

# Expanding the Circle of Care for Audiovisual Collections in Tribal Archives



## ABOUT

The [Community Archiving Workshop](#), a project of the [Association of Moving Image Archivists](#), proposes to address the widespread threat to audiovisual (film, video, audio) holdings in humanities collections through a series of regional workshops for tribal archives, libraries and museums (TALMs). In a 2020 survey, 21% of responding TALMs reported that they have an assessment of the audiovisual recordings in their care, and less than half of that (9%) have a preservation plan in place. In partnership with the [Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums](#), CAW proposes to support efforts to preserve and improve access to these collections by training tribal archivists and librarians to inventory and assess their collections, prioritize and prepare them for digitization, and develop strategies for the long term care of their digital files. At each onsite, one-day workshop participants learn to identify different media formats and risk factors, establish controlled vocabularies for the description of audiovisual collections, and document and prioritize collections for preservation.

## METHODOLOGY

The training developed by the Community Archiving Workshop are events that combine formal technical presentations about the needs and characteristics of audiovisual collections with hands-on activity where audiovisual professionals and workshop participants work together on an inventory and assessment of an organization's collection. The CAW meets its partners and participants where they are and requires no previous training or expertise.

Delivery of the workshop takes place in three distinct phases:

1. Pre-workshop planning and meetings
2. Onsite, hands-on training by processing an audiovisual collection
3. Post-workshop summary, evaluation, webinar, and finalization of inventory for preservation planning

While the actual workshop is only one day in length, producing a workshop involves many days of planning and remote training, along with additional post-workshop days to finalize and evaluate the process.

**1) Pre-workshop planning and webinars:** Before the workshop, CAW members meet with host site partners virtually to cover what to expect during the CAW, and ways to prepare for the workshop. CAW members collaborate with the workshop host site to identify a collection to process, establish metadata fields and naming conventions for the inventory, identify and acquire necessary equipment and supplies, and establish a schedule and workflow for the onsite workshop day.

**2) Onsite, hands-on training:** During the onsite workshop day, CAW members present on the historical evolution of different audiovisual format types, how to identify formats and signs of damage and decay, and how to mediate damage and decay by taking basic conservation and preservation steps. Together, CAW members and workshop participants review the purpose of defined metadata fields and controlled vocabularies in order to develop an inventory. Following presentations, participants break into small groups to work together—each group under the guidance of a CAW member—to practice what they have learned by identifying, inspecting, organizing and describing individual assets in the collection.

Participants learn to produce metadata: as they inspect each recording, they enter a description into the inventory spreadsheet, including a unique identifier, format, age, recording generation, content notes, and condition notes. Throughout the day, groups move through different stations—usually organized by format—so they get experience with a variety of material, such as grooved media, video cassette, open reel audio, optical media, and film. There will also be demonstrations of video and audio digitization. The workshop closes with a shared acknowledgement of the work completed, with opportunities to highlight exciting finds or lessons learned. All participants are given time to fill out an evaluation form before leaving.

**3) Post-workshop webinar, summary and evaluation:** After the workshop, CAW members will continue to work remotely with the host site, compiling and organizing the spreadsheets created at the workshop, producing a prioritized list of assets for preservation planning and making preservation recommendations. A post-workshop webinar, open to all workshop participants, will cover the basics of digital file management for audiovisual collections.

#### **WHAT YOU RECEIVE FOR BEING THE HOST SITE:**

- Through the workshop, training for staff and community members in processing an audiovisual collection.
- Through the workshop, a small (approximately 150 - 200 assets) audiovisual collection will be inspected and processed.
- Support from a CAW Mentor in developing a preservation plan for your audiovisual collection.

- An AV preservation kit, containing tools and supplies for ongoing assessment of collections.
- A subaward to defray cost of your time (approximately \$2,000)

**THE BASIC EXPECTATIONS OF HOSTING SITES:**

- Collaborate with CAW to identify and outreach to other regional tribal archivists to participate in the workshop.
- Collaborate with CAW to establish a workshop schedule.
- Provide a space for the workshop.
- Collaborate with CAW to determine what materials and equipment are needed & secure these materials prior to workshop date.
- Collaborate with CAW to identify an audiovisual collection to process as a part of the workshop.
- Recruit local community volunteers to participate in the workshop.

