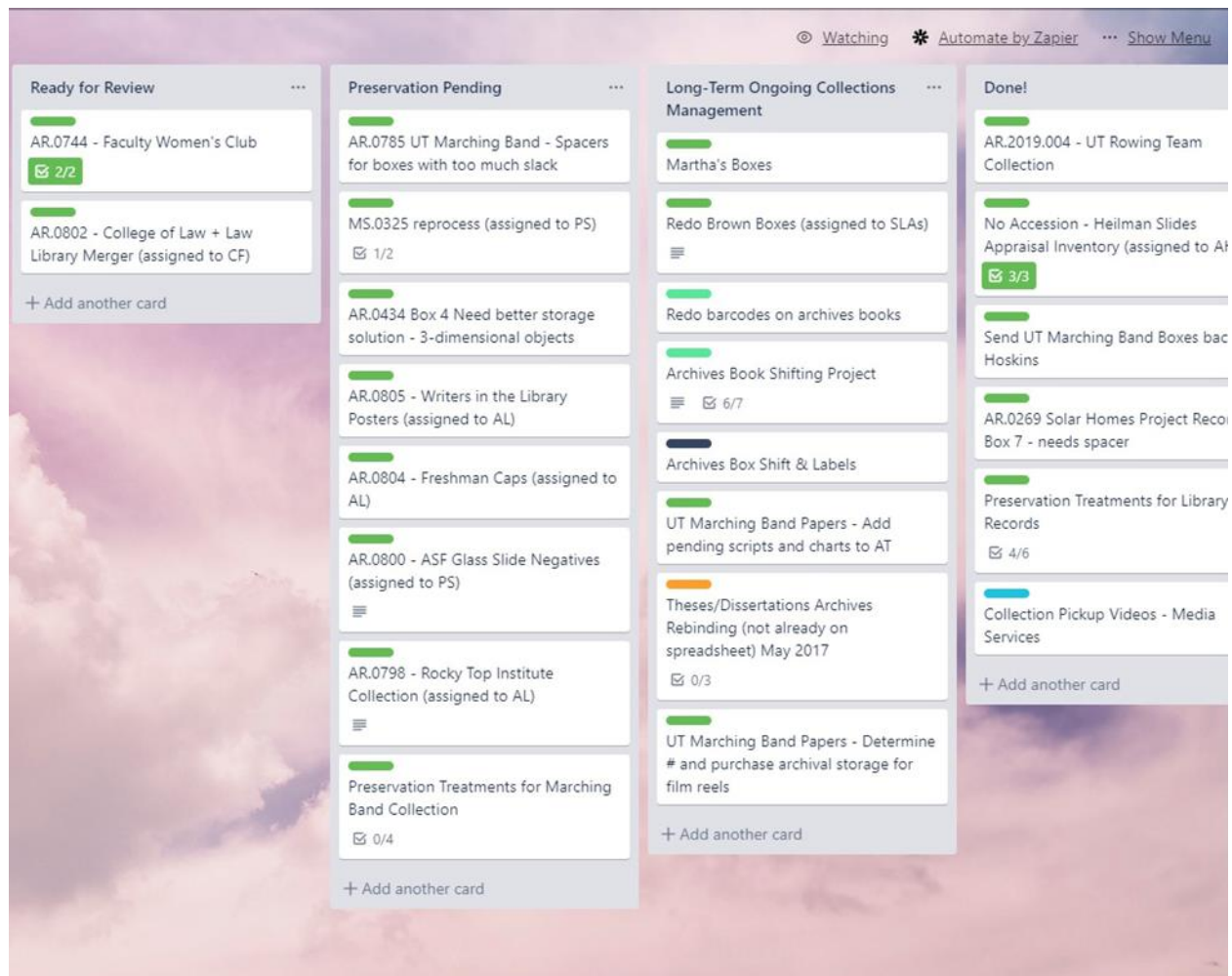
An example Trello board for University Archives collections management.

Archivists who provide research and reference services can use Trello as an internal ticketing system for tracking active requests. Each card represents an active request. Users can assign due dates to cards to remind themselves to complete requests within a deadline, whether it be within the same day or within two weeks. Email addresses associated with the Trello account will receive email notifications about approaching due dates. If multiple archivists in the institution manage research requests, they can assign "Project Members" to cards to keep track of who is answering which request. They can also create cards via email by sending research requests to the email address Trello generated for the ticketing board. In doing so,

the card's title will be the subject of the email; the card's description will be the body of the email, and any attachments will be included with the card.[4]

The Project Members feature can also be applied to collaborative outreach and programming projects. Such projects follow a traditional project management system that has a linear progression. Digital and physical exhibit planning, digital collection project planning, event planning, and publication planning follow an initiation phase, a design phase, an implementation phase, and a maintenance phase. Users are not limited to a Kanban style project management system to organize their projects—they can apply a linear project management system to Trello as well. For example, Trello can track exhibit planning tasks that are deadline dependent, such as designing graphics, curating and compiling images for both physical and digital exhibits, installing physical exhibits, and editing captions. In this case, Trello is great for projects that do not allow for last minute changes. In terms of event planning, digital collection project planning, and publication planning, users can assign Project Members to certain parts of the project represented as cards and assign checklists and due dates to cards to keep team members accountable for accomplishing tasks on time.

Trello itself is compatible with its Atlassian siblings and other apps through the "Power-Ups" feature, which is found in Trello's menu on the right side of the screen. Power-Ups function as automation widgets that integrate Trello with other apps like GitHub, Dropbox, Evernote, and Slack. However, only one Power-Up can be active at a time in the free version of the application. The Business Class version, a paid subscription, includes unlimited Power-Ups, priority technical support, and increased attachment size.[5] One setback for archivists who want to use separate boards for several large collaborative projects is the limited number of team boards. Whereas Business Class allows unlimited team boards and board collections to group boards of similar topics or departments together, the free version limits users to ten team boards and no way to group alike boards together. For the most part, individual users, small-to medium-sized archives, and units within large archives and libraries can implement Trello with no Power-Ups and the ten-megabyte attachment size limit and not miss the added features. It is fully functional as a project management system, ticketing system, and a collaboration tool without the added bells and whistles.

Overall, Trello's simple concept and design allow for flexibility and adaptability that opens the web tool for everyone to use, including archivists. The free version is great for lone arrangers and small- to medium-sized archives that have several small projects that can be managed in several personal boards. Large-sized archives

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[4] Trello, "Creating Cards by Email," Trello Help, accessed July 12, 2019, https://help.trello.com/article/809-creating-cards-by-email.
[5] "Trello Business Class," accessed July 12, 2019, https://trello.com/en-US/business-class.

may need to consider the Business Class version for managing large project boards and multiple teams. Trello's endless possibilities can be overwhelming for new users who do not know where to begin organizing their project plans. Built-in tutorials, how-to blog posts on the Trello website, and email newsletters help new users navigate Trello or inspire new uses for the web tool. However, archivists need to keep in mind these tutorials are geared toward broad productivity and workflow topics in order to reach all potential audiences for the product, from software engineers to vacation planners. Contrary to Atlassian advertising Trello as a visual collaboration tool, archivists can use it for personal organization needs due to juggling multiple projects and tasks throughout their busy days.