

## Implementing a Born-Digital Architecture and Design Archive at the Art Institute of Chicago

Carissa Kowalski Dougherty  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 S. Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60603  
[ckowalski@artic.edu](mailto:ckowalski@artic.edu)

### Abstract

This presentation will provide an overview of the issues confronted by a small team of archivists, architects, and programmers in developing a pilot system for collecting, archiving, and exhibiting born-digital design data in the Department of Architecture and Design at the Art Institute of Chicago. The pilot is the culminating activity in an 24-month implementation program; its final products include a functioning software ingest system (Digital Archive for Architecture, or DAArch), a workflow procedure for the curatorial department, and a small collection of accessioned, cataloged, and preserved digital architecture and design objects. As the Department's coordinator for the digital archiving project, I will be presenting the findings of our pilot from the perspective of someone working within large visual arts institution, negotiating among several interest groups, and addressing a wide range of problems, from copyright issues to metadata schema, from format standards to system architecture. Using the workflow diagram developed for the pilot project as a starting point, I will trace a typical born-digital collection object as it is ingested and processed using the DAArch system. This narrative will focus on the challenges we faced in developing something conceptually and technologically complex as well as completely unprecedented.