

# Open Access to Government Data: Data Curation Needs, Gaps and Opportunities

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**Abstract:** In February 2013, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies in the federal government directing them to develop plans promoting open access (OA) to data and publications. The directive applies to any federal agency with more than \$100 million in annual conduct of research and development (R&D) expenditures. The memorandum acknowledges the need for federal agencies to have flexibility in developing and implementing plans for data sharing, access, and preservation given the diverse set of disciplines, missions, and approaches. At the same time, it identifies some uniform guidelines. Agencies are instructed to coordinate their responses and associated plans to minimize the burden and costs associated with compliance.

With funding from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) is carrying out a study of the data curation needs implied by recent open access activities. We are conducting a highly structured content analysis of federal agency plans supporting open access to data and publications, identifying both commonalities and differences among plans. We are also interviewing leaders of projects recently funded by the IMLS to identify their experiences related to data curation needs. Finally, we will be placing these findings within the context of current data curation education offerings, caps and opportunities, as well as elaborating broader implications for cultural heritage institutions. This poster will summarize preliminary results from this study and elicit feedback from the audience.

## **About the authors:**

*Suzie Allard* is Associate Dean for Research, Director of Center for Information & Communication Studies, and Professor at the School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Her research interests focus how scientists and engineers use and communicate information. She is a co-investigator and member of the Leadership Team for DataONE, an NSF funded cyberinfrastructure for environmental science information. Allard is the principal investigator on other projects related to science data. She was a founding member and past-chair of the American Society for Information Science and Technology's (ASIST) Special Interest Group on Digital Libraries. Previously, Dr. Allard provided consulting services to the television and motion picture industries as a vice president of Research Frontiers Corporation. She has also served as the editor-in-chief for an outdoors periodical and was a freelance writer. Allard's research has been presented at conferences in the United States, India, China, Germany, and South Korea and her work has been published in journals, including the Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, Journal of Education for Library and Information Science, The Electronic Library, and the American Communication Journal.

*Christopher (Cal) Lee* is Associate Professor at the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His primary area of research is the long-term curation of digital collections. He is particularly interested in the professionalization of this work and the diffusion of existing tools and methods into professional practice. Lee edited and provided several chapters to *Digital: Personal Collections in the Digital Era*. He is Principal Investigator of the BitCurator project, which is developing and disseminating open-source digital forensics tools for use by archivists and librarians.

*Nancy Y. McGovern* has been the Head of Curation and Preservation Services at MIT Libraries since February 2012. Her responsibilities include ensuring long-term access to the digital and physical assets of the Libraries and developing appropriate long-term strategies for an expanding range of digital content. Before MIT Libraries, she was the Digital Preservation Officer (DPO) and a Research Assistant Professor at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), a social science data archive at the University of Michigan that was established in 1962.