Nikkei
national museum
& cultural centre
日系文化センター・博物館

Digital Archive Organization Templates

A simple, thorough system for organizing interviews, photos, and documents so nothing gets lost and everything is easy to find.

Quick start

1. Pick a folder structure below and mirror it on your drive.
2. Rename files using the pattern under **File naming**.
3. Log items in **metadata_minimal.csv** (use **metadata_full.csv** if you want more detail).
4. Keep consent forms and usage notes with the archive and track them in **consent_log.csv**.
5. Make an access copy for sharing, keep the primary untouched.
6. Back up with the 3-2-1 rule.

ADVANCED Folder structures (choose one)

Option A: Simple

```
.
├── 00_Admin
├── 01_Source_Primary
│   ├── audio_primary
│   ├── video_primary
│   ├── photo_primary
│   └── documents_primary
├── 02_Working
├── 03_Derivatives
│   ├── audio_access
│   ├── video_access
│   ├── photo_access
│   └── documents_access
├── 04_Transcripts_Translations
├── 05_Metadata
└── 99_Delivery_Sharing
```

Option B: Project-based (per storyteller or project)

```
.
├── 00_Admin
├── 01_Project_Name
│   ├── 01_Source_Primary
│   ├── 02_Working
│   ├── 03_Derivatives
│   ├── 04_Transcripts_Translations
│   ├── 05_Metadata
│   └── 99_Delivery_Sharing
└── 90_Global_Metadata_and_Vocabularies
```

Option C: Archivist (year-based intake + logs)

```
.
├── 00_Admin
├── 10_Intake
├── 20_Source_Primary
├── 30_Working
├── 40_Derivatives_Access
├── 50_Transcripts_Translations
├── 60_Metadata
├── 70_Reference_Renditions
├── 80_Public_or_Sharing
└── 99_Archive_Logs_and_Reports
```

Tips

- Store camera or recorder originals only in the Source_Primary folders.
- Put anything you edit into Working. Export sharing copies into Derivatives.
- Keep transcripts and translations together.
- Keep CSVs and logs inside Metadata.

File naming

Pattern

LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_YEAR/DATE_TOPIC/THEME

Examples:
- Tanaka_Masako_2025_ChildhoodMemories.mp4
- Yada_Jaia_2025_ChildhoodMemories_Photo.jpg
- Tanaka_Masako_2025_ChildhoodMemories_Transcript.docx

Rules

- No spaces. Use underscores.
- Do not rename primaries after cataloging. Rename before logging.
- Keep access copies clearly labeled _access or versioned.

Metadata (Advanced)

Start with **metadata_minimal.csv** and add more fields later using **metadata_full.csv**.

Minimal fields

- record_id: short unique ID like NIK-20250823-001
- title: human-readable title
- primary_storyteller_name
- interview_date (YYYY-MM-DD)
- content_type (audio, video, photo, document)
- file_current_name and file_path
- consent_status and usage_rights

- topic_tags (semicolon-separated)
- notes

Helpful additions

- Languages, translator, interviewer, location, device
- Transcript and translation status and file names
- Checksum for primary files if you want integrity checks

Nikkei-aware tags
Use controlled vocabularies included in the pack for era and topics. Example era tags: Pre-war, Internment, Post-war Resettlement, Redress Movement, Contemporary.

Consent and usage

- Log every form in consent_log.csv and store the signed PDF in 00_Admin or a Consent subfolder.
- Use simple statuses: consented, limited, restricted, denied.
- Add notes for restrictions or sensitive content. Tie this to sensitivity_level in metadata.

Quality and derivatives

- Keep the primary file untouched. Keep an access copy for sharing.
- Audio masters: WAV 48 kHz 24-bit if possible. Video primary files: keep camera originals.
- Access copies: MP3 for audio, MP4 for video, JPEG/PNG for photos, PDF for documents.

Backups

Use the 3-2-1 rule.

- 3 copies
- 2 different kinds of storage
- 1 copy offsite
  Test a restore each month.

Checklists

- Pre-interview: consent prep, charge devices, test audio and lighting, confirm name pronunciations.
- Post-ingest: copy primary files, rename, create access copies, fill metadata, log consent, back up.
- Monthly: test backup restore, spot-check metadata, export CSVs to an external drive.

What's included in the download pack (Advanced)

- CSVs: minimal and full metadata, file manifest, consent log, people template
- Controlled vocabularies: era, topics, sensitivity levels, usage rights, locations
- Naming guide and examples
- Folder trees
- Guides: backup strategy, checksums
- Checklists: pre-interview, post-ingest, monthly