UDA Oral History Project: Guidelines for Interviewers

"Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did … Oral sources are credible but with a different credibility. The importance of oral testimony may lie not in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism and desire emerge. Therefore, there are no 'false' oral sources"
Alessandro Portelli, oral historian and professor of literature

Introduction

The International Council on Archives' Training Programme is currently developing an online training course about the *Universal Declaration on Archives*. It will provide learners with a thorough understanding and knowledge of the *Universal Declaration on Archives* (UDA) covering the history of its development and a detailed analysis of the content. The course will also provide strategies for using the UDA to advocate for archives and ways to use it to support archivists and records managers in their professional responsibilities. The course objectives are:

- To provide an outline of the content of the UDA;

- To provide an outline of the history of the UDA and its endorsement by UNESCO;

- To discuss the role of the ICA in developing and advocating for the UDA;

- To describe ways of using the UDA as a tool for evaluating an archival programme;

- To discuss strategies for using the UDA when advocating the importance of archives in their country or organisational environment.

To augment and illustrate the section on the history of the development of the UDA, the course developers would like to include short interviews with a number of people who were active in the project to create the Declaration. It will be very helpful to students to learn about the motivation and experiences of individuals who were involved and instrumental in the successful campaign to develop and advocate for the Universal Declaration on Archives. It would be particularly interesting to have these people interviewed by ICA New Professionals, as it will keep the dialogue fresh.

Background Reading and Interview Project Documentation

It is recommended that New Professionals who will be conducting these interviews read the *Universal Declaration on Archives*, as well as the draft module text "The History and Development of the Universal Declaration on Archives" by Dr Claude Roberto.

They should also review the following project documentation:

- Interview Consent Form
- Information for Interviewees
- Invitation to participate
- Interview Record Form

Please note that the UDA uses 'archives' to mean 'archives and records' and 'archives management' to encompass records management from the point of deciding or needing to create a record through to destruction or, if it has archival value, permanent preservation.

Interviewees

The following individuals have been identified as offering useful insights into and comments on the development and adoption of the UDA.

Henri Zuber

Henri Zuber, as Chair of the ICA Section on Professional Associations, presented the document to the ICA Executive Board in October 2008.

Fred Van Kan

Fred Van Kan is currently the President of the ICA Fund for the International Development of Archives and was previously a member of the SPA Steering Committee responsible for the development of the UDA.

Normand Charbonneau

Normand Charbonneau is the Vice-President Programme for ICA and he oversees all aspects of the professional programme. He was also Director of the Archives of Quebec during the development of the Quebec Declaration on Archives.

Papa Momar Diop

Papa Momar Diop was the Senegal National Archivist and subsequently Senegal ambassador at the UNESCO who submitted the resolution to gain UNESCO endorsement of the UDA.

Claude Roberto
Claude Roberto is the Chair of ICA's Expert Group on Advocacy. She was also a member of the SPA Steering Committee responsible for the development of the UDA and she is currently coordinating the UDA translations on the ICA website.

Process

The interviews will be conducted during the second half of 2018. The interview will consist of a series of open-ended questions about the interviewee's role in the development and

endorsement of the Universal Declaration on Archives. The questions have already been drafted by the course developers but can be augmented by the interviewers in consultation with the course developers. Interviewees will be provided with a list of the questions in advance of the interview. Appendix A provides a list of the questions for each interviewee.

If the interviewee plans to attend the Annual Conference in Yaoundé in November 2018, the interview will be conducted there, face to face. Otherwise, the interview may be conducted online or at a place of mutual convenience. No other involvement is expected of interviewees.

The course developers will be writing to individuals to let them know that they have been identified as potential interviewees. The New Professional interviewers will then write to their interviewees explaining more about the interview process and asking them to agree to be interviewed and to review the consent form. This form must be signed by the interviewee before the interview. It ensures that interviewees have all the information they need, informs them of their privacy rights and signs over copyright in the recording which allows ICA to use the material for educational and awareness-raising purposes. The course developers have drafted a consent form, wording for New Professionals to use in their initial email to interviewees and an information sheet on the UDA training module.

Once the interviewees have agreed to the interview they will be sent the questions so they can prepare. If the interview is to take place in Yaoundé a mutually convenient time should be set. It is recommended to allow at least an hour for the meeting.

Audio or Video

We intend to have all the interviews in video format unless the interviewee refuses to be interviewed and cites a dislike of being filmed as their reason. In that case we will agree to a sound recording but we would like a photograph of the interviewee. You should take the photograph as part of the interview process.

Recording the Interviews

The guidance given in this section is intended as an initial introduction to recording the interviews with options for using Microsoft technology on a laptop and Apple technology with an iPhone or iPad. New Professionals are often very skilled in using mobile technology and we are open to any recording method that results in a short interview (between ten and fifteen minutes) of no more than 8GB in one of the formats accepted by our Learning Management System as follows:

- **Video formats:** *.mov; *.mpg; *.avi; *.flv; *.f4v; *.mp4; *.m4v; *.wmv; *.vob; *.mob; *.3gp; *.mkv; *.divx; *.xvid
- **Audio formats:** *.mp3; *.wav; *.m4a

Microsoft Office software

To make a video recording of the interview:
Open the Camera programme and ensure your interviewee is visible and centre stage, click on video icon, click to start recording, click to stop recording. The video should be saved in your pictures/ camera roll folder/subfolder as an MP4 file. Rename the file with the name of the interviewee and the date of the interview.

To make an audio recording of the interview:
Open the Voice recorder programme, click on the purple button to start recording, click again when the recording is over. The recording should be saved in your documents/sound recording folder/subfolder as an M4A file. Rename the file with the name of the interviewee and the date of the interview.

Smartphone apps

The guidance below is for interviewers who want to use an i-phone to record the interview. Android phone users will need to research how to make audio and video recordings before they can conduct the interview[1].

To make a video recording of the interview with an i-phone:
Before you begin, make sure that you have somewhere solid to rest your i-phone or i-pad during the interview. The GorillaPod stand[2] is a good tripod to use for this, but any way to keep your phone at a steady angle would work. Ensure your interviewee is visible and centre stage in the screen. Use the video option in the camera app to record your interview. The recording will appear in your camera roll and from there you can export the mov file. Rename the file with the name of the interviewee and the date of the interview.

To make an audio recording of the interview with an i-phone:
If you don't have an app on your iPhone, the HandyRecorder app[3] works well. You can also use a Zoom microphone attachment. Record the interview. HandyRecorder allows you to email the recording in wav format directly from the app. Rename the file with the name of the interviewee and the date of the interview.

Skype

It may not be possible to interview everyone in person. In this case we plan to interview them via telephone or conference call technology. We welcome suggestions from the New Professionals on how to do this. One possibility may be to use Skype.[4] We will be able to test the options together once we have more information about the interviewee availability.

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[1] The authors of the guidance would welcome the chance to include instructions for android phone recording techniques, please let us know if you want to help
[2] Available here: https://joby.com/gorillapod-tripods
[3] Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/handyrecorder/id566291779?mt=8
[4] See https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA12395/how-can-i-record-my-skype-calls

Editing the Interviews

It is possible the interviews will need to be edited. This should be discussed with the course developers and the original recording should be retained.

Documenting the Interviews

As has already been mentioned, the recordings need to be given titles with the date of the interview and the name of the interviewee. You will need to document the interview using the Interview Record Form. You should check the spelling of the interviewees name and ask them about their current job, what they were doing at the time of the UDA initiative and their role in developing it. You can fill out your own details either before or after the event. The form also includes a check box to ensure we collect the signed consent form.

Interviewing Techniques

The goal of the interview is to obtain meaningful answers to the questions which have been designed to shed light on the exciting endeavour of bringing the *Universal Declaration on Archives* to life. You will need to prepare well. Test your equipment and ensure that you know how to use the recording technology, but it should be an interesting and enjoyable experience for the interviewer as well as the interviewee.

As part of your preparation for the interview, make some test recordings and save them in the preferred formats, re-naming them to ensure that your recording will meet the project requirements. If you need help or want to check that your results meet our standards, please contact Margaret Crockett.

You should also review the interview process to ensure that you are familiar with all aspects. Decide how you will begin the recording, you should introduce yourself and the interviewee to the audience at the beginning. For example: "I am Jane Dough, one of the ICA New Professionals at the Yaoundé Annual Conference in November 2018 and it is my honour to be interviewing Fred Bloggs for the *Universal Declaration on Archives* training course. Fred is President of the ICA Group on Food Appreciation as well as being Archivist for the UK Association of Food Growers. Hello Fred." Alternatively you can ask direct questions, such as:

- Please tell us your name and your current professional role.
- What was your role within ICA / UNESCO / other organisation involved in the UDA?
- What was your professional role when you were working on the development /approval of the UDA (if it was different to your current role)?

You should also think how you are going to conclude the recording and this should include acknowledgements and thanks to the interviewee, for example: "Thank you Fred, that was a really interesting interview, we are really grateful to you for sharing your insights into the

UDA. I would like to thank the audience for watching this video and again, many thanks to Fred, goodbye."

Regardless of how you plan to begin and end the recorded part of the interview, write yourself a script with the questions and any notes you think will be useful to ensure you get full answers. You might also want to include a prompt to get the interviewee to say goodbye at the end too.

You will have had email correspondence or some kind of contact with your interviewee when you were introducing yourself and setting up the interview. Once you have met to conduct the interview you will want to set him/her – and yourself – at ease. The UDA Interview Record Form requires a little detail about interviewee's work experience and current work as well as their rôle in developing the UDA.

Ensure that the interviewee is sitting comfortably and set up your camera so it is secure and steady with the image of the interviewee centre stage. Ask him/her to remember to speak slowly and clearly since people for whom English is a second language will be accessing the recording. When you are ready you can start the recording as you have scripted it, remembering to speak slowly and clearly yourself. When all of the questions have been answered you can finish the interview as you planned and scripted it. Once the recording equipment has been turned off you have a chance to express your own view on the interview content if there were specific things the interviewee said that made an impression on you. You should also thank the interviewee for his/her time and remind them that they will receive a personal copy of the recording.

If your interview is being held in Yaoundé in November you can report in to Claude Roberto or Margaret Crockett. Hand over the consent form and take the opportunity to discuss how you felt the interview went. If there is time, you can also listen to the recording and decide whether it needs to be edited. Later you should save the recording in one of the preferred formats and label it as outlined above before emailing it to Margaret. If you plan to edit it, keep a copy for yourself and edit it as discussed with Margaret and Claude in Yaoundé, before emailing to Margaret. You should also confirm who is responsible for sending the recording to the interviewee, together with a formal thank you message.

To re-cap, the process in brief is as follows:

1. **Initial contact with the interviewee:** send the message as indicated in the invitation to participate template and set up the time and date of the interview (location will be organised on the ground in Yaoundé)

2. **Equipment and technology test:** make some test recordings and save them in the preferred formats, re-naming them to ensure that your recording will meet the project requirements

3. **Review the interview process:** ensure that you are familiar with all aspects of the interviewing process and write yourself a script to include introductions, the questions and wrap up

4. **Final equipment test:** check the camera is working immediately prior to the interview

5. **Introductions:** introduce yourself

6. **Record Form:** ask the interviewee for the information about themselves, ask them to sign the consent form

7. **Project background:** briefly explain the project and the reason for the interview

8. **Recording:** record the interview

9. **Wrap-up:** comment on the interview as appropriate and thank the interviewee for their time Debriefing: meeting with Margaret and/or Claude to discuss how the interview went and if editing is necessary

10. **Final message to interviewee:** send the recording to the interviewee together with a formal thank you

Tips:

- Show respect and sensitivity
- Be clear
- Ask follow-up questions in order to get a full answer
- Listen actively and show you are listening (eye contact, body language, mirroring[5])
- Don't fiddle with or be distracted by the equipment
- Don't speak too much
- Try not to 'um and ah'

Use of the Recordings

The interviews have been designed and recorded to be used as learning materials in the ICA Training Programme course "Understanding and Using the Universal Declaration on Archives". Final edited interviews will be made available to students on the ICA Training Programme's Learning Management System, played during face-to-face training and/or used for advocacy purposes by ICA as video or audio resources. A transcription of the content will also be provided, to facilitate access to information in the interviews for students who may have limited Internet bandwidth or be otherwise hindered from accessing large files.

Copyright

Interviewees will agree to assign to the International Council on Archives all copyright in their contribution for use in all and any media. This will not affect their moral right to be identified as the "performer" in accordance with copyright, design and patents legislation.

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[5] Mirroring is repeating key words or the last few words of the interviewer to show you are following and encourages them to continue

Privacy

Interviewees will be identified by title, name and professional role in the interview recording. Personal contact details will not be published in the online learning platform. ICA needs to retain basic contact information to ensure we can reach interviewees in the event we wish to change how we use the recordings. The privacy rights of interviewees, particularly those articulated in the European Union General Data Protection Regulation of 2018, will be protected.

Contact Details

Margaret Crockett, ICA Training Officer	crockett@ica.org
Claude Roberto, Chair, ICA Advocacy Expert Group	roberto@ica.org

"The documents of oral history are always the result of a relationship, of a shared project in which both the interviewer and the interviewee are involved together, if not necessarily in harmony. Written documents are fixed, they exist whether we are aware of them or not, and do not change until we have found them. Oral testimony is only a potential resource until the researcher calls it into existence."
Alessandro Portelli, oral historian and professor of literature