

Preserving social media?

Try Data Lifeboat.

With thanks to:

Europeana, 10 June 2025
George Oates, glo@flickr.org



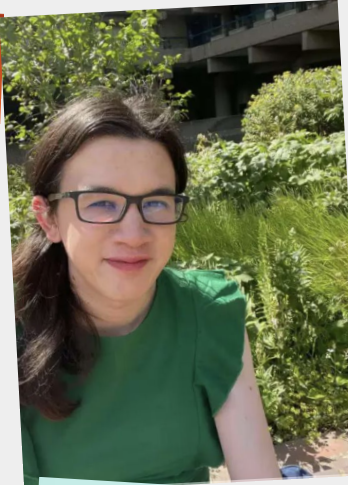
NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES





flickr.org

Established 2022



**Community
Design
Direction
Engineering
Legal
Operations
Research**

Flickr Commons

Sharing historical
photography collections
with a global audience.

Content Mobility

Flickr as a waypoint—not the
endpoint—for photographs
online.

Creative Archives

What might a 21st century
approach to a huge social
media collection afford us?

New Curators

What does social cataloguing
mean? How do we curate
billions of things?

[flickr.org/programs](https://www.flickr.org/programs)

Flickr Commons

17 years old

116 members

1,885,454 photographs

4.58 billion views

347,685 comments

596,754 tags

commons.flickr.org



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17 years old

116 members

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commons.flickr.org



Richard Norton 13y

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krasi%C5%84ski_Square



Art Siegel PRO 13y

A tinted version of the postcard original of this photo is in the LOC collection:

www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsc.03915/

described as follows: "Title from the Detroit Publishing Co., catalogue J foreign section, Detroit, Mich. : Detroit Publishing Company, 1905."



Pete (LOC P&P) 13y

thanks for the links. We'll update the record.



KasiaReisner 12y

The proper name of this square is Plac Krasinskich.



KasiaReisner 12y

KRA+ not KAR



40 HRS OF MY
WORK. HOW
DO YOU LIKE IT,
MR. PRESIDENT?





“I don’t think people appreciate the cultural significance of Flickr as a platform and a corpus.”

TREVOR OWENS

OUR MISSION

**Keep Flickr pictures visible
for 100 years.**



What if
Flickr.com goes down?



“Tens of billions”





Aalborg City Archives/Aalborg Stadsarkiv

Aalto University

Bodleian Libraries

Boston Public Library

The British Library

Cambridge University Library

Capital Area District Libraries

CLOCKSS

Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Archives

Creative Commons

Digital Preservation Coalition

GLAM-E Lab

Filecoin Foundation for the Decentralized Web

The Internet Society

The Library of Congress

The National Archives (UK)

National Archives (US)

National Library of Wales/Llyfrgell Genedlaethol

Cymru

Permanent.org

Port Morien Digital Archives

Provincial Archives of Alberta

Royal Danish Library/Det Kongelige Bibliotek

Schlesinger Library at Harvard Radcliffe Institute

San Diego Air & Space Museum

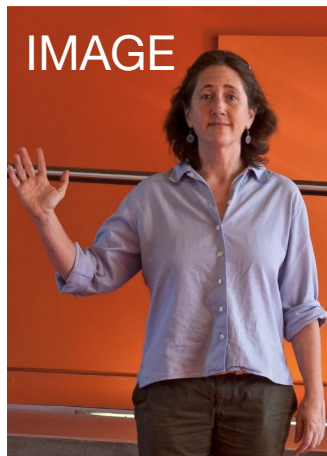
University of Bristol

University of Edinburgh

University of Washington

Flickr is

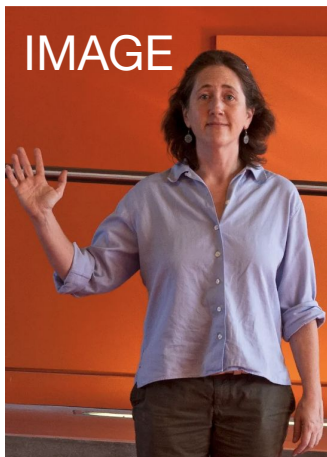
***“a great place
to be a photo”***



TECHNICAL
metadata

SOCIAL
metadata

GENERATED
metadata



TECHNICAL
metadata

SOCIAL
metadata

GENERATED
metadata

Machine-set
Date taken
F stop

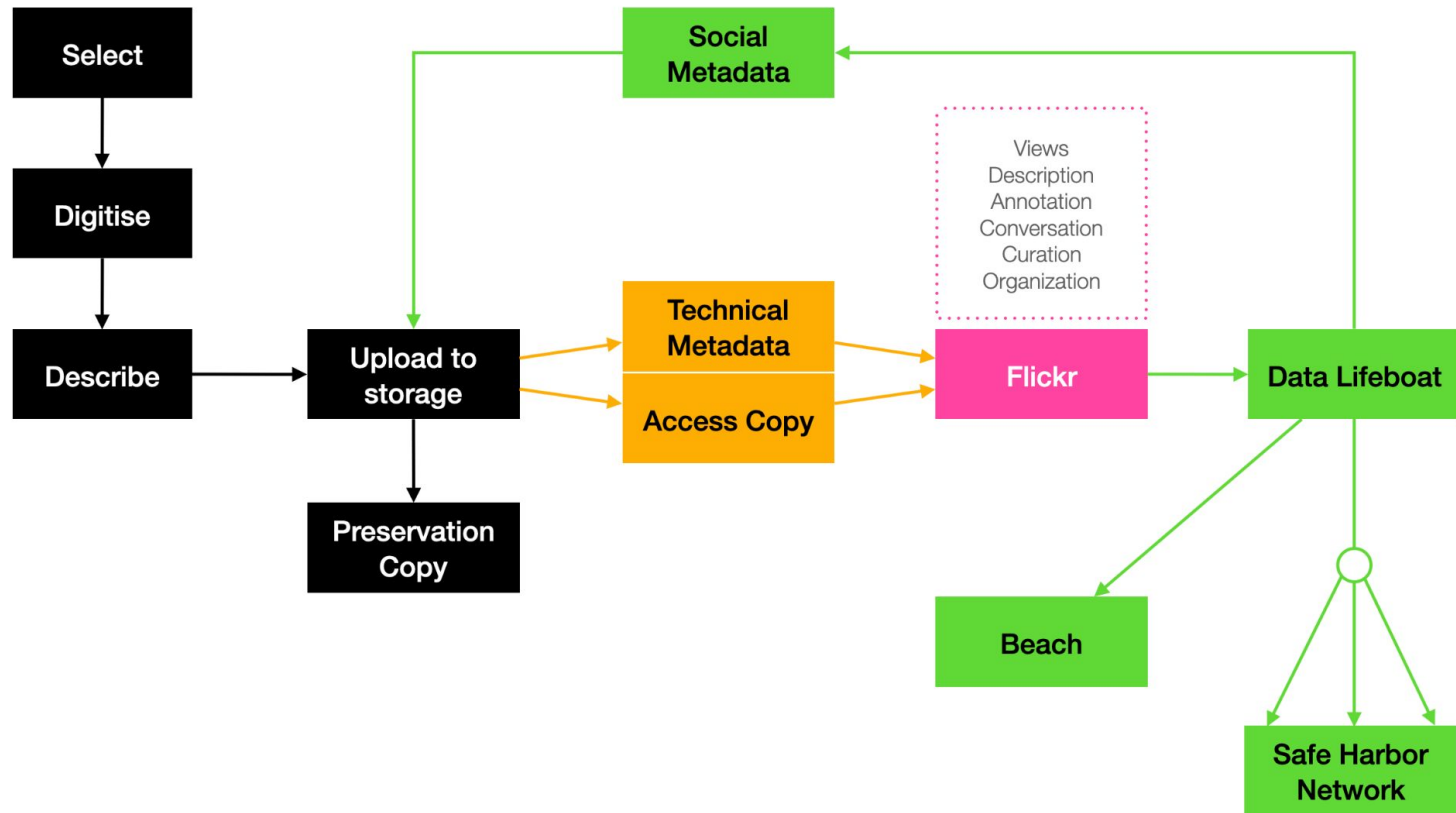
People-made
Conversation
Curation

(speculative)

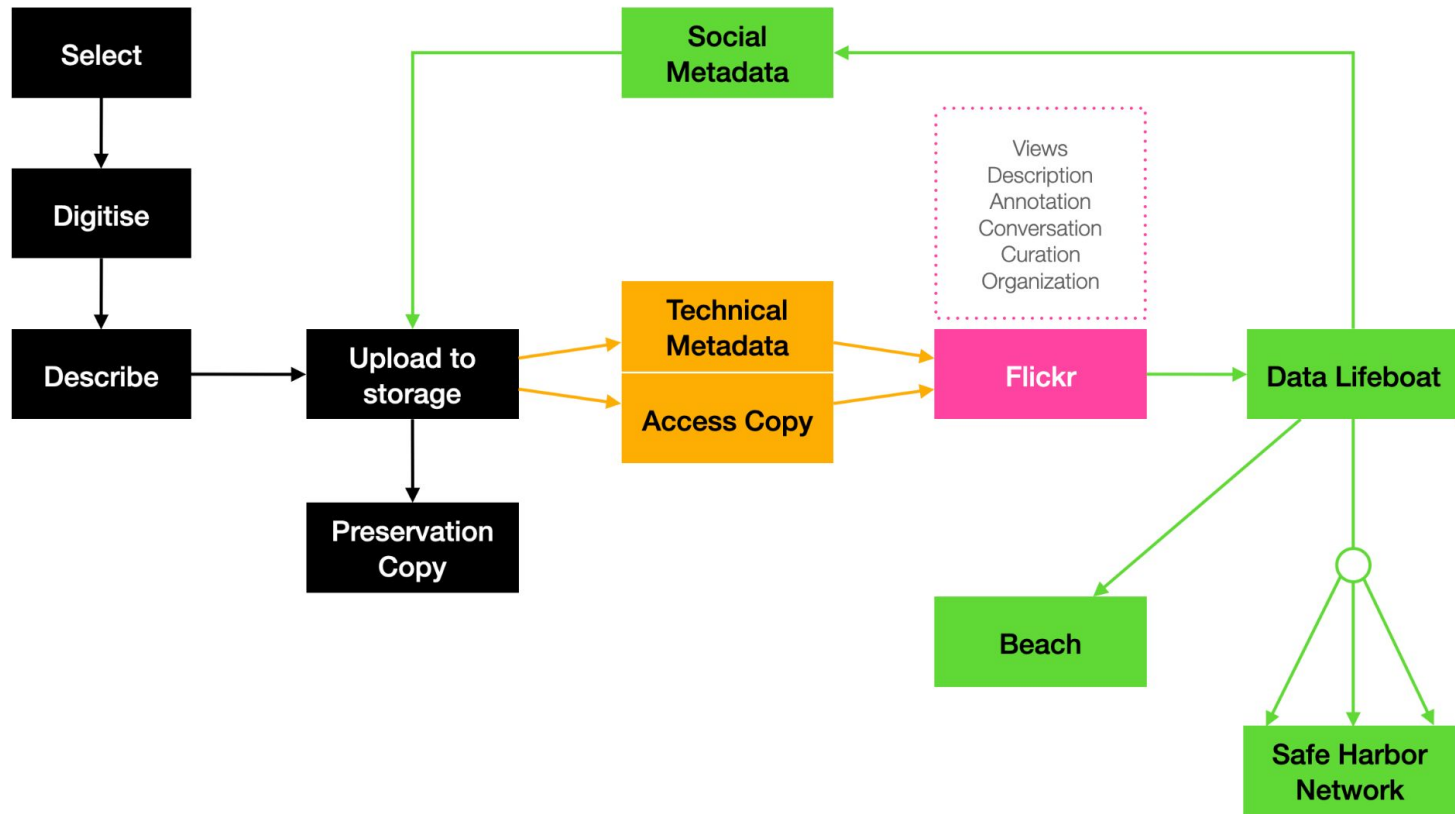
User-generated histories

Hiding in plain sight

- Important events
- Family histories
- At-risk subjects or organisations
- Contemporary collecting on timely topics
- Intangible heritage
- Overlooked subjects
- Quirky things



**Accessible Archives
2025-2027**

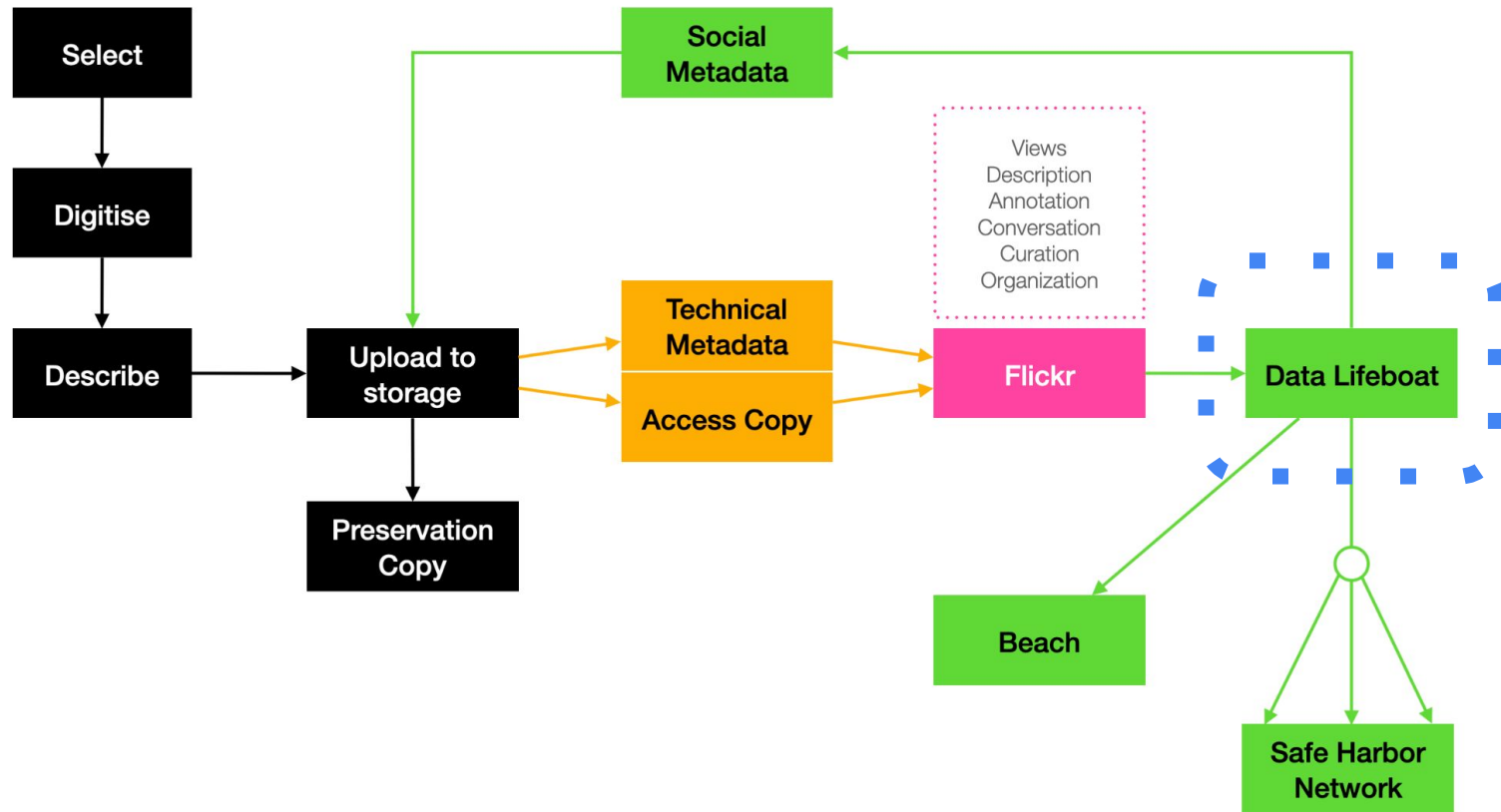


Create

Publish

Share

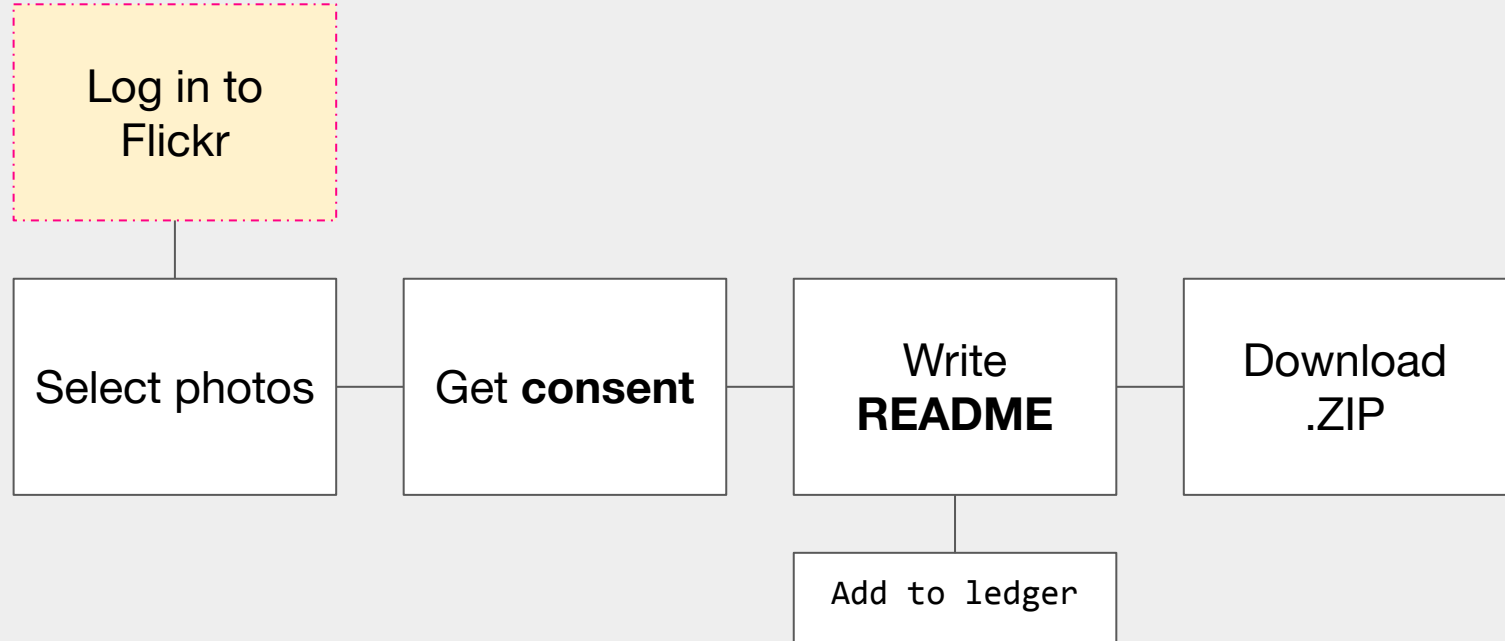
Preserve

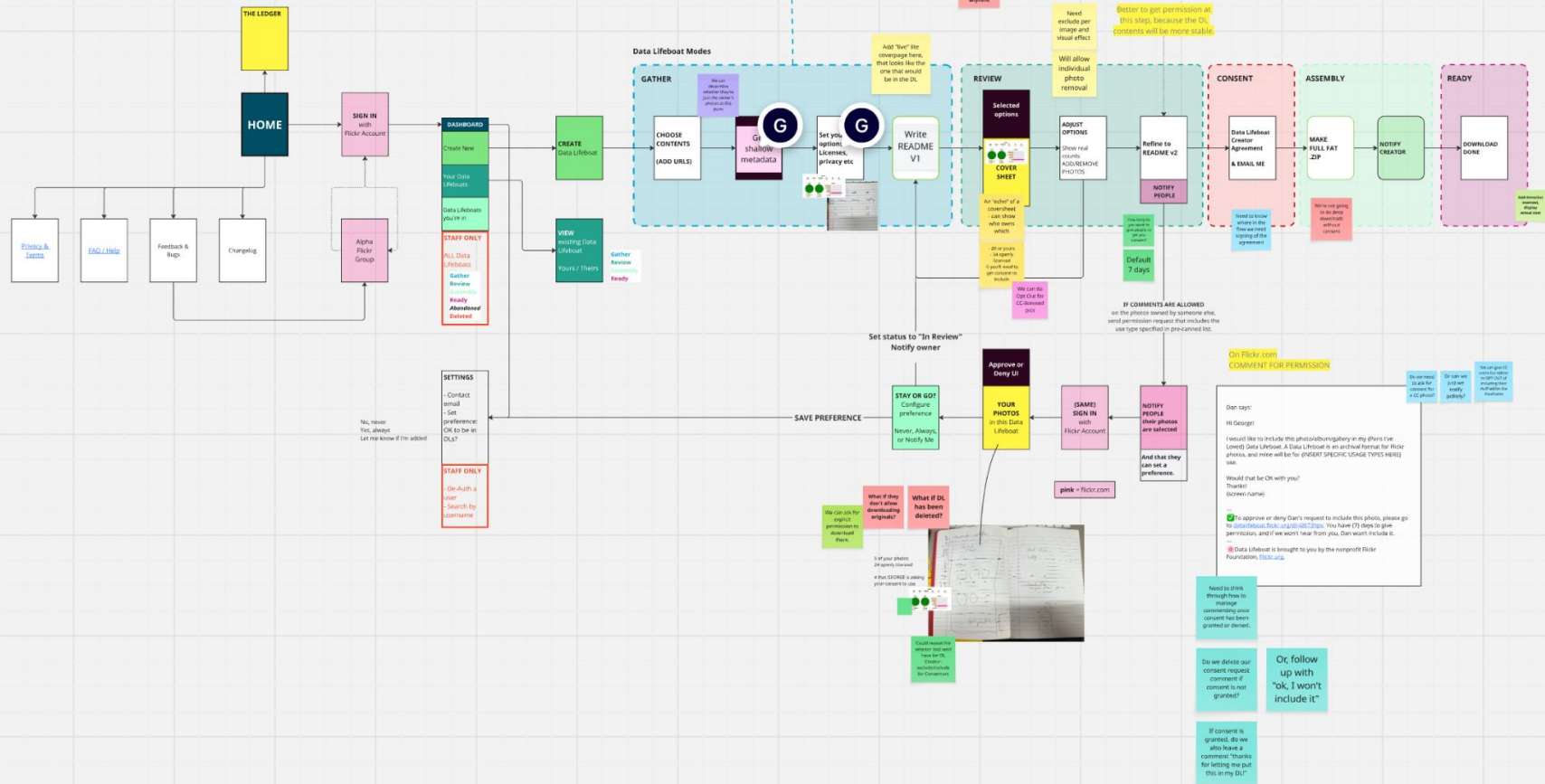


**Accessible Archives
2025-2027**

TOOLS:

Data Lifeboat





Write
README

Why are you making this?

Who is it for?

How do you want it to be used?

[← Back to galleries list](#)[Edit](#)[Comments](#)[Share](#)

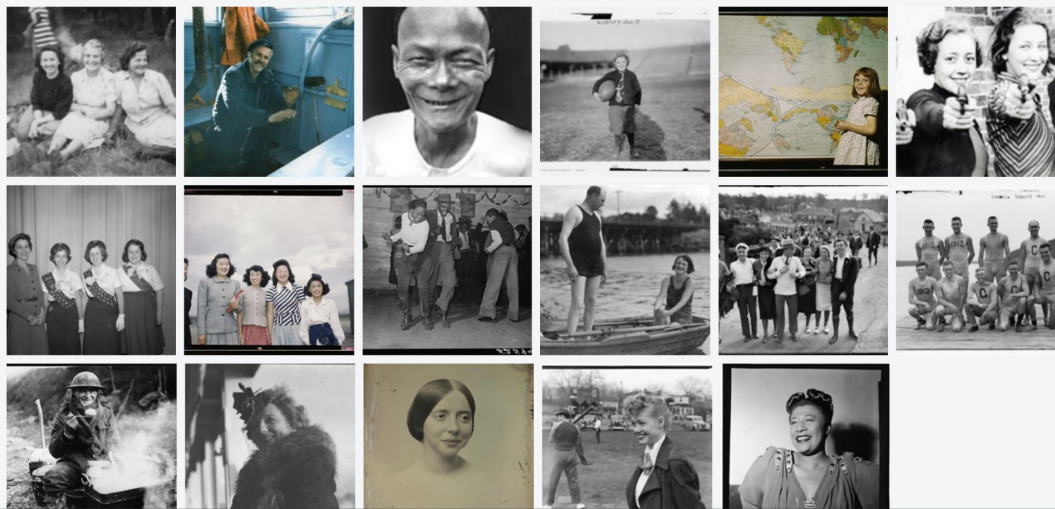
Commons Smiles

a gallery curated by **YOU!**

This was always one of my favourite examples of a collection that emerged spontaneously from within the Commons photos, just by adding a tag.

[read more](#)

17 items • 478 views • 0 comments

[+ Add](#) [Reorder](#)



config.js



media



metadata



README.html



viewer

< > commons_smiles

Name



config.js



media



originals



thumbnails



metadata



albumIndex.js



contributorIndex.js



galleryIndex.js



groupIndex.js



licenseIndex.js



photoIndex.js



photos



tagIndex.js



README.html



viewer



data.html



docs.html



list_photos.html



list_tags.html



policies.html



single_photo.html



static



config.js



media



metadata



README.html



viewer



HTML, JPG, JS

Commons Smiles

This Data Lifeboat was created by George Oates on 6 March 2025.

This was always one of my favourite examples of a collection that emerged spontaneously from within the Commons photos, just by adding a tag.

This Data Lifeboat was created as a demo of the Data Lifeboat for Flickr Foundation staff.

Popular tags



woman



libraryofcongress



smile



smiles



Commons Smiles

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Popular tags



woman



libraryofcongress



smile



smiles





woman



libraryofcongress



smile



smiles



smiling



1940s



women



old

Statistics

9.2

MB

17

photos

891,451

views

236

comments

272

tags

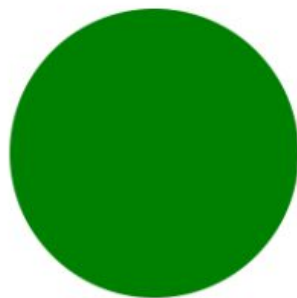
465

contributors

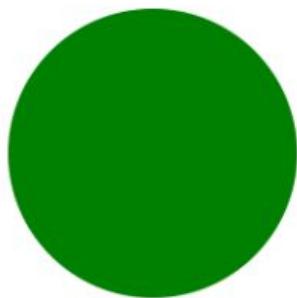
Privacy

Safety

Licenses

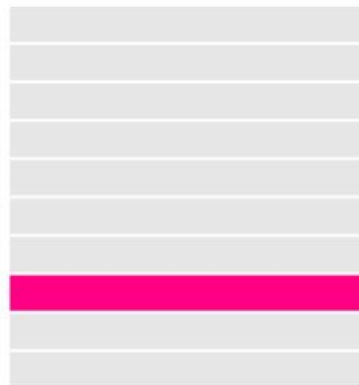


- public
- friends/family
- private

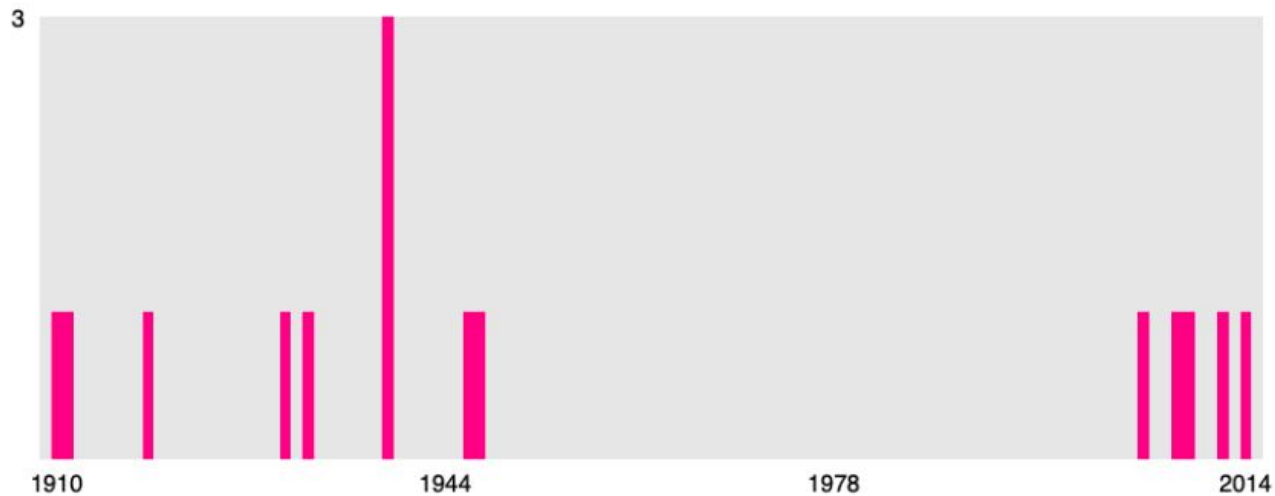


- safe
- moderate
- restricted

- All rights reserved
- CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
- CC BY-NC 2.0
- CC BY-NC-ND 2.0
- CC BY 2.0
- CC BY-SA 2.0
- CC BY-ND 2.0
- NKCR
- CC0
- Public domain



Date taken



Eleanor (MacIntosh) MacDonald, Cora MacIntosh, Mrs. Clarence MacDonald

from [Port Morien Digital Archive](#)



Description

This photo was not described.

[About this photo](#) | [About the uploader](#) | [Comments](#) | [Albums](#) | [Galleries](#) | [Groups](#) | [Files](#) | [Complete JSON](#)

About this photo

License:	No known copyright restrictions (https://www.flickr.com/commons/usage/)
Date taken:	unknown
Date uploaded:	July 21, 2015
Location:	(unknown)
Tags:	women , smiling , smiles , outside , picnic
Original URL:	https://www.flickr.com/photos/portmorienarchive/19699550110/
Safety level:	safe
Visibility:	public
Number of favorites:	1
Number of views:	1,094
Original format:	jpg

About the uploader

Flickr NSID:	98726691@N05
Username:	Port Morien Digital Archive
Realname:	(none)
Profile page:	https://www.flickr.com/photos/portmorienarchive/

Eleanor (MacIntosh) MacDonald, Cora MacIntosh, Mrs. Clarence MacDonald

from [Port Morien Digital Archive](#)



This is a low-resolution copy of the image created by Flickr for fast browsing.

Path: [media/thumbnails/19699550110.jpg](#)
File type: image/jpeg
Dimensions: 640 × 451
File size: 58.9 kB (58,918 bytes)
File checksum: sha256:2ac9e695a41ab83f2820f4d8e465409f9f1be52bdfaeaae871053263b9d809421

Complete JSON

All of the metadata about this photo is stored in a machine-readable JavaScript format. The metadata file for this photo is saved at [metadata/photos/19699550110.js](#).

You can read the metadata below, and the [data documentation](#) explains how Data Lifeboat stores metadata.

▼ Raw JSON metadata

```
const thisPhoto = {
  "id": "19699550110",
  "secret": "beaa2bf5fa",
  "url": "https://www.flickr.com/photos/portmorienarchive/19699550110/",
  "title": "Eleanor (MacIntosh) MacDonald, Cora MacIntosh, Mrs. Clarence MacDonald",
  "description": null,
  "uploaderId": "98726691@N05",
  "licenseId": "nkr",
  "dateTaken": null,
  "dateUploaded": "2015-07-21T15:32:24+00:00",
  "location": null,
  "tags": [
    {
      "authorId": "34427469121@N01",
      "rawValue": "women",
      "normalizedValue": "women",
      "isMachineTag": false
    },
    {
      "authorId": "34427469121@N01",
```


Self Contained

Long Lasting

Versatile

Legible

Docs

In this documentation section, you can find:

- Information about what Data Lifeboat is (this page)
- Specifications for the machine-readable metadata files inside a Data Lifeboat (see [data](#))
- The policies that the Data Lifeboat's creator agreed to (see [policies](#))

A Data Lifeboat is a self-contained archival sliver of Flickr.com. It contains photos and social metadata – the original image, any metadata added by the member who uploaded it to Flickr, and social context like comments and tags.

Data Lifeboats are created by the Flickr Foundation.

Eventually this page will have a more detailed description of what a Data Lifeboat is.

What's in a Data Lifeboat?

When you open a Data Lifeboat folder, you'll find the following files and folders:

- [README.html](#) – this is the entry point to the Data Lifeboat viewer. It opens a tiny app that lets you browse the photos and metadata in this Data Lifeboat.
- [media/](#) – this has the media files, i.e. the photos and videos that are in this Data Lifeboat. It includes both small low-resolution thumbnails and high-resolution originals (if available).
- [metadata/](#) – machine-readable metadata that describes all the photos in this Data Lifeboat. You can read the [Data docs](#) to understand the structure of these files.
- [viewer/](#) – this has the code for the viewer that lets you browse the contents of the Data Lifeboat in your browser.



USAID on Flickr

This Data Lifeboat was created by Flickr Foundation on 5 March 2025.

The Flickr Foundation created this collection of photos representing the work of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) ahead of their shutdown by the Trump administration in January 2025.

The photos in this collection come from a variety of accounts and licenses. Please use them responsibly and in accordance with their original Flickr license.

Popular tags



usaid



africa



usagencyforinter
nationaldevelop
ment



economicgrowth



Statistics

841.6

GB

187,989

[photos](#)

68,887,058

[views](#)

1,187

[comments](#)

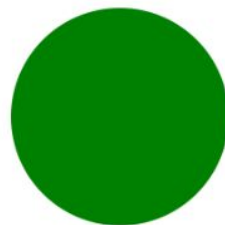
9,849

[tags](#)

1,123

contributors

Privacy



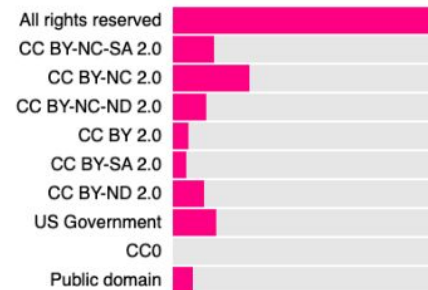
- public
- friends/family
- private

Safety

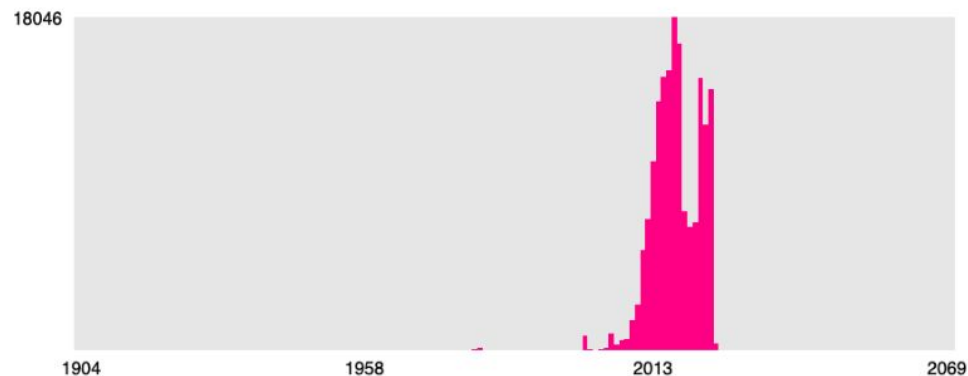


- safe
- moderate
- restricted

Licenses



Date taken





Ghana



Ukraine



El Salvador



Pakistan



Zambia



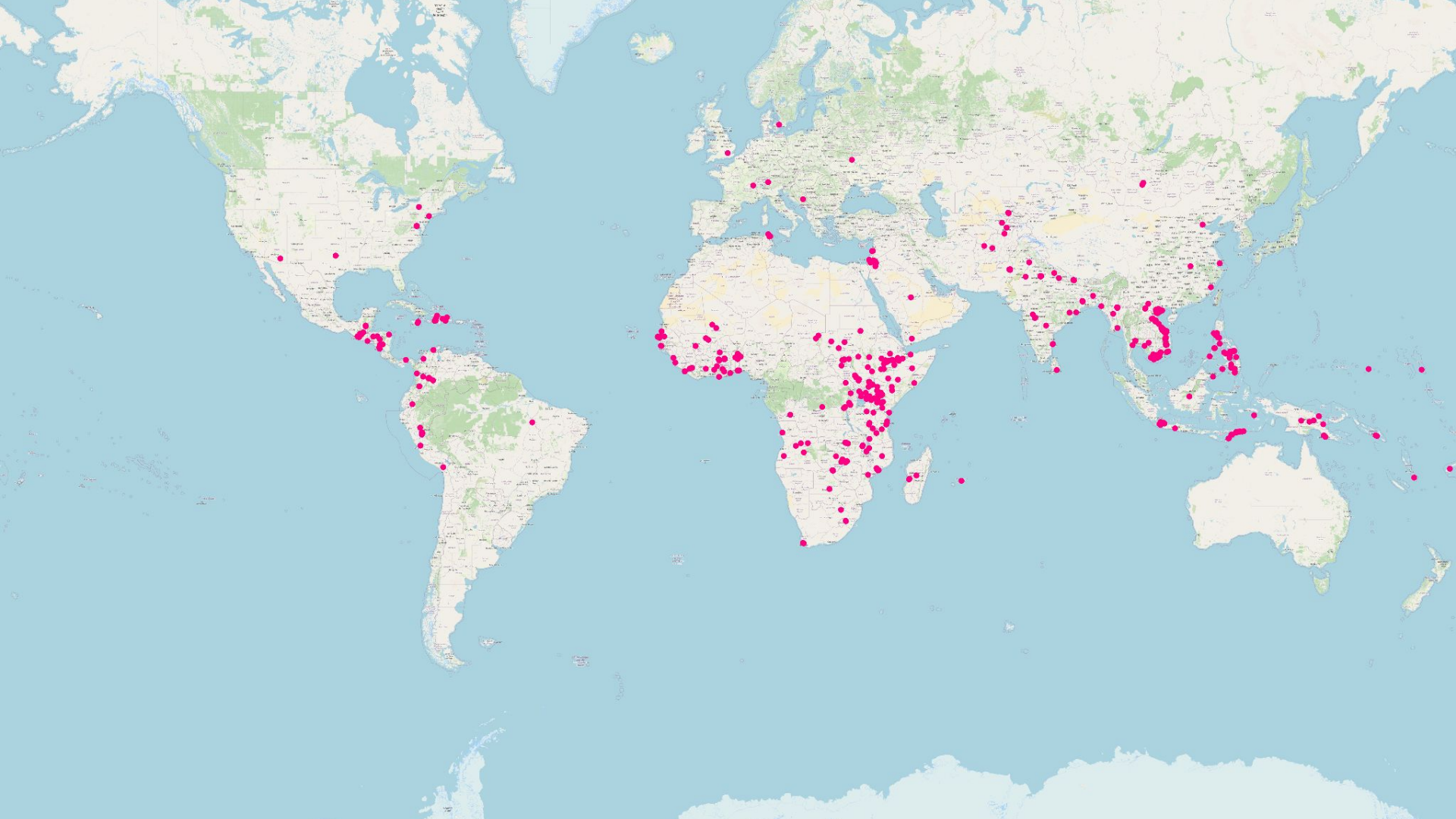
Colombia



Philippines



Peru



Statistics

841.6

GB

187,989

[photos](#)

68,887,058

[views](#)

1,187

[comments](#)

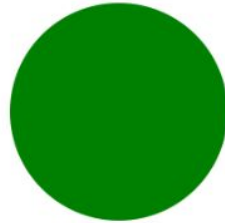
9,849

[tags](#)

1,123

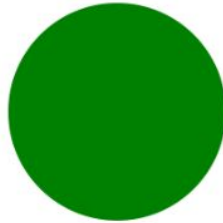
contributors

Privacy



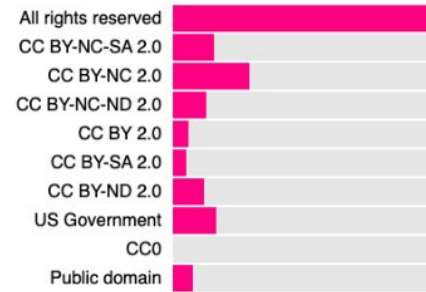
- public
- friends/family
- private

Safety

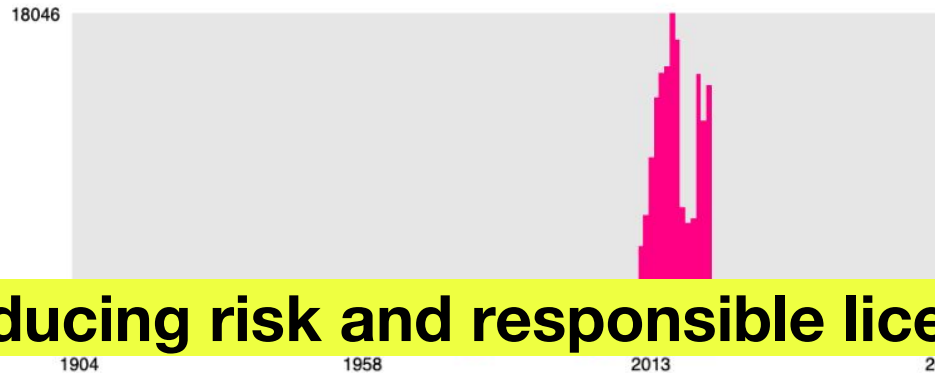


- safe
- moderate
- restricted

Licenses



Date taken



Reducing risk and responsible licensing



Project Report

Project:	Building a “Data Lifeboat” for Flickr <i>To support the development of a mechanism called “Data Lifeboat” which gathers photograph collections hosted on Flickr.com for preservation elsewhere.</i>
Project Director:	George Oates Flickr Charitable Foundation
Funder:	Mellon Foundation
Grantmaking area:	Public Knowledge
Date of award:	1 May 2024
Published:	May 2025
Co-authors:	Fattori McKenna, Ewa Spohn, Alex Chan, Dan Catt, Jessamyn West, Joshua Christman, George Oates

New!

Research Report on Data Lifeboat

Available at:
[flickr.org/blog](https://www.flickr.org/blog)



ALPHA COMING SOON!

datalifeboat.flickr.org

Data Lifeboat

Brought to you by Flickr.org

Hello.

A Data Lifeboat is a sliver of Flickr you can archive somewhere else. You have to have a Flickr account to make one.

CHOOSE YOUR
PHOTOS



WRITE A GREAT
README



DOWNLOAD THE
ARCHIVE

Would you like to try it?

We will be launching our Alpha very soon, and access will be granted via our [Data Lifeboat Flickr group](#). If you'd like to take part, join the group and we'll be in touch.

REGISTER FOR ALPHA

Data Lifeboat is built by the nonprofit Flickr Foundation.

We love [donations!](#)



 [Find out more](#)

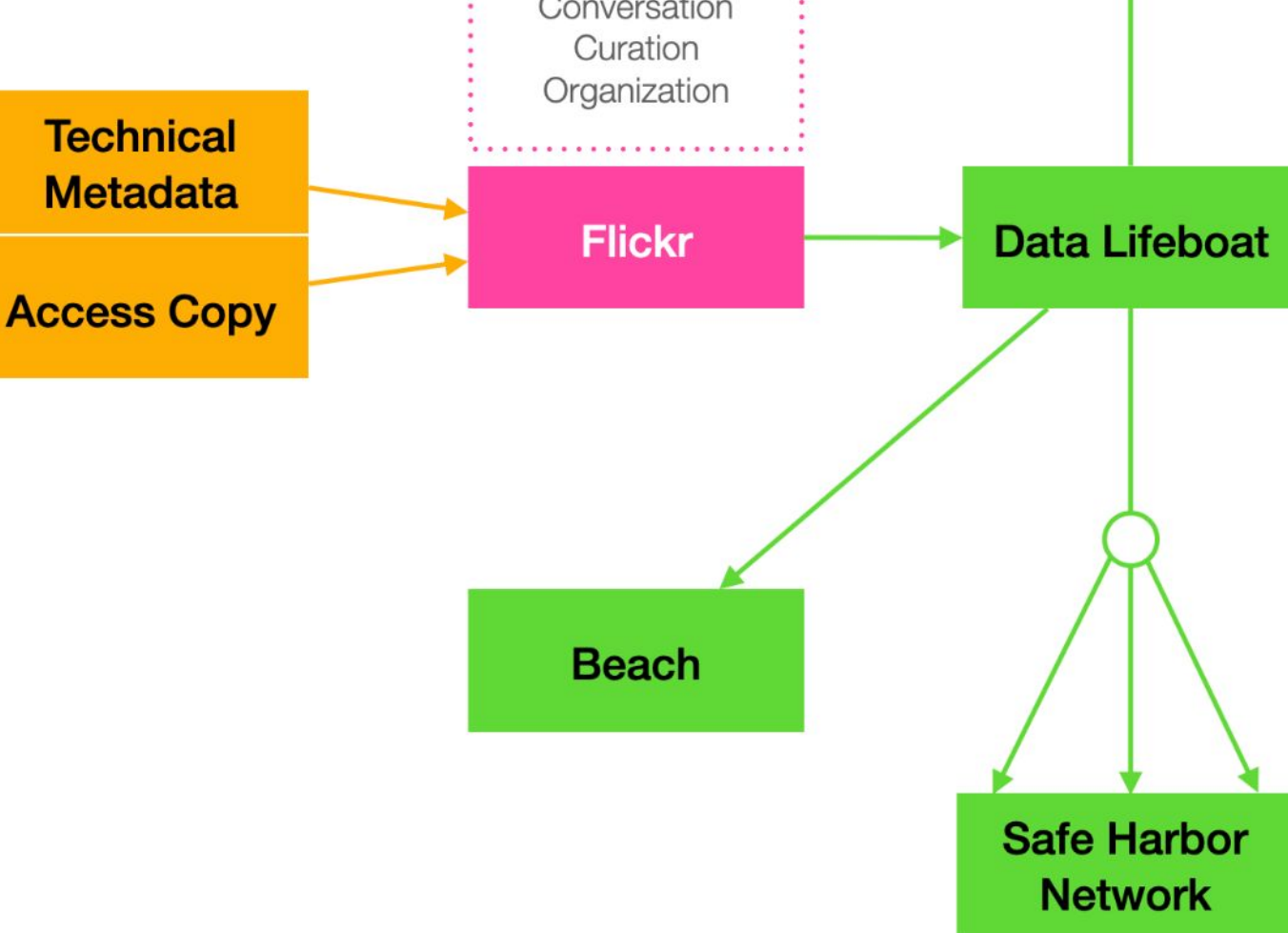
Data Lifeboat is proudly brought to you by the nonprofit [Flickr Foundation](#).
[Donate today!](#)

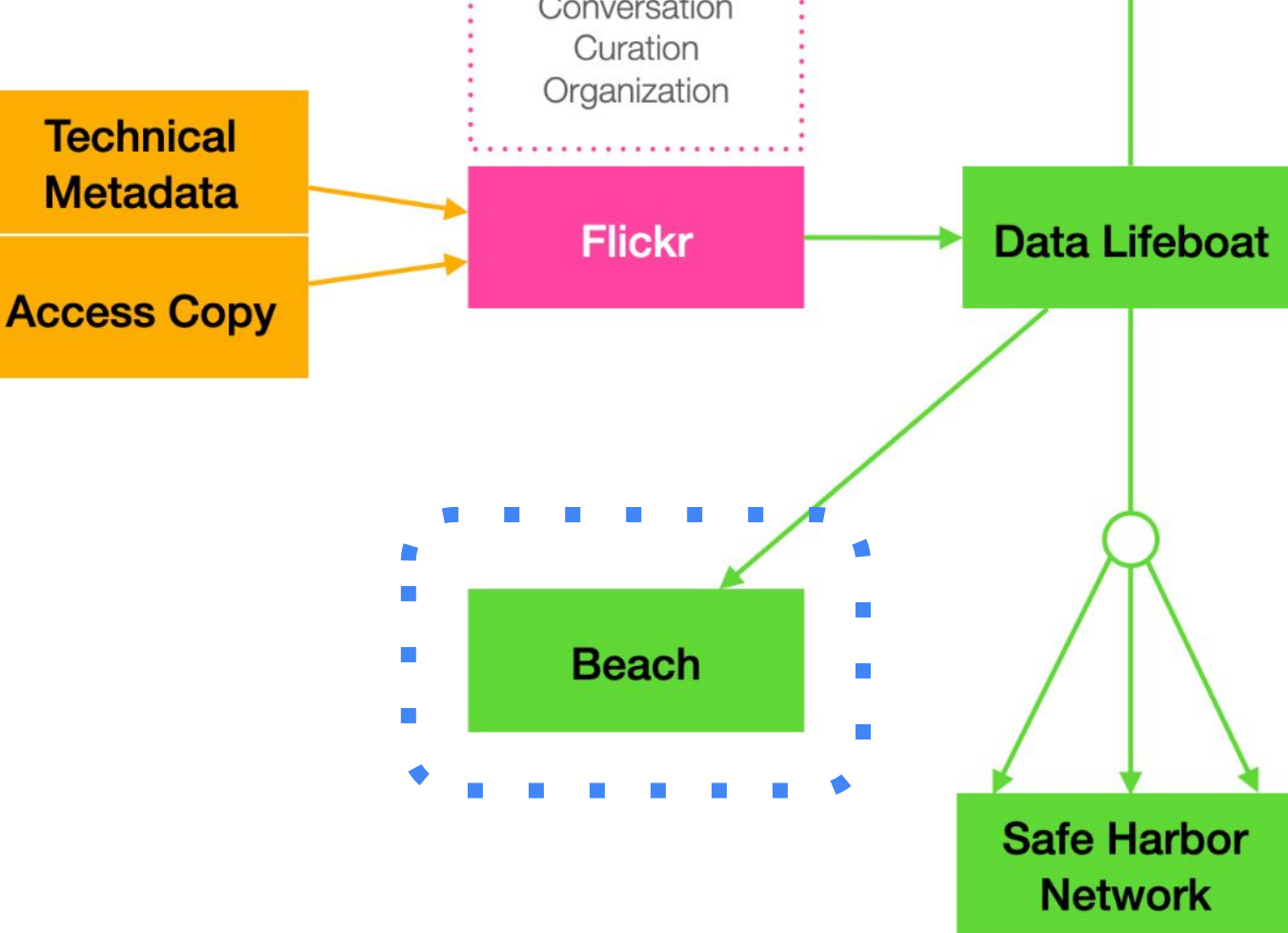
Funded by the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) and [Mellon Foundation](#).

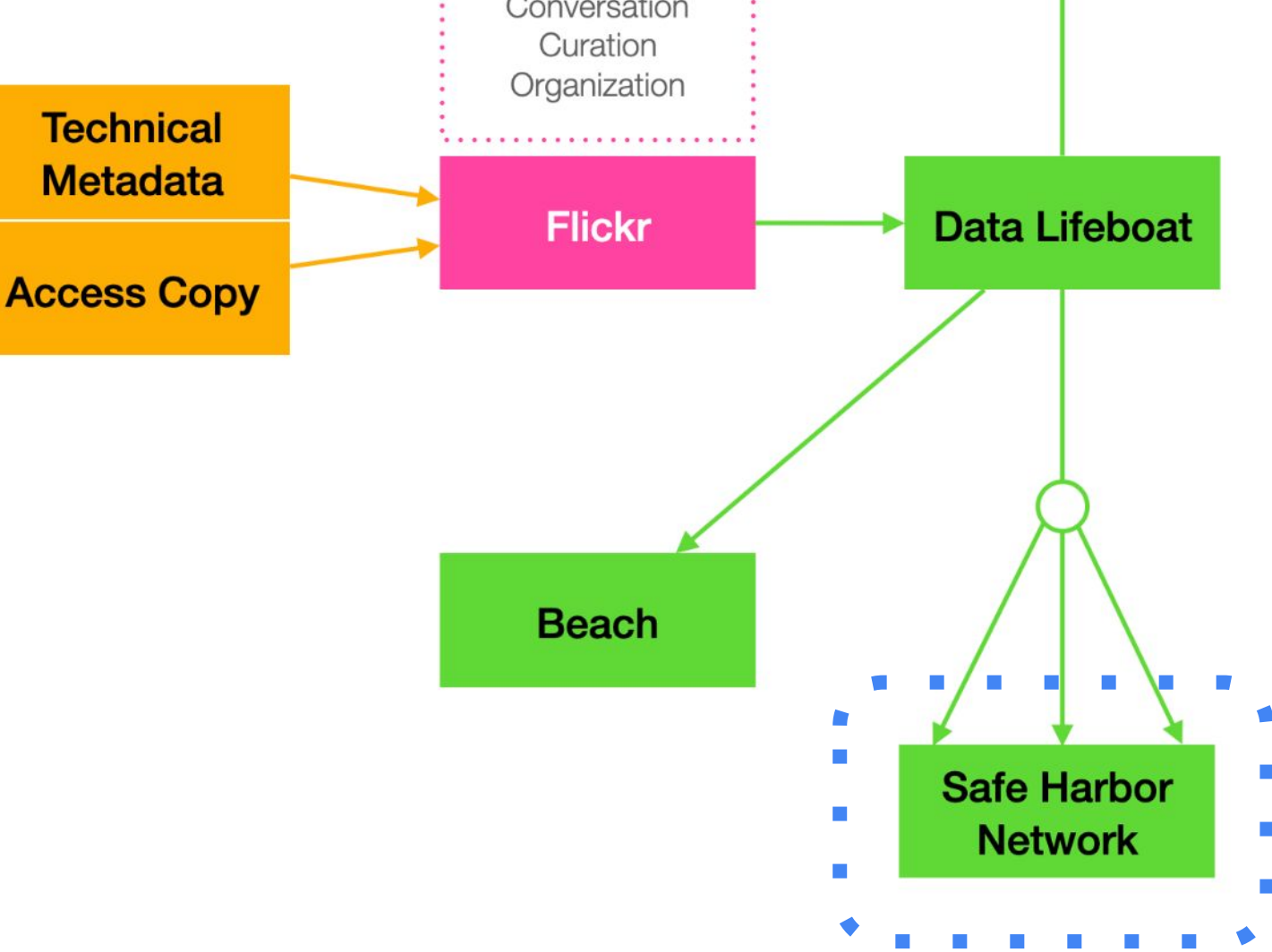
Photo by [Koekoets Vorster](#) on [Flickr](#)

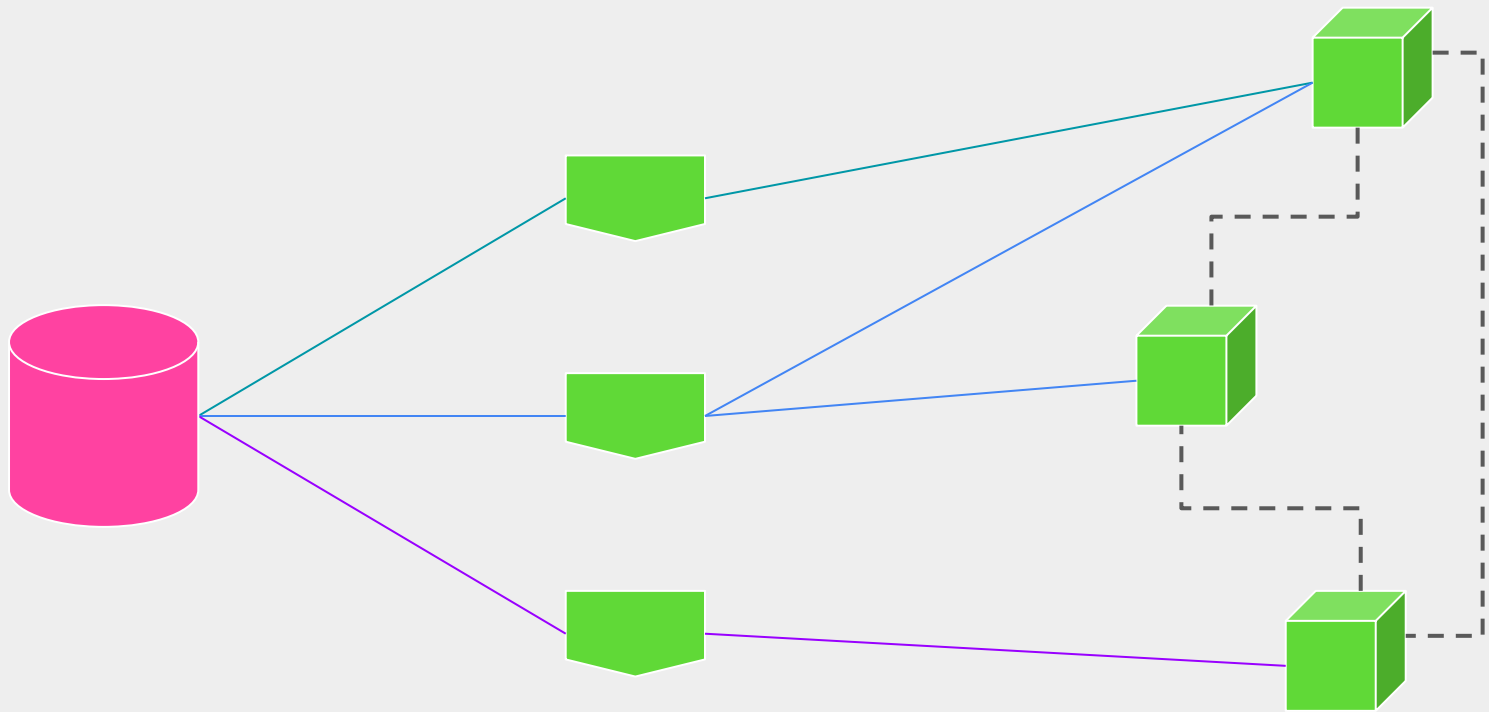


flickr.org









Data Lifeboats

Safe Harbor
Network

Private, permissioned

On archive.org!

Proto dock for Safe Harbor

archive.org/details/commons_smiles

DOWNLOAD OPTIONS

HTML	1 file
ITEM TILE	1 file
PNG	1 file
TORRENT	1 file
ZIP	1 file

SHOW ALL 8 Files
8 Original

INTERNET ARCHIVE WEB TEXTS VIDEO AUDIO SOFTWARE IMAGES FLICKR FOUNDATION UPLOAD Search

ABOUT BLOG PROJECTS HELP DONATE JOBS VOLUNTEER PEOPLE

DATA LIFEBOK

Commons Smiles

This Data Lifebok was created by George Oates on 6 March 2025.

This was always one of my favourite examples of a collection that emerged spontaneously from within the Commons photos, just by adding a tag.

This Data Lifebok was created as a demo of the Data Lifebok for Flickr Foundation staff.

Popular tags

woman libraryofcongress smile smiles

smiling 1940s women old

Statistics

9.2 MB 17 photos 891,451 views 236 comments 272 tags 465 contributors

Privacy Safety Licenses

0 public 0 safe 0 family/friends 0 moderate 0 private 0 restricted

All rights reserved
CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
CC BY-NC 2.0
CC BY-NC-ND 2.0
CC BY 2.0
CC BY-SA 2.0
CC BY-ND 2.0
Public domain

Date taken

1910 1944 1978 2014

This Data Lifebok was created by George Oates on 6 March 2025.
It was created with Data Lifebok 0.0.0.1 and the D3.js library 3.5.1.
This initiative is brought to you by the non-profit Flickr Foundation.

commons_smiles

Edit
Manage
History

Topics
Item Size

smiles flickr
12.5K

this item is currently being modified/updated by the task: book_op

Add to list
Favorite
Share
Flag

0 Views

**Are you curious about
collecting social media?**

Come say hi! 🖐️

Thank you.

George Oates
glo@flickr.org

