

Provincial Acquisition Strategy – FAQ

What is the Provincial Acquisition Strategy?

The [Provincial Acquisition Strategy](#) is a set of principles and guidelines designed to ensure and promote the cooperative acquisition and preservation of Ontario's archival heritage at the local, regional and provincial levels and to lay the foundation for a provincial documentation strategy aimed at filling in the gaps in the province's documentary memory.

Why should my institution participate?

The documentary heritage of Ontario is a resource to be shared among all of its citizens. It is the combined responsibility of all archives in Ontario to hold these records in trust and ensure that they are preserved and accessible for future generations.

By agreeing to the principles of this strategy, the Ontario archival community recognizes that a collaborative approach will best enable it to safeguard the preservation of significant private and government records in the most appropriate repository and ensure every effort is made to make them accessible to all Ontarians.

What institutions already participate?

We're tabulating the results! Bear with us.

What are the benefits?

A clear acquisitions mandate will strengthen your archival program. Defining the scope of your collection for the benefit of the strategy will insure that donations that should be part of your holdings arrive at your door. It will also enable you to work with the professional community in de-accessioning and re-locating collections that are a better fit elsewhere. It is hoped that a provincial



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acquisition strategy will position Ontario's archival community to identify gaps in the province's holdings and to build a collaborative archival network that reflects Ontario's regions and people in all of their diversity.

Further, it will allow Ontario's archival community to share and acknowledge the individual and collective mandates for private and government records acquisition in the province, helping to prevent unnecessary competition between institutions.

How does my institution join?

Your institution can join by agreeing to follow the terms of the Provincial Acquisition Strategy. We encourage all institutional members of the Archives Association of Ontario (AAO) to comply with the strategy.

My institution doesn't have a collection policy, how do I get one?

Check out our document called [Guidelines for developing an acquisition policy](#). You can also contact the AAO's [Archives Advisor](#) for further assistance. Once you have developed your collection policy, you can add it to your institutional profile on [Archeion](#).

How is this different from what I'm already doing?

It might not be. This strategy is a way to formalize the process and an attempt to encourage all archives in Ontario to collaborate. The value of Ontario's provincial strategy will be enhanced through tools to assist with its implementation and dissemination. Once adopted, the provincial acquisition strategy will then provide the basis for an ongoing discussion among Ontario archives interested in the documentary heritage of the province as a whole.

Do I have to be an AAO member to participate?

No, although taking out a membership with the AAO is strongly encouraged. The AAO promotes the development of a co-operative system of archives in Ontario by advocating on behalf of Ontario's archival community to the government of Ontario, local government and other provincial institutions in order to advance archival practice and promote the value of archives; promoting professional standards, procedures and practices among archival repositories; facilitating archival communication and cooperation among institutions, users and sponsors; providing leadership through communication and co-operation with individuals, groups and associations interested in the preservation and use of Ontario's documentary heritage; and being part of a network of provincial, territorial and national archives associations.

Does my institution have to do anything in order to participate?

It is hoped that your institution will follow the guidelines as outlined in the strategy. In addition, there are a few tasks that your institution can do to ensure the success of the strategy:

- complete or update your institutional profile in [Archeion](#) to include information about your collection policy, mandate, geographic scope, etc.;
- contribute to the Ontario Archival Accessions Register (OAAR) on an annual basis;
- participate in talks to further refine the strategy at the local or regional efforts; and
- start thinking about how we, as a province, can meet the challenges and fill in the gaps of our documentary heritage.

What is the Ontario Archival Accessions Register?

The Ontario Archival Accessions Register (OAAR) is a new online register of accessions to archival institutions in Ontario. It has been developed in



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conjunction with the Provincial Acquisition Strategy to provide a common place for Ontario archives to share basic information on the new records they have received in the previous year. Unlike Archeion, the Archives Association of Ontario's database of completed archival descriptions, OAAR is intended to capture brief details on newly acquired records at the point of acquisition, before processing has taken place. For more information please read the [OAAR FAQ](#).

What happens in the event of a conflict between institutions?

The AAO's [Institutional Development Committee](#) (IDC) is committed to providing a forum for resolving disputes between institutions when varying interpretations of the application of the strategy arise. The Chair of the IDC can be reached by emailing idc@aao-archivists.ca