

Introduction

At our community scanning events, we bring our mobile digitization kit to library branches and invite residents to bring in photos, documents and memorabilia. We scan the materials, which are returned to the donors along with a flash drive of digital copies. The digital files are also included in the digital archives of our respective repositories, as well as being ingested into the Digital Public Library of America. Our role at these events as the Culture in Transit Mobile Digitization Specialists includes: selecting locations, scheduling events, doing outreach and collaborating with partners, facilitating the events, and doing the post-event cataloging and ingest of materials into our digital repositories.

It's our hope that this toolkit will serve as a valuable resource for individuals and organizations interested in launching a community scanning project in their area.

Event Planning

The planning for a community scanning event should begin 3-4 months in advance of the anticipated event date. Timing considerations include: internal deadlines for promotional materials, needs of any community partners, and availability of staff and equipment. Please see our [event planning checklist here](#).

Site Selection and Visit

When selecting a location for a community scanning event, consider the following attributes:

- Identify gaps in archival collections, and match with neighborhoods and /or communities that could help fill those gaps.
- Reach out to branch librarians and local groups to gauge interest in possible events.
- Explore existing institutional relationships with community organizations, and consider extending these partnerships to the community history project.
- Develop partnerships with local groups working on community history projects.
- Work with local Friends of the Library groups for event planning and outreach.
- Return to neighborhoods that have previously been successful.

Once a location is selected to host a community scanning event, a site visit is necessary to assess the space and meet the staff. On the day of the event, we're occupying a portion of their library for several hours, so it's important the branch staff knows what to

expect and what their role will be. Topics that should be covered with the librarian during this initial visit include:

Date Selection

- Work with the librarian to choose a date for the scanning event that won't conflict with other library programs. Alternatively, a date that coincides with a complimentary program might increase turnout.
- Ask the librarian to suggest days and times when the library is usually busy.
- Aim to schedule events in pairs, or a short series of events. The first event can serve as effective outreach for the following events at the same locations.
- Consider target audience when scheduling events. If you are aiming for older adult participation, be sure to schedule events during daylight hours.
- Be sure to avoid religious and school holidays.

Outreach

- The site visit is a good time to collect the contact information for any community leaders or groups that might be interested in the project.
- We ask the librarian to begin identifying patrons that might be interested in participating.
- We also request a meeting with the library's Friends Group, or the opportunity to speak at any relevant upcoming event(s).
- Determine language needs of the branch's local communities.

Promotional Materials

- Decide who will produce the promotional materials.
- Will materials need to be made available in other languages?
- Is there a space in the library to hang or distribute materials?

Set Up Location

- We use this time to assess the library's layout, determining the best location to set up our digitization kit on the day of the event.
- Observe patron foot traffic.
- Locate electrical outlets.

Space Requirements

When selecting a space to set up for a community scanning event, the most important factor is visibility. We've found that positioning ourselves in a high traffic area of the

library, such as the entrance or checkout kiosk often increases our rate of walk-in donations by allowing us to:

- Engage with every patron as they enter or leave the library.
- Attract curious patrons with interactive features displayed on our table.
- Appear more approachable.
- Make potential donors feel more comfortable by first observing the digitization and donation process.

With this increase in interaction we often sacrifice the ability to customize our workspace, making do with very little square footage or access to electrical outlets. The bare minimum requirements to set up a mobile digitization kit is as follows:

Tables

- Three tables is ideal, two is realistic:
 - One to hold the scanner and laptop, leaving a small space for the completion of paperwork.
 - One for the setup of interactive displays (tablets, pamphlets, etc.).
 - One to set up the copy-stand (can be moved to the floor if necessary).
- Each should be no shorter than 5 feet in length.
- If space is at an absolute minimum:
 - Two tables can be eliminated by moving the copy-stand to the floor (requires 4 x 4 feet of space) and choosing to not include the interactive materials.
 - The scanning table can be set up in an alternate space that is physically separate from the staff members interacting with donors. Staff can ferry donor materials back and forth from the scanning station.

Electrical Requirements

- Only one electrical outlet is required as long as the digitization kit includes an extension cord and power strip.
- Duct tape may also be required to minimize the risk of patrons tripping on the cord.

Including space for three chairs, at a minimum we need an estimated **60 square feet** of space to set up our mobile digitization kit, including space for two mobile digitization specialists and a donor to sit comfortably.

Outreach

Media and Phone Banking Outreach

The majority of our donors attend our community scanning events after hearing about them from a local community group or branch librarian. We also get a fair number of walk-ins, people who just happened to visit the library on the day of event and choose to donate after learning more. However, in the weeks leading up to the event we attempt to attract a few additional donors with outreach methods such as:

Cold Calling and Emailing: We contact local senior centers, religious organizations and businesses in hopes that their members and customers might be interested. We ask that they support Culture in Transit by displaying or distributing our promotional materials at their location.

Social Media: Providing a high quality JPEG of our flier to local business and organizations will allow them to easily share it on their social media accounts.

Blogs: Our community scanning events make great content for blogs reporting on upcoming local activities.

Newspapers: Placing an ad or suggesting an article in a local newspaper can be preferable to social media when attempting to reach a community's senior population.

Leveraging Library Communities

In planning for our community scanning events we've often found our best resources and advocates can be found at the library. This is a group of people who understand the significance of a project like Culture in Transit and are eager to see it succeed.

Individuals and groups worth reaching out to are:

Friends Groups: Community members who serve as volunteer advocates for their branch library. These groups may be involved with fundraising and program planning, with close ties to the communities we're working in.

Staff Members: Librarians and assistants have existing relationships with library patrons, and will be helpful in identifying individuals who might be interested in the project. Staff members should also be encouraged to make their own donations, as they are often members of the communities they serve. People

respond positively to an individualized and in-person invitation to a community history event, and branch staff are in the best position to do this.

Programs: Patrons who have previously attended library programs, events and activities will be likely to attend our community scanning event as well. We try to identify related programs such as genealogy workshops, computer classes and older adult meet-ups to hand out fliers and speak for a few minutes about the project.

Community Partnerships

Community groups and projects serve as important liaisons between the library and the community. Creating partnerships for community scanning events can:

- Increase event participation through targeted outreach
- Reach communities who might not traditionally access library services
- Assist with language support and translation, both during the events and while cataloging material gathered at public events
- May have materials and activities that can be used to make events interactive and educational
- Community groups have the trust of their membership, and their co-sponsorship of a community scanning event lends credibility to the library as a custodian of personal materials
- Focus documentation efforts on communities that are traditionally under-represented in the archive.

School Scanning

We believe partnering with an educational organization is one of the best ways for school-aged children to participate in community scanning projects, although there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Consent Form and Introductory Letter: The child's legal guardian is responsible for signing the consent form. This means the form must be sent home, signed and returned to school before we arrive. We found it helpful to include an introductory letter that better explains the project and offers suggestions as what we can and cannot accept as donations.
- Metadata Form: We also send metadata forms home with the child to be filled out with their parent or guardian. Although the child is legally capable of filling

out our metadata forms, we receive more accurate information if their parent or guardian assists them. It's our hope that this assistance will also lead to a larger conversation within the family about their role in the history of the community .

Linking with Oral History Projects

Many of our donors are eager to share not only their physical items, but the stories and memories that come with a lifetime of collecting. It was a natural fit including an oral history component to our community scanning events. Luckily, both the Queens Library and the Brooklyn Public Library have existing oral history projects:

- Queens Memory: A collaboration of the Archives at Queens Library and Queens College Libraries' Department of Special Collections and Archives. The Queens Memory Project combines historical and contemporary photography with oral history interviews of current residents.
- Our Streets, Our Stories Oral History: A division of the Brooklyn Public Library's Outreach Services department, this project is working to collect interviews from a diverse group of Brooklyn residents, creating a neighborhood-specific oral history archive.

Event Overview

Staffing

A community scanning event requires a minimum of two staff members, although three is ideal. Each should be comfortable assuming the following responsibilities:

Consent, Metadata & Feedback Collection:

- The consent form must be signed before any digitization or metadata collection can begin. Each staff member should be able to accurately summarize the consent form, including the copyright restrictions in plain, non-legal language.
- Making sure each digitized item has a corresponding metadata sheet, filled out using information provided by the donor and the object itself.
- When possible, feedback forms should be collected from participants.
- This staff member should be comfortable interacting with the public.

Digitization:

- Using the scanner and copy-stand to quickly create archival quality digital images from a variety of items. This person is also responsible for making sure the file names adhere to their institution's file naming conventions.
- This staff member will need training in the equipment and procedures in advance of the event.

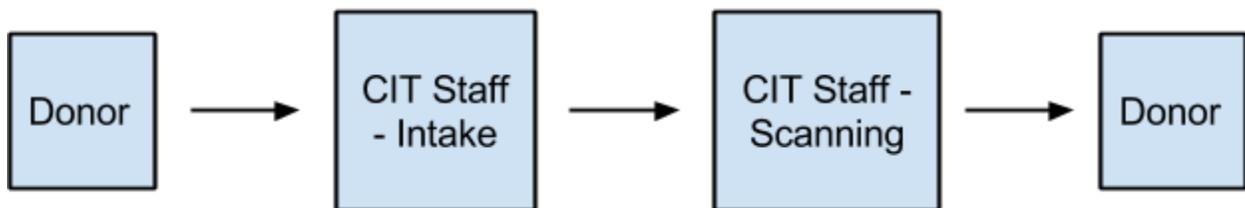
Interactive Activity Supervision:

- It's helpful to assign a staff member to guide visitors through activities such as photographs, maps, audio and slideshows; offering tutorials and additional information as needed.

Please see a sample of the [breakdown of staffing responsibilities here](#).

Event Workflow

During our community scanning events, the basic flow of materials being digitized is as follows:



Please see a detailed description of the workflows, standards and procedures used during our community scanning events [here](#).

The overall workflow for materials digitized at community scanning events [is available here](#).

Digitization Standards

We create Master files and Access files during our events, both of which are given to the donor on a flash drive.

Master Files:

- Document type: Reflective
- Bit depth: 24-bit
- Color space: Adobe RGB
- Resolution: 600ppi
- File type: TIFF

Access Files (created through an automated Photoshop action):

Document type: Reflective

Bit depth: 24-bit

Color space: Adobe RGB

Resolution: 300ppi

File type: JPEG2000

Each donor folder contains a scan of a color target, labelled with the date of capture. Due to the time constraints of public scanning events, it is not possible to scan each item with a color target included and created cropped derivative files while the donor waits.

File Name Conventions

Develop a standardized file naming convention, which adheres to existing institutional standards. Information to consider building into the logic of your file naming convention includes:

- Donor name
- Location or date of public digitization event
- Numerical numbering of each item digitized
- Information about structure of object (such as recto, verso)

Copyright

Please see samples of our consent forms [here](#) and [here](#). Your consent form should be reviewed by your institution's legal department before being implemented.

The images collected by Culture in Transit at the community scanning events are the personal items of the donors; the Brooklyn Public Library and Queens Library do not own the copyright to any of the digital images we've collected. The donor retains their role as rights holder, but at the time of donation we do ask that they sign a consent form granting the image an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license:



Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

NonCommercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

We scan the donor's consent form, and include it on the thumb drive provided to the donor. See a detailed explanation of the creative commons copyright licenses and why we use them [here](#).

Metadata

We collect metadata about each individual item digitized, using paper intake sheets. The information we attempt to collect about each item includes:

- Date the photograph was taken
- Location of the photograph
- Name of the photographer
- Names of people who appear in the photograph
- Event taking place in the photograph
- Measurements of photograph
- Additional contextual information

An example of our metadata collection form is available [here](#).

Donor Relations

Although we meet with our donors for only a short time during the community scanning events, it's important we take steps to personalize the experience for them. We want our donors to feel valued, and to trust that their items will be handled with care and respect. Steps we take to ensure this include:

Availability: We make ourselves available to our donors at any time leading up to and after the event. It's important donors know they can always contact us with questions, and we sometimes we need to contact the donors with questions about the materials they donated, or when someone wants to use the materials in a publication. This is the start of a donor relationship.

Time Management: Rushing through the donation process feels cold and impersonal. We need to make sure we're leaving enough time for our donors to take their time and feel comfortable sharing their items with us. If they want to

share a story about a particular item, or need a few extra minutes to remember a name, it's our responsibility to make sure they have time to do so.

Additional Resources: Presenting an opportunity for donors to do an oral history interview or get involved with a community group is a great way for them to continue sharing their story and working with their community.

Not Turning Anyone Away: For copyright reasons, we can't include newspaper clippings, books, magazine articles or certain images in our collection. However, it is good donor relations to provide community members with a digital copy of their item to take home, even if it can't be used for Culture in Transit.

Educational Resources

Please see a detailed breakdown of [interactive outreach models here](#).

Community History

Interactive public and community history activities are included at our events in order to: share local history materials, engage participants who have not brought material to be scanned, demonstrate that individuals' stories and materials are interesting and to provide an activity for donors who are waiting for their material to be digitized.

Suggested activities include:

Photograph Slideshow: Digital slideshow of historic photographs and documents from the neighborhood, drawn from institutional archives and material collected at previous scanning events.

Oral History Listening Station: Clips of oral history interviews from the neighborhood.

Community Mapping Station: A large map of the neighborhood, on which participants are invited to place a dot sticker with their first name where they live, as well as writing brief memories of the neighborhood on a Post-It-Note which can also be stuck to the map.

Photograph Comparison: Print out historic photos of a neighborhood, with the location captioned on the back of the image. Participants can use a laptop or tablet to find the corresponding location on Google Street View.

Please see detailed instructions for [setting up outreach tablets here](#).

Technology Education

Donors with a hugely varying level of technological knowledge attend community scanning events, and it is important to provide educational resources about the digitization process and how to maintain the files donors receive on their thumb drives. We provide two primary resources for understanding our technology:

- Preserving Your Digital Memories Brochure
This brochure is given to participants at Queens Library community scanning events. The pamphlet discusses why digital files require special care, provides a step-by-step guide to maintaining your personal digital archive, and provides tips for digitizing your own photographs or documents.
- What's On My Thumb Drive? Handout
This small handout explains what is on the thumb drive given to donors, and what each type of file should be used for.

Assessment

For the community scanning events, we conduct two primary forms of assessment, from participants and from the event leaders. For event participants, we use a paper form and later enter their responses into a spreadsheet.

- **Community Participant Feedback Form**
Through this form we aim to gain metrics about outreach, who is attending our community engagement events, and their experiences in the project. We collect responses using Google Forms, and also have paper copies available at events. It is often difficult to collect participant feedback forms, as we have already asked our donors to complete a lot of paperwork during the event.
- **Community Event Assessment Form**
Through this form we aim to assess our event planning, attendance and realization, and improve problem areas for future events. We submit our responses through a Google Form, which we complete within a week of the event.
- **Community Partner Feedback Form**
This form is distributed to partner organizations who co-organize events or programming series. We use this form to understand the experiences, motivations, and needs of community partners.