



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy

A large, light-colored magnifying glass graphic is centered on the page. The handle of the magnifying glass points towards the bottom right corner. The lens of the magnifying glass is positioned over the main title text.

Member Case Study

Developing
preservation pathways
for physically published
legacy materials.

dri[∞]

Digital Repository of Ireland

The Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) is a Trusted Digital Repository (Core Trust Seal awarded in 2018 and Data Seal of Approval in 2015) that provides long term digital preservation and access to digital collections.

As a national e-infrastructure for humanities and social sciences research data across the education, culture, and public service sectors, DRI content is available for use by the public, students, and scholars. The Repository links together and preserves research and data held by Irish institutions, providing a central internet access point and interactive multimedia tools to access information.

The DRI is an accredited National Aggregator for Europeana. As such, we support the aggregation of Irish digital cultural heritage content to the Europeana collections platform, which provides a centralised search and discovery portal for content from European cultural heritage institutes and makes Irish content accessible to a wider European audience.

Long term digital preservation

Preservation is more than storage, and the DRI offers a range of expertise and technologies to ensure that national and international standards of best practice are met.

Operating under a membership model, the DRI provides long term digital preservation for research data generated by HEIs and research centres following FAIR principles, which are an essential part of practicing Open Science.

Vulnerability of physically published legacy materials

Irish institutions across the education, culture, and public service sectors hold vast quantities of physically published legacy materials which have not been made available openly or to the public and wider research community.

Many research institutions do not have the capacity to perform long-term digital preservation on digitised legacy materials items such as: books, maps, manuscripts, and photographs.

Recent research has identified challenges relating to time, funding, and an absence of national digitisation policies as critical steps needed to create a sea change to provide long term access to heritage materials. Experts further recommend that reviewing and constantly updating organisational standards are essential for the progress of digital preservation projects in any country.¹

Case Study

In this case study, Ruth Hegarty, Managing Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's (RIA) publishing house, reflects on how Publications has adapted to digitally preserve open-access research data using DRI's flexible ingest pathways.

Ruth also discusses the department's data management approach as well as new workflows used to integrate the DRI as part of the publishing process - complementing traditional routes to publication via printed book and e-books in different platforms.

¹ Pandey, Rahul and Kumar, Vinit. "Exploring the Impediments to Digitization and Digital Preservation of Cultural Heritage Resources: A Selective Review" *Preservation, Digital Technology & Culture*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2020, pp. 26-37. <https://doi.org/10.1515/pdtc-2020-0006>

Profile: The Royal Irish Academy

The Royal Irish Academy is an independent, all-island learned society established under Charter in 1785. It has approximately 650 Members, chosen for their distinguished contributions to scholarship and research in the sciences, humanities, social sciences, and public service. Membership is by election and considered the highest academic honour in Ireland.

Publications

The Academy began publishing scholarly articles in its *Transactions* in 1787 – and now six journals are published by the RIA. The Academy also publishes books aimed at communicating scholarly material to a wider public, landmark series, reference works such as the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and scholarly books.

The books and journals are peer-reviewed and are produced to a high standard of editing and design. Collections in the DRI include:

- An introduction to the *Cathach*, Ireland's earliest manuscript written wholly in Irish,
- *Excavations at Knowth*: the complete volumes,
- Books by the RIA including *Debating Austerity* and *Unearthed*.

Author Profile

Ruth Hegarty is the Managing Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's publishing house. In 2006 she established the Prism imprint of the RIA which produces beautiful accessible books that encourage readers to return to the primary source and are rooted in scholarship.



Legacy materials: Excavations at Knowth Collection

One of the flagship projects at Publications over the past two decades has been the open-access publication of the excavation reports of Knowth - the megalithic passage tomb sited in the Boyne Valley part of the World Heritage site that includes Newgrange.

Led by Professor George Eogan, Knowth has been extensively worked on since the 1960s. However, for many years, the volumes of the excavations at Knowth were out of print and unavailable. Then, in 2018, a work experience student named Daniel Gilligan digitised the volumes, and they were published in their entirety in the Repository.

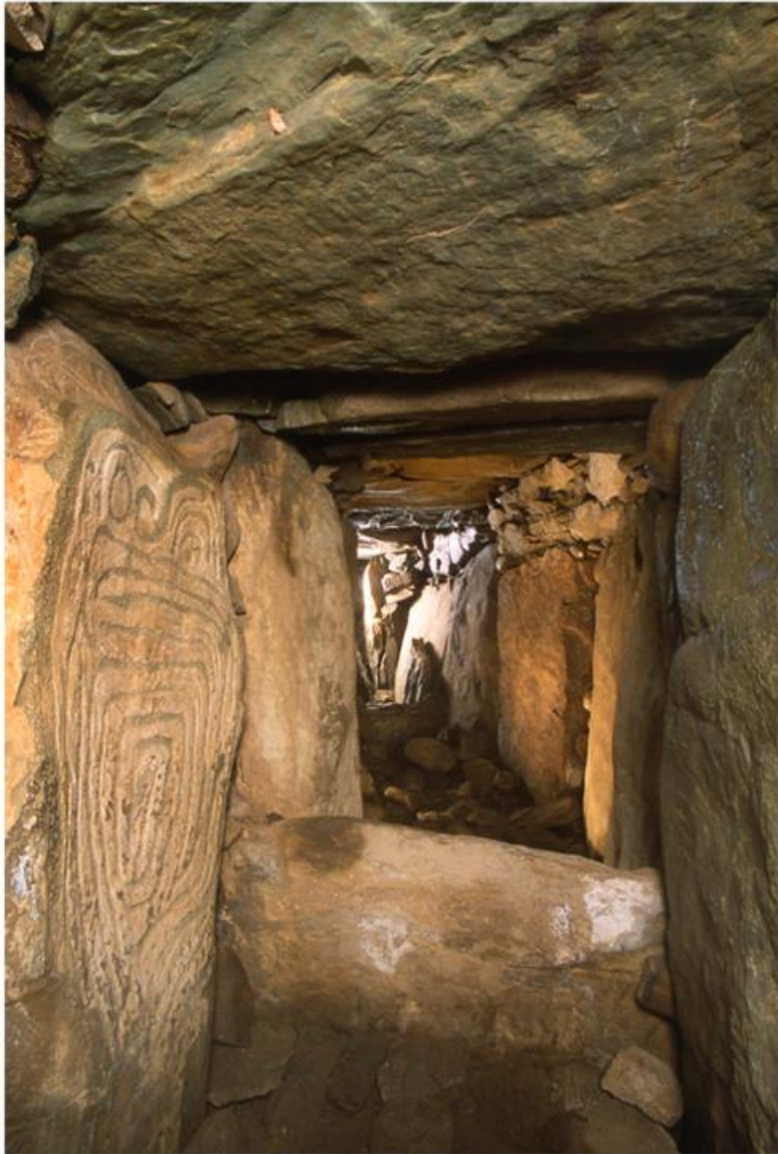
Thanks to this work, these physically-published legacy materials – once only available in specialised libraries or through bookshops – are now openly available to all through the Repository and through Europeana aggregation.

The flexible nature of ingest pathways into the Repository continues to allow the OPW and other organisations to use RIA Publications as an umbrella organisation to continue to add objects to the Knowth collection in the Repository.

When new volumes appear or photographic collections are created, curating sub-collections in the Repository allows for the periodic ingest of these additional legacy materials.



National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. (2018) Carved flint macehead, Eastern tomb chamber, Knowth, Digital Repository of Ireland [Distributor], Royal Irish Academy [Depositing Institution], <https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.v1194v535>



National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. (2018) Western tomb passage, Knowth Tomb 1, Digital Repository of Ireland [Distributor], Royal Irish Academy [Depositing Institution], <https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.qn603j97k>



National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. (2018) Eastern passage tomb, Knowth, discovery of entrance, Digital Repository of Ireland [Distributor], Royal Irish Academy [Depositing Institution], <https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.rn30dg370>



National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht. (2018) Knowth under excavation, Digital Repository of Ireland [Distributor], Royal Irish Academy [Depositing Institution], <https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.tb09xm65z>

Ingesting ‘Debating Austerity in Ireland’ into the Repository

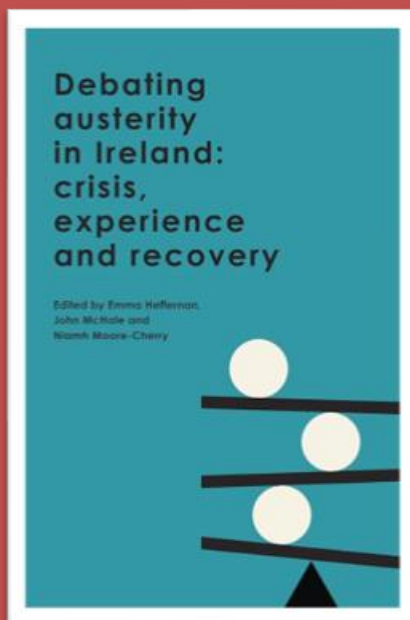
The austerity that followed the economic and financial crisis of the 2000s in Ireland has led to impassioned debates across the social sciences and the public at large.

Debating Austerity in Ireland is an edited collection that brought together experts from across the social sciences spectrum to debate this traumatic period in Ireland’s economic and social development.

Among the hotly debated questions: what is austerity? Was it necessary? What have been its consequences?

The ingest of *Debating Austerity in Ireland* ensures open-access for readers interested in understanding nuanced approaches towards austerity, as well as thoughts and analysis on the path to recovery in Ireland.

The papers included in this edited collection were selected from a conference at the Royal Irish Academy, peer-reviewed and rewritten with the addition of a substantial introduction and conclusion by the editors. This book has also been aggregated to Europeana to ensure as wide a readership as possible, coupled with comparative opportunities between Ireland and other European countries regarding austerity.



Royal Irish Academy. (2018) *Debating austerity in Ireland: crisis, experience and recovery*, Digital Repository of Ireland [Distributor], Royal Irish Academy [Depositing Institution], <https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.pz50wb26t>

Ruth Hegarty: The challenge of preserving physically published legacy materials

“As a publishing house that is over two centuries old, there are thousands of pages that could be digitised and preserved in the Repository. Publication here at the RIA began in 1787, and the volume of material can be intimidating.

We made the decision to begin depositing what is currently being created in Publications, rather than starting with our legacy materials. This decision has been liberating.

From the outset, it was helpful that publications such as *Debating Austerity* were conceived as open-access publications.

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This decision has been liberating.

This meant that the reproduction rights process was simplified for illustrations and text in the books - we asked for the right to deposit the images in the Repository at the same time as we were producing the printed book.

For the future - legacy content will be ingested into the Repository over time, probably once grants are secured.

With each legacy publication comes its own multifaceted complexity: many items have illustrations and other materials where digital and online rights need to be cleared and signed off – this can often be a laborious process, taking weeks or even months to complete.

Anecdotally, we find that rights holders are amenable to making their work openly and freely accessible, and they welcome the opportunity to introduce a new audience to their work.

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What has been key for us in Publications is acknowledging the need to build digital preservation into our workflow. With the help of DRI, this is a challenge that we would like to further investigate in the coming years. Staff within Publications also hope to avail more of the training courses offered by DRI, including workshops such as the 'Writing a Digital Preservation Policy' (hosted by the Digital Preservation Coalition) that was held online in late 2023.

As our current projects develop, we at the RIA anticipate ingestion to the Repository will become second nature to our staff – complimenting traditional routes to publication via printed book and e-books in different platforms.

I am personally looking forward to ingesting items from the *Grangegorman Histories* project to the Repository. This project is a public history endeavour that is currently generating publications, videos, podcasts, oral histories, articles, and reference works that relate to the Grangegorman site in north Dublin city. Grangegorman was once a workhouse, hospital and prison. The buildings stand as architectural monuments to that past and its complex histories. It is now to become a health and education campus as part of a wider city integration project.

Ingest to the Repository has been built into the *Grangegorman* project workplan. Open access digital preservation will ensure a wide public engagement with the project findings – reflecting the core values of the project and bringing histories to life for a new generation."

DRI Viewpoint: The Importance of the Work of Publications at the Royal Irish Academy

“Publications at the Royal Irish Academy have increased the reach and impact of their important studies by making them accessible through the DRI’s Repository. Information that is out of print or was once only available through specialised libraries is now becoming openly accessible to a wide national and international audience.

Publications have also created extremely rich collections because their ingests include additional resources such as photographs. These additions serve to renew and enhance our understanding and interaction with the original text.”

*Dr Lisa Griffith,
Director
Digital Repository of Ireland*

“The DRI relieve us of the responsibility for long-term preservation of our work.

Their expertise and ability to train us to get started has been essential to ensure that we can archive safe in the knowledge that we've given the right file formats with the right metadata.

The system is flexible, allowing us to build collections that suit our needs, whether that's for a book with the underlying research archive to accompany it, or an exhibition or an entire research project's multimedia publications.

The DRI team are approachable, easy to work with and always solution focused.”

*Ruth Hegarty,
Managing Editor
Royal Irish Academy*

**For membership queries
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