Job Description
Executive Director

Job title: Executive Director
Hours: Full time (37.5 hours/week)
Contract type: Fixed term for 12 months
Reports to: Board of Directors
Location: Negotiable (with significant travel within EU and beyond)
Last updated: 10/08/15

Job Purpose

- To lead, manage, and develop the OPF and build an international community of practitioners working in in the field of digital preservation.

- To develop and enhance the membership of the OPF and ensure that member organisations benefit from their association with the organisation.

- To promote and advocate open digital preservation solutions and services.

- To provide leadership and management of OPF staff (currently 3.0FTE) and budgets (c. £250k/annum) and to run the organisation responsibly and with accountability.

Job Summary

The Executive Director is responsible for the strategic leadership and operational management of the Open Preservation Foundation an international, not for profit membership organisation providing digital preservation services to memory institutions around the world.

The postholder will need to engage with the digital preservation community and build trust to position the OPF as an international community leader in the provision of technical advice and guidance for digital preservation. It will require an understanding of other organisations that are operating in this space and a facility to work with those organisations to position the OPF correctly. It therefore requires some level of comfort with technical issues but also an ability to work politically, strategically and tactically.

The postholder will also need to work closely with the OPF Board to provide strategic leadership of the OPF and advise the Board on the development and implementation of the OPF's strategic agenda. He/she will have an influential role, both nationally and internationally in raising awareness of the OPF, building and maintaining key relationships that will help to further the OPF's work, and managing and developing services to maintain its position as a leading player in digital preservation.

The postholder will be pivotal in communications with member institutions and will be the primary conduit between the Board and the membership. The Executive Director will be expected to take primary ownership of how satisfied the wider membership is with the direction of travel of the organisation and provide the Board with regular updates and recommendations for refreshing and renewing the value of the organisation. The postholder will therefore be responsible for the upkeep and delivery of the OPF's business plan, and for developing a strategy for sustaining the OPF and its work over the long term.

The postholder may negotiate where they will be based but the role will involve considerable travel to engage with and extend the membership base and to effectively represent the OPF.

Responsibilities

General responsibilities

- To develop and deliver the vision, mission, and strategy of OPF ensuring that goals and objectives are clearly defined and deliver value to members and the wider digital preservation community.

- To secure financial viability and long term sustainability through business development, including through the recruitment of members and software supporters and external funding proposals for research and development.

- To design and implement the community engagement programme that is at the heart of the OPF mission and maintain annual plans to provide operational transparency and ownership of activities for members and software supporters.

- To have overall responsibility for the implementation, quality, and sustainability of the OPF software portfolio and services, including through dedicated interest groups and product steering committees.

- To be accountable for the governance of the organisation, including management of staff and HR functions (currently 3.0FTE, plus external contractors), finance and budgets (c. £250k/annum), coordinating meetings of the Board of Directors, and other matters relating to the running of the company.

Specific responsibilities

- To provide leadership for the organisation, taking ownership of the vision, mission, and strategy, ensuring they serve the interests and priorities of members.

- To coordinate the operational planning of the organisation, taking ownership of its annual plan and deploying its resources effectively to ensure that members and software supporters receive value for money from their subscriptions.

- To govern the financial management of the organisation, growing revenue and ensuring the long term sustainability of the organisation.

- To manage relationships with stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, members and software supporters, project partners, and other collaborators.

- To manage the staff Community Manager and Technical Lead and service contracts for software development, hosting, web design, etc.

- To maintain awareness of key trends and developments in digital preservation and to engage in continuing professional development.

Technology
- To provide leadership to the ongoing development and quality of the OPF software portfolio of leading digital preservation tools, working with the Technical Lead

- To have overall responsibility for maintaining infrastructure and working practices to support distributed open source software development, as designed and managed by the Technical Lead.

- To manage the expansion and development of software products and services in order to meet the digital preservation needs of the OPF members, software supporters, and the wider community.

Knowledge
- To coordinate and liaise with members through site visits, meetings, publications and email lists to maximise their benefits from membership and engagement in OPF.

- To promote synergy between members working in similar or complementary areas.

- To provide leadership to the development of OPF's knowledge exchange activities, working with the Community Manager.

- To have overall responsibility for the website, online services including blogging platform and knowledge base, webinar series, training activities, and interest groups, as coordinated by the Community Manager.

Advocacy and Alliances

- To be an effective ambassador for the organisation and to communicate its vision and mission to stakeholders, including at international conferences.

- To build and maintain relationships with other organisations working in digital preservation and other relevant areas, to enable collaborations on shared areas of interest that deliver value and efficiencies to members.

- To be a major influencer for OPF, both with members and in the wider professional arena. To represent OPF at national and international level, advancing awareness of OPF and advocating digital preservation and longterm access to collections.

- To work in a complementary way with comparable national and international organisations such as the Digital Preservation Coalition and IMPACT Centre of Competence encouraging communication and collaborative working.

- To build and sustain productive relationships with key stakeholder bodies in the library and archives, cultural heritage, university and other information management communities, and to secure engagement from them in developing and undertaking OPFs programme of work.

Person Specification
Minimum requirements (essential)

- Education to degree level or can demonstrate equivalent professional knowledge and skills sets.

- Demonstrable business acumen with considerable experience in successful income generation, fundraising and budget management.

- Proven track record of running successful services and sound financial management. Extensive recent experience in a relevant professional context, including managerial experience.

- Ability to deliver a focused and effective work plan while maintaining a flexible approach to new opportunities and changes in direction.

- A comprehensive understanding of current professional issues and practice in digital preservation at least at national level, underpinned by a commitment to continuing professional development.

- Demonstrable track record of successful stakeholder management, strong professional network and credibility within the sector.

- The ability to build effective teams, collaborations and partnerships.

- The ability to generate new ideas or abstract concepts and the intellectual skills to lead policy development and implementation process.

- Strong analytical skills, including the ability to evaluate and interpret both quantitative and qualitative data to form judgements.

- Significant proven track record of effective verbal and written communication skills, including report writing, presentations, and new media.

- Proven competency in staff management, with experience of HR issues and procedures.

- The ability to plan and manage programmes and projects, including estimating the resources needed for a complex project or item of work, and time management skills.

- The ability to work with a high degree of autonomy.

- A flexible approach to work in terms of working outside normal office hours and travel within the European Union and beyond.

Additional requirements (desirable)

- A relevant postgraduate qualification.

- Previous experience in collaborative projects and / or membership organisations.

- Membership of, and active involvement in, appropriate national professional bodies, and contributions to relevant professional publications.

- Some knowledge of software development methods and procedures and the resources required to build effective tools.