

Digital Archives Policy

Drafted Spring 2022

Introduction

The Digital Archives collections at VCUarts Qatar originally began as a way to collect digital photographs of the annual Fashion Show put on by the Fashion Design department. In 2004, the LUNA digital asset management system was purchased to organize the Fashion Show photographs. Since 2012, more efforts have been made to collect digital objects from the various university departments based on the University Archives Collection Development Guidelines. In addition to the LUNA digital asset management system, there are two servers for image collection and backup. The IT department manages these two servers and the archivist uploads images.

Scope

The goal of the digital archives collection is to preserve the digital institutional memory of VCUarts Qatar and document faculty, staff, and students' work as outlined in the University Archives Collection Development Guidelines. In addition, some university records will now be captured in digital format.

VCUarts Qatar faculty, staff, and students can access the LUNA digital asset management system to review the curated collections and request higher resolution images or videos. Access to digital collections is not available to the general public; however, individuals from outside the VCUarts Qatar community can contact the library for archival inquiries: vcuqlibrary@vcu.edu tlschureman@vcu.edu.

Collection

The Library works closely with the VCUarts Qatar Communications department to collect digital photographs of university events and activities. Communications books photographers for events and activities, and the photographers then share their images with both the Library and Communications.

Digital objects will be collected from departments if requested, and the items are within the scope of the collection development policy.

The Library does not collect digital objects directly from students.

When digital objects are collected, they are first uploaded onto the Masters server and then the ImagesDB server. Only the archivist, library director, and the IT department have access to the Masters server.

Once images are uploaded to the Masters server, they are not accessed again unless something occurs with the ImagesDB server. This is done to preserve the original data as much as possible in the digital files.

Only the archivist, library director, and IT department have access to the Masters server. The ImagesDB server is accessible by the archivist, the library director, the IT department, and selected members of the Communications department.

Digital objects should be collected in the following formats:

Photos: tifs (preferred), jpegs

Videos: MP4 or MOV

Documents: PDF/A or PDFs

Curation

Once digital objects are collected and uploaded to the servers, the archivist will make curation decisions for the objects to be added to the LUNA digital asset management system. Not all collected images are uploaded to the LUNA system due to several reasons. One is that the photographers take a large number of images at each event, and many times these photos are near-duplicates; therefore, we do not need to upload each image to LUNA. Another reason is that metadata must be created for each image, and it is the most time-consuming part of the process; therefore, curating the best images that will be most representative of the event or activity is done.

In 2021, a decision was made to only upload jpg files to LUNA due to the LUNA system's constraints and the remote archivist role.

General guidelines on how many images for different collections are given below, but each upload must be evaluated accordingly, and these are not strict numbers.

Lectures/presentations (e.g. Crossing Boundaries) - 20 images

Conferences (e.g., Tasmeeem) 3-5 images per talk, workshop, or presentation and 50 images of general conference activities and documentation

Exhibitions/exhibition openings - 30 images

Fashion Shows - all images are kept unless there are many duplicates of each outfit.

Student Work:

- Freshman, Sophomores, and Juniors - 1-5 images of work per course - selected by the professor
- Seniors - 5-10 images of work
- MFA - 40 images of student work

Note: Student work has not been actively collected since 2018 as it proved too difficult to collect images from the departments. Student work can still be collected if approached by the department.

Faculty - one image of each work created that has been exhibited - only collected if contacted by the faculty member.

Visiting Artists/Artists-in-Residence - an image of each of the works created while at VCUQatar - usually taken during the exhibition of the work, so separate photos do not need to be collected unless otherwise agreed upon

Videos - final edits of videos taken for events or activities are collected and uploaded to LUNA. Raw, unedited footage is uploaded to the servers but not to LUNA.

Metadata

When collecting digital objects, there must be a level of metadata to accompany the object. Most cameras store metadata in either EXIF or IPTC metadata, and the VCUQatar archive does not alter this metadata when it is received or uploaded to LUNA. Files that are not photographs or videos, such as PDFs, may have XMP metadata and it is also not altered when uploaded.

Additional metadata is added to the record when it is uploaded to LUNA. This metadata is based on Dublin Core and is either DCplus3 or DCplus4. The subject headings that are added to the metadata are taken from the Getty Research Institute's Art & Architecture Thesaurus, the Library of Congress Subject Headings, and/or the Society of American Archivists Thesaurus for Use in College and University Archives. Which subject headings reference is used should be noted in the metadata.

The created metadata is kept on CSV sheets on the ImagesDB server with the digital objects so that they can be recreated if needed.

Digital Objects Not Collected

- Graphics/branding files for the university or university events
- Email
- Social media posts
- Digital objects created by the VCU Richmond campus