

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) has long championed the preservation of archaeological collections and related documentation through appropriate preservation and curation. Principle 7 of the SAA's Principles of Archaeological Ethics specifically established the preservation and curation of objects and records as an ethical obligation of all archaeologists:

Archaeologists should work actively for the preservation of, and long term access to, archaeological collections, records, and reports. To this end, they should encourage colleagues, students, and others to make responsible use of collections, records, and reports in their research as one means of preserving the in situ archaeological record, and of increasing the care and attention given to that portion of the archaeological record which has been removed and incorporated into archaeological collections, records, and reports.

As digital data become an increasingly important component of archaeological records and documentation, and an integral part of every phase of archaeological research, SAA affirms the ethical responsibility of archaeologists, public agencies, and other organizations funding, authorizing, managing, or conducting archaeological work to ensure long-term preservation of and access to the digital records of their investigations by employing, mandating or budgeting for use of digital repositories that provide appropriate online access and high standards for long-term preservation. In most cases, ensuring appropriate access and preservation of these digital records also is a legal requirement.

The Center for Digital Antiquity (Digital Antiquity; <http://digitalantiquity.org>) is a multi-institutional organization established to ensure the long-term preservation and effective access to and use of archaeological information. Digital Antiquity developed, maintains, and operates tDAR (the Digital Archaeological Record; <http://tdar.org>), an international repository of the digital records related to archaeological investigations and resources. tDAR provides online discovery and access as well as long-term preservation for tens of thousands of archaeological documents, data sets, and images. Digital Antiquity is currently housed at Arizona State University and is governed by an independent Board of Directors and supported by an external Professional Advisory Panel.

The Society for American Archaeology and Digital Antiquity share a commitment to the long-term preservation of digital records and to making these records broadly discoverable and accessible, with appropriate safeguards for sensitive information. SAA and Digital Antiquity are pleased to announce a collaborative program to focus increased attention on the curation of digital data from archaeological projects. As part of a four year, non-exclusive cooperative agreement SAA will provide material support to Digital Antiquity and tDAR of \$5k/annum, and work with Digital Antiquity to encourage all archaeologists and organizations that conduct or require archaeological investigations to deposit well-documented digital records in tDAR or other digital repositories that ensure long term preservation and appropriate access.

SAA and Digital Antiquity both seek to develop in students a strong ethic of stewardship, including responsible curation of both physical and digital collections. In order to encourage students to properly curate the digital records they produce, Digital Antiquity will provide every SAA student member free uploads of 3 files with up to 30MB of data per year for the next four years. This valuable student-member benefit allows all student members of SAA to practice responsible preservation without additional cost.

Beyond this partnership, both Digital Antiquity and SAA welcome opportunities to work with other organizations to advance these important goals of fostering and improving digital data curation in archaeology.

