

**Noolaham Foundation**  
**Project Report**



<b>Project title</b>	Digitizing Publications for Online Access
<b>Project number</b>	NF/PG/2012/0005
<b>Project location</b>	Colombo and Jaffna
<b>Sector</b>	Digital Archive, Digital Library
<b>Implementing agency and contribution</b>	Noolaham Foundation (NF)
<b>Grant Agency and Contribution</b>	Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust (NTT) and Noolaham Foundation
<b>Total Budget and Expenditure</b>	Total budget LKR 475,000.00 Total Grant received from NTT LKR 427,427.00
<b>Start and End date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2012 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2014
<b>Responsible Stakeholder/s</b>	Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust, Volunteers of NF

## Summary

The **Digitizing Publications for Online Access** project was carried out by Noolaham Foundation in Colombo and Jaffna with the project funding received from Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust in Colombo and Jaffna. The main goal of this project was to identify, locate and digitize various publications and make them available online.

During the project period, Noolaham Foundation has digitized 31,053 pages from 262 various kinds of publications and made them available through the digital library at [noolaham.org](http://noolaham.org). These publications include works of eminent Tamil and Muslim writers. Also, Noolaham Foundation has obtained written permission from 52 copyright holders to digitize their writings and publications and make them available online. We obtained permission from writers, institutions and schools. The permission obtained from these persons and institutions has enabled Noolaham Foundation to release another 20,000 pages which had been archived but held back from open access because of copyright restrictions. A number of publications digitized through this project enabled us to launch two more projects releasing DVDs of publications of two schools.

## Introduction and Background

The conversion of all sorts of intellectual, cultural and history contents into digital opens up a completely new dimension of archiving that can reach traditional and new audiences by. But the context of archiving has changed a lot around the world nowadays because several

research libraries and institutions are either already involved in digitization initiatives or are contemplating or planning involvement in such endeavors. Computer-based systems are now considered essential for many aspects of such memory of any community.

In recent years, a growing understanding of the costs of digitization, in terms of both time and financial resources, has placed a greater focus on developing digitization initiatives and programs that will realize tangible and strategic benefits for the community and institution, and its users. The primary and usually the most obvious advantage of digitization is that it enables greater access to collections of all types. And digitization contributes to the conservation and preservation of intellectual property and resources; it creates new educational opportunities; and it provides ways of improving access by the citizen to their intellectual patrimony.

Developing a digital surrogate of a rare or fragile original object can provide access to users while preventing the original from damage by handling or display. This was the motivation behind the digitization of many priceless information resources. The provision of digital materials can overcome gaps in existing collections. Primarily, there is an opportunity for collaborative digitization initiatives to allow the re-unification of disparate collections. It is often the case that materials that were originally part of a complete collection are now held in far-flung locations, and there is a growing desire to present at least a 'virtual' sense of what the entire collection would look like. Many projects have been motivated by the goal of virtually 're-unifying' such materials. In that regard Noolaham Foundation Archive's project identifies, digitizes and makes these works accessible to the wider scholarly community and the public.

### **Objective/s and Achievements or Results**

Digitization is a complex process, and there are concrete benefits to be realized from many types of digitization projects. These can be summarized as access, support of preservation activities, collections development, institutional and strategic benefits, and research and education.

#### ***Digitizing a minimum of 30,000 pages***

Digitizing is as a series of activities that result in a digital copy being made available to end users via the Internet or other means for a sustained length of time. Digitization is also a means of creating resources that can be re-purposed for unforeseen uses in the future. The activities included: documents identification and selections, document preparation, scanning locating, basic descriptive and technical metadata collection sufficient to allow retrieval and

management of the digital copies and to provide basic contextual information for the user and safety of the material being digitized.

Noolaham Foundation has digitized two hundred and sixty two publications during the project period. These publications included works of eminent writers such as Jinnah Sherifdeen, S. Pathmanathan, Theniyan, and S. Sutharsan, and schools including Jaffna Hindu College and Colombo Royal College. These collections included Encyclopedia volumes on Hinduism by Prof. S. Pathmanathan, and various fiction as well as nonfiction books. Thus the number of easy to access online information resources has increased and students, researchers, social activists and the general public will benefit from these collections.

### ***Obtaining permissions from 50 copyright holders***

In the past, Noolaham Foundation was able to locate and digitize numerous publications but wasn't able to make all of them available for online access because of copyright restrictions. Thus another goal of this project is to make as many publications online as possible. During this project, NF contacted many writers and institutions to get their permission to make their publications available online. Through this activity Noolaham Foundation has obtained written permission from 52 copyright holders.

By the end of the project our Permissions database grew from 264 to 317, and it has enabled the foundation to make thousands of pages available online to the use of the general public. NF clearly shared the overall and key objective of this project with many stakeholders and scholars with whom NF had discussions during the project period. Through the discussion, they have informed Noolaham Foundation about their active support to the success of this project initiative. Some notable achievements are as follows:

- By obtaining permission from Dominic Jeeva, the editor of Mallikai magazine, 281 Mallikai magazines which NF had in its archive were given access online. (More than 10,000 pages) Seven books written by Dominic Jeeva have come to full online access as well.
- By obtaining permission from, International Center for Ethnic Studies, 19 Nethra magazines which we had digitized earlier have come online for free access.
- By obtaining permission from A. Jesurasa, an eminent scholar, writer and publisher seven of his published books which had been already digitized were provided online access.
- M. Fouzer provided permission for 18 *Moonravathu Manithan* issues and Ethuvarai issues to make them accessible online for free.
- M. Pushparajan, Majeeth, Memonkavi and Theniyan also gave permission so that their works could be made available online.

### ***All publications digitized through the project made available online***

The project dealt with over 30,000 images from all collections, including many different types of materials, such as printed books, magazines, newsletters, booklets, reports, souvenirs and felicitation, annual publications, leaflets, memorial publications and academic journal articles. In order to support this undertaking, major investments in staff, technology and infrastructure were made. In particular, a team of almost five staff was developed, covering a broad scope of expertise in all aspects of digitization and technology infrastructure, including databases, web publishing and high-resolution imaging, as well as metadata and library standards. Now that the team is in place and fully equipped, and has completed some of the earlier projects, they are able to support additional projects and initiatives for the whole organization. All 262 digitized publications through this project are uploaded on NF's digital library. Noolaham Foundation also provided a search interface and descriptive metadata which allow resources to be found the intellectual content of the object. Pages with metadata information for each publication were created to enable easy access.

### **Constrains / Challenges and lesson learned**

- NF planned to commence this project in September 2012, but it was commenced in October 2012 because the financial sources were received in October 2012. Thus NF was unable to finish the project by the initial deadline (28 February 2013). Then NF obtained one month extension to complete the project.
- While obtaining permission NF has identified certain inadequacies in its permission database (Naming was not compatible to Library Science Standards, contact details were not up to date, pseudonyms were not linked to original names etc.) Thus the project resources were used to update them.
- A fewer number of publications were obtained with permission by the Foundation but they were identified as "in sale". Thus they were not included in this project as it is a policy of Noolaham Foundation not to include recent publications which are on sale.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

- NF also identified, located and digitized a number of publications for which we already had obtained copyright permissions. Other than the publications digitized, we have also obtained a number of publications and permissions from ten schools and writers to be digitized. They will have to be digitized under future projects of the Foundation.
- Currently, preservation of master files and their accompanying metadata should be stored in a secure, dedicated server space, available through Foundations Technology. Master

files stored on servers will be periodically backed up on appropriate disk as part of University foundation's backup program.

- On an annual basis, all projects should be reviewed in order to refresh and migrate master files and their accompanying metadata as necessary.

### **Acknowledgments**

NF would like to take this opportunity to express a deep sense of gratitude to Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust for providing the grant to carry out this project. We would also like to thank Ms. Sithie Thiruchelvam and Ms. Jacqueline Netto-Lyman for guiding us in obtaining the grant. And we are thankful Mohamed Rayees and Rajanayagam Kohilanath for guiding us during the project period. NF takes immense pleasure in expressing its gratitude to the schools, institutions and writers for giving permission and support to digitize their publications. NF thanks all the volunteers who made this project a success.

Relevant Attachment:

Annexure 1–During the digitization work

