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# Building an E-ARK for the archival data deluge

National archives play a vital role in safeguarding information and enabling access to it. However, the exact approaches taken to achieve these goals vary widely across Europe. As such, there is a critical need for an overarching methodology for archiving data that can become the gold standard throughout the continent. The E-ARK project was launched earlier this year to develop such a methodology.

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*Participants at the launch of the project in Lisbon, Portugal, earlier this year. Image courtesy E-ARK project.*

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The E-ARK project was launched earlier this year to develop such a methodology. E-ARK stands for 'European Archival Records and Knowledge Preservation' and the project is set to run for three years, until early 2017.

The project, which is co-funded by [the European Commission](#) under its [ICT Policy Support Programme](#), will examine current best practices to create a pilot archiving service to keep records authentic and usable. This should minimize the loss

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of information, while also ensuring that maximum benefit can be obtained from the information stored in the archives.

"What we're doing is really ambitious," says Janet Delve of [the University of Portsmouth, UK](#), who is coordinator of the project. "We're helping people to get data in, we're helping archives to create an infrastructure, and then we're using 'big data approaches' to make any data marked as open - that which is not private or classified - available to government departments, businesses, and individuals for data mining."

"It's important for society that we don't just take our important governmental records and bury them in dusty rooms. So much of our national treasure these days is in digital form," says Delve. "Of course some things need to remain secret, but we're currently seeing a big push towards open data. So, it's important that we get those things that can be open out to people."

*Find out more about E-ARK on the project website, [here](#).*

*- Andrew Purcell*

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