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# ARCHIVE OF IIT MADRAS

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ANNUAL REPORT



JULY 2020 – JUNE 2021

# Contents

- 1. Introduction ..... 2
- 2. Activities covered in the second year ..... 4
- 3. Activities planned for the current year ..... 5
- 4. Archive team and committees ..... 6
  - A. Archive team ..... 7
  - B. Archive Planning Committee ..... 7
  - C. Archive Design Committee ..... 8
- 5. Record collection ..... 9
- 6. Work accomplished during the second year ..... 9
  - a) Survey of records ..... 9
  - b) Plan and execution of the construction of the Archive premises ..... 13
  - c) Public presence for the Archive: workshops, conferences, visits ..... 15
  - d) Private Paper guidelines ..... 17
  - e) Record Retention Schedules (RRS) for the following units: ..... 17
  - f) Social media presence of the Archive ..... 18

## **1. Introduction**

Greetings to everyone. The Archive of IIT Madras is stepping into its third year of the project phase. This annual report covers the details of activities carried out during the second year July 2020 to June 2021. Given the COVID pandemic the Archive team prepared itself for work flow continuity alternating in short notice between home office and on campus work modes. The on campus mode involved surveying the records and overseeing the refurbishment of Archive premise at the Central Library basement. The survey of the records from various units of IIT Madras helps us to understand the available quantity, topics dealt with in the records, and their physical condition.

Thanks to the IIT Madras Administration, the Archive of IIT Madras has its office in the Humanities and Sciences Block (HSB) on the first floor next to the Central Lecture Theatre. The Archive team relocated to this office from September 2020 after the first lockdown.

We thank Prof. R. Nagarajan, Kumaran Sadhasivam and Ms. Mamata for allowing the Archive team to share its office with them at the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras from July 2019 to March 2020.



**Archive of IIT Madras office**

*(Source: Archive team (September 2020))*

The Archive project phase runs for three years starting from July 2019 to July 2022. The Archive of IIT Madras as a permanent unit of IIT Madras is scheduled to open for public by mid-2022 as per the project proposal. The Archive team is committed to keeping this scheduled for opening as a priority and working accordingly. However, we cannot predict delays due to the pandemic. Construction of the Archive storage and processing premises is on halt at the moment, as the Director and Dean Planning decided to wait for the monsoons to pass in order to check potential water seepage in the Central Library basement before taking further steps on the building and infrastructure activities.

## **2. Activities covered in the second year**

The Archive of IIT Madras as a permanent unit of IIT Madras, with climate controlled storage, conservation laboratories (physical and digital), visiting facilities with appropriate finding aids, will facilitate access to the physical records of permanent nature to the administration and general public.

In order to accomplish this main objective, the Archive team has undertaken the following activities during the project's second year:

1. The survey of archival records was completed in 25 major units out of the identified 52 units.
2. The survey information is further organised at collection and series level (each unit is a collection and most bundles represent a series). So far, 12061 bundles have been surveyed. Organisation at bundle level enables the Archive team to carry out appraisal, acquisition and cataloguing procedures.
3. Immediate conservation of the records are assessed and the Archive team is in discussion with specialist conservators.
4. The Archive Design Committee has been formed to plan and execute the construction and furnishing of the archive premises, including the climate-controlled storage facility, conservation workshop, reading room, and offices.
5. The Archive of IIT Madras website and social media pages have been updated and new information has been posted.

6. The work of the Archive has been presented in public events, conferences, and workshops.

### **3. Activities planned for the current year**

The following objectives are scheduled for the third and current year 2021-2022. The Archive team plans to

1. Complete the survey of remaining twenty seven units
2. Determine the value of the records based on the appraisal guidelines, record retention schedule (RRS) and input from the concerned staff and faculty of various units of IIT Madras
3. Start the acquisition procedures of the selected records which is permanent in nature
4. Carry out the cleaning (removal of pest and dust) process of all selected records
5. Segregate the permanent records which needs special attention of the conservators
6. Work with the Engg. Unit in the tender process for the construction of Archive premises
7. Work with the consultants in the tender process for the procurement of the infrastructure facilities for the Archive
8. Prepare Disaster recovery plan - detection and effective suppression of manmade and natural disasters

9. Public presence for the Archive - the Archive of IIT M plans to conduct the following events

- A workshop on Access to Memory catalogue application jointly with Azim Premji University Library, NCBS and IISc (Bengaluru)
- The international conference “Archiving the Contemporary: Memory, Technology and People”, organized jointly with the French Institute of Pondicherry, HSS Dept., IIT Madras, and CNRS, CEFRES, Prague
- An exhibition of important records to showcase the rich history of the institute jointly with the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras
- A biannual magazine publication has been discussed with the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras to record the unheard voices of IIT Madras

#### **4. Archive team and committees**

At the project stage, the Archive of IIT Madras functions at three levels, the Archive team, Archive Planning Committee and Archive Design Committee. The Archive team works on the objectives of the project, while the Archive Planning Committee oversees the progress of the work and directs the team wherever necessary. The Archive Design Committee, which was set up recently, looks into the different aspects of the construction, equipment and furnishing of the Archive.

### A. Archive team

Dr. Roland Wittje, Principal Investigator

Prof. R. Nagarajan, Co-Investigator

Dr. Ponnarasu Subramanian, Project Leader

Ms. Rashmi, Project Associate

Ms. Minnu Ann Mathew, Project Associate

### B. Archive Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Role
Dr. Roland Wittje	Department of Humanities and Social Sciences	Chair of the Committee and Principal Investigator
Prof. R. Nagarajan	Department of Chemical Engineering	Co- Investigator
Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam	Heritage Centre	Secretary
Prof. Koshy Varghese	Dean Administration, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula	Dean of Alumni & Corporate Relations, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. P. Sriram	Department of Aerospace Engineering	Member
Mr. G. Sundar	Director, Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai	External Member
Mr. Venkat Srinivasan	Archivist, NCBS, Bangalore	External Member



### C. Archive Design Committee

Name	Affiliation	Role
Dr. Roland Wittje	Department of Humanities and Social Sciences	Chair of the Committee and Principal Investigator
Prof. R. Nagarajan	Department of Chemical Engineering	Co- Investigator
Prof. P. Sriram	Department of Aerospace Engineering	Member
Prof. R.G. Robinson,	Chairman, Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. Sannasiraj	Co-Chairman, Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Dr. Mahendra N Jadhav	Librarian, Central Library, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam	Heritage Centre	Member
Mr. Soundarraaj	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Ravichandran	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Rizwn Ali K,	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Ajay Krishnan	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. G. Sundar	Director, Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai	External Member
Mr. Venkat Srinivasan	Archivist, NCBS, Bangalore	External Member
Dr. Ponnarasu Subramanian	Project Leader, Archive of IIT Madras	Member

## 5. Record collection

The Archive of IIT Madras will keep the records from two different sources, first official records produced by the various units of the institute, and second records received from private donors as students, faculty, employees, and other people associated with IIT Madras. The survey, appraisal, acquisition, and accession of administrative records is an extensive process. The setting up of the collection of institute records in the public domain is in progress.

In the private paper collection, we acquire records relevant to the history of IIT Madras and support teaching and learning interests of the institute. The team has started collecting records from former faculty, which includes question banks, teaching materials, experiments, etc. We are thankful to Prof. Oruganti Prabhakar and Prof. Emeritus P. Venugopal, former faculty of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Department of IIT Madras for donating their papers to the Archive. (<https://archive.iitm.ac.in/faculty-collection>). As of now, we are in contact with other former faculty of the institute and hope to bring in more records and make it available on the Archive website.

## 6. Work accomplished during the second year

### a) Survey of records

The Archive team surveyed 5871 cubic feet of records from **sixteen** central administration units, (which includes offices of the Director, Registrar and all the Dean's. Apart from

these offices, Large record room in the Dean Students building, Engg. Unit records in the community hall and IC&SR building comes under this section), **six** teaching departments and **three** facilities. The remaining 26.68% of records from 27 smaller units (10 teaching departments, 12 Advanced Research Centres and 5 facilities) will take another two months to complete.

Based on the information fetched from the survey, the team assessed the quantity, topics and the condition of the records. Topics will be used to prepare the catalogue and the retention schedules. To preserve and protect it from further deterioration the records are recommended for different levels of conservation based on the survey information. Most common causes for deterioration include termites, silverfish and other insect attacks, and acidification of paper and other damages caused by poor storage conditions.

**Photographs of the survey conducted by the Archive team at various locations of IIT**

**Madras showing the varying condition of records**



Archive team (Rashmi & Minnu Ann Mathew) during the survey

*Source: Archive team (January 2021)*



Semi - organised records

*Source: Archive team (October-November 2020)*



(L) Drawings of the building plans

*Source: Archive team (January 2021)*



Semi - organised records

*Source: Archive team (February-Marc. 2021)*



## **b) Plan and execution of the construction of the Archive premises**

IIT Madras has allocated space for the Archive premises in the basement of the Central Library. The Engineering Unit of IIT Madras has undertaken refurbishment works to control the water seepage. The Archive team is closely working with the Engg. Unit to finalise the building and infrastructure requirements for the Archive.

The construction of the Archive facility is being carried out by the Institute's Engineering Unit. The design and framework are closely monitored by the Archive Design Committee (ADC) constituted by the Archive Planning Committee (APC).

The completed facility will have an entrance cum record receiving area, records sorting & cleaning room, physical & digital conservation lab and climate controlled storage area. Office space, reading room, and exhibition area will be located close to the Archive facility. The planning for the complete space allocation and design is in progress.

Archive facility – during the refurbishment work

*Source: Archive team (January. 2021)*



Archive facility – after completion of the refurbishment work

*Source: Archive team (January 2021)*



**c) Public presence for the Archive: workshops, conferences, visits**

- Dr. Ponnarasu visited the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives in Pondicherry to understand the organisation and functioning of the Ashram archive.
- Dr. Ponnarasu presented the Archive of IIT Madras to the retired faculty of IIT Madras in order to collect the records pertaining to their teaching and research connected to the institute.

## **The Archive of IIT Madras - Objectives and Building Process**

An initiative of the Diamond Jubilee of IIT Madras

Presentation to the

IITM Teaching Faculty Pensioners Association

**Dr. Ponnarasu Subramanian**

**August 12, 2020**

- AtoM Workshop: On October 6, 2020, the Archive of IIT Madras organised a workshop on AtoM (Access to Memory application) jointly with Azim Premji University, Bangalore. Mr Madhan and his team (Suresh, Sohini, Meera and Abid) gave training on the AtoM software and creating metadata for archival material. The workshop is a joint venture of the archives of IIT Madras, NCBS and IISc.



## Access to Memory

A flexible open-source application  
for standards-based description and access

By: **Suresh Yadav**  
KRC, Azim Premji Foundation  
Bengaluru

- On June 24, 2021, Dr. S. Ponnarasu presented a paper on “Building an institutional archive of science and technology in India: Processes and challenges” in the Third Workshop on Scientific Archives, Hamburg, Germany.

## Building an Institutional Archive of Science and Technology in India: Processes and Challenges

The Third Workshop on Scientific Archives, Hamburg, DE,  
Hosted by [European XFEL](#), on 22-24 June 2021

*Ponnarasu. S, Archive Project Leader, Archive of IIT Madras,  
Indian Institute of Technology Madras*

#### **d) Private Paper guidelines**

The document “Guidelines for Donating Private Papers” was drafted with separate sections for faculty, alumni, student, and staff organisations along with the agreement form.

#### **e) Record Retention Schedules (RRS) for the following units:**

- Teaching units (departments)
- Engineering Unit
- Dean Administration
- Dean Alumni & Corporate Relations
- Dean Global Engagement
- Recruitment Section
- Sophisticated Analytical Instrument Facility
- Central Glass Blowing Section
- Central Library
- Registrar
- Dean Students
- Chemistry department

Director's Office Record Retention Schedule				
Topics	Subtopics	Retention Period	size (Cu. In.)	size (Cu. Ft.)
Departments	Correspondence	5 years		
	Monthly reports	Permanent	931	0.539
HOD, Deans Meetings		minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent	23458	13.575
Committees- IIT M	BOG	minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent		
	Senate	minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent		
	FC	minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent		
	Estate committee	minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent		
	Works committee	minutes and meeting proceedings - permanent		
Meetings- inter IIT	IIT Directors meeting	10 years		
	Council of IITs	10 years		
	IIT review committee	10 years		
	Corresp. with IITs	10 years		
Director's files	Engagements, bills, foreign vists, personal, TA bills, speeches, subscription to bodies, certificates and testimonials issued by the Director	5 years		

**Sample RRS of the records of the Director's office**

**f) Social media presence of the Archive**

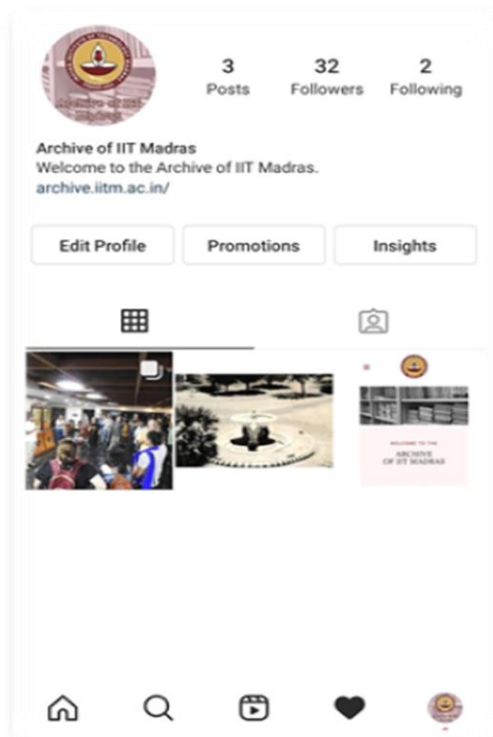
As we are in the digital world, social media plays a vital role in providing and updating information about the Archive project and various events and services conducted by the team, which can be accessed through the social media accounts of the Archive on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram:



Archive of IIT Madras in Facebook



Archive of IIT Madras in  
Twitter



Archive of IIT Madras in  
Instagram