



United States Copyright Office

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Copyright Office Modernization Update

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What is Copyright Office Modernization?

Copyright Office modernization is the initiative to reimagine the entire Office by focusing on four key goals: (1) building a new enterprise information technology (IT) system that will be more flexible and easier to use, (2) modernizing supporting IT systems, (3) digitizing historic records, and (4) further ensuring that Office practices and processes are efficient and productive.

1 Enterprise Copyright System (ECS)

One of modernization's key goals is to develop a new enterprise IT system that integrates and improves all of the Office's technology systems, which we are calling the Enterprise Copyright System (ECS). Specifically, the ECS will include the Copyright Office's registration, recordation, public record, and licensing IT applications, among other functions. As the Library of Congress uses a centralized IT model, the Copyright Office relies on the Library's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) for technical services, including system and software development. The Copyright Office works closely with OCIO to provide the business information needed for OCIO to undertake the IT development work.

All applications will share the same ECS design—giving users a consistent interface and experience. Additionally, the ECS will support shared business services such as email, payment, authentication, and notifications. The ECS will also leverage the Library's financial management system.

The Copyright Office is focused on making sure the ECS is easy for users to navigate. This user-centered and flexible design, which takes into account streamlined business processes and policies, will provide better access to the Copyright Office's main services to the public.

1.1 Registration

The Copyright Office is creating a user-centric, flexible, and modern application to replace the existing registration application product, eCO. This includes developing both the public-facing functions and the internal Office examination review and correspondence functions. Doing this work will expand and improve our services, reduce errors and the need for correspondence, and improve the user experience across all Office business units.

Below is the status of our ongoing work on the registration application development:

- Fall 2017—Began user research for registration applicants.
- Summer 2019—Began user research for registration examiners, supervisors, and managers.
- Fall 2019—Conducted a foundational development effort on limited registration application fields.
- Summer 2020—Began development of a clickable Standard Application prototype and internal features.
- Fall 2020—Began preliminary internal testing of clickable Standard Application prototype.
- Winter 2020/21—Started moderated user testing of limited prototype release 1 of a reimagined registration Standard Application. From this, we will gather feedback and commence with improvements and a second round of user testing.
- Winter/Spring 2021—Continue iterative development of internal system development and registration workflows. In addition, a second development team is expected to join the team working on the functionality of the clickable prototype over the summer.
- Spring 2021—Plan for limited public prototype release 2 of a reimagined Standard Application based on results from prior testing.
- Second half of 2021—Continue iterative development to support work on the Standard Application as well as internal system development. Begin prototype development for supplemental registration and preregistration.



1.2 Recordation

We will replace the current paper-based, manual recordation process with an application that enables web-based submissions and creates an updated workspace for Office staff to review and validate submissions while using a modular design to enable efficient growth, development, and integration with other ECS applications. We anticipate that recordation application development will follow this timeline:

- April 2020—Initial [recordation](#) pilot released.
- Selected external users to review and assess the recordation pilot application.
- Modular design intended to integrate with future ECS applications.
- Limited functionality to test new ideas and concepts focused on allowing users to record English-only and unredacted documents related to copyright ownership that fall under section 205 of Title 17.
- 2020/2021—Continue to support users in the pilot system and expand pilot system functionality as part of continuous development.
- Added functionality to allow pilot users to record all document types related to copyright ownership that fall under section 205 of Title 17.
- Shifted focus to the design and development of a web-based process for the submission of notices of termination.
- Conducted user testing of a click-through notice of termination prototype to gather feedback and improve the design of the submission interface.
- Held regular checkpoints with pilot users to address questions and gather feedback.
- Incorporated user feedback into subsequent releases that will expand functionality in both the remitter portal and the recordation staff workspace.
- Invited additional waves of users to continuously increase usage.
- Fall 2021—Goal of having 20 percent of recordations submitted through the new recordation pilot application.

1.3 Online Public Records

We will replace the existing online Public Catalog with a significantly enhanced new portal. The new portal will provide enhanced search capabilities, improved public and staff interfaces, and access to more copyright records for registration and recordation data.

- Fall 2019—Began development of the [Copyright Public Records System](#).
- December 2020—Launched the Copyright Public Record System pilot with a new user interface, advanced search, facets, filters, and the ability to email records.
- 2021—Continue iterative development of both internal and external search functionality.

In addition, historical public records are being digitized, validated, and made available through our work under the Historical Public Records Program (see below).

1.4 Licensing

The Office is reviewing current licensing processes and assessing whether to make changes and develop new business requirements for automating internal workflow and integrating financial processes with the Library's financial management system. Potential work may include improvements to forms and submission methods. This process will use the following timeline:

- Fall 2020—Began development of user experience design and initial automated workflow.
- 2021—Continue iterative development of internal workflows.



2 Modernizing Supporting IT Systems

The ECS is just one part, albeit a large one, of the Office's modernization efforts. The Office is also modernizing additional IT services, such as developing a business intelligence tool, updating public information capabilities, and improving tracking of physical materials. Each is expected to integrate with the ECS.

2.1 Copyright Office Business Intelligence (BI)

Business intelligence is a capability that allows the Office to see, manipulate, and exploit the data that applications are generating. In July 2020, the Office deployed an internal business intelligence (BI) capability that aids in analyzing Office functions. Internal training and use of the BI tool are underway. Future internal use of the BI tool will support improved dashboards and reporting from a common, trusted data repository that will support various Copyright Office divisions in their decision-making and service analyses.

2.2 Public Information Office

The Office's Public Information Office (PIO) provides support to the public, answering public inquiries on copyright and Office services. In 2021, the Office engaged experts to conduct a gap analysis and facilitate modernization roadmap planning. Anticipated activities will focus on improved analytics and streamlined responses, including a high-performing and high-quality, multi-channel customer contact center to support the copyright community and improve communications between Office staff and the public.

2.3 Asset Tracking/Warehouse

The Copyright Office moved into its new storage facility in November 2020. To support tracking deposits, the Office will procure a warehouse management system (WMS) in fiscal 2021 that optimizes warehouse operations and functionality, promoting timely and reliable services. The implementation and incorporation into the ECS will take place in fiscal 2022 and fiscal 2023.

3 Historical Public Records

As part of our commitment to preserving and expanding online access to public records, we are undertaking efforts to digitize our historical public records from 1870 through 1977. This includes the Copyright Card Catalog, record books, and the Catalogs of Copyright Entries (CCE). Digitization is the critical first step, to be followed by the perfection of metadata to enhance searchability.

- Spring 2018—Launched Virtual Card Catalog (VCC) proof of concept release 1.
- Summer 2018—Launched VCC proof of concept release 2, enhancing search functionality.
- Spring 2019—Launched [VCC proof of concept release 3](#), completing the digitization and accessibility of more than 41 million card images from the Copyright Card Catalog, reflecting the complete Copyright Card Catalog collection. This release means that the complete Copyright Card Catalog collection from 1870 through 1977 is available to browse using filters that limit the number of drawer results.
- 2021—The following efforts are underway:
 - The 26,278 hard copy record books are being digitized. This is the first step to making them available online for public use. The collection contains works as diverse as books, photographs, musical compositions, sound records, motion pictures, software, and more.
 - The Copyright Card Catalog records are undergoing data capture, cleanup, and enrichment of specific metadata. The metadata that was captured as part of the optical character recognition process needs to be data perfected and corrected to allow accurate online search capability for the public.
 - A data-mapping contract is underway to determine the best way to link all historical public records together for online presentation. The Copyright Office is undertaking this effort to create a business glossary, data dictionary, and mapping schema to define the required metadata to allow the historical public records to be searched online as part of the Office's new online Copyright Public Records System that is under development.



4 Non-IT Office Modernization

Modernization involves updates to Office processes, organization, and culture.

4.1 Process

The Office will integrate and improve its business processes, resulting in public services that are more user-friendly, flexible, and better able to accommodate future growth. This will include reviewing current business processes and staff responsibilities and recommending new methods and processes to reduce operational costs and improve business efficiencies via business process reengineering (BPR). In 2020, we completed a yearlong contract, where we identified and evaluated sixty-six distinct processes and identified possible solutions. We are now moving forward to prioritize workflow issues and apply solutions. This effort will be continuous throughout the ECS development cycle and will involve developing requirements for automated workflows and processes as needed and analyzing how these workflows interact with one another across divisions.

4.2 Organization

With all the various modernization work streams, it is important that the Office find ways to optimize its organizational structure and align personnel resources with the emerging needs resulting from implementing the ECS and revised processes. To consider the organization and people aspects of modernization, the Office engaged the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) Human Resources Solutions to conduct three engagements. First, to consider the organizational and personnel aspects of modernization, OPM performed an organizational analysis and workload assessment in 2019. Second, as part of follow-on work related to position redesign, OPM conducted classification reviews of supervisory and managerial positions in 2020. Third, in 2021, OPM is assisting the Office with developing position competencies as part of the Office's career development and succession planning efforts.

4.3 Culture

Organizational change management (OCM) at the Copyright Office involves the development of key change management processes and documents, staff training on change management practices, strategic coaching on structuring and leading a complex business transformation, and the implementation of complementary tools to adapt to change. During fiscal 2020, extensive training was completed by a set of "changemakers"—Office staff who will support the practices and culture of continuous improvement. All supervisors in the Office went through a tailored training on the same topics. For fiscal 2021 and the future, our goal is to continue to build and expand our internal capability using OCM tools to support continuous improvements in Office operations, communication, and culture. This effort is ongoing as OCM subject matter experts have begun supporting modernization projects and additional Office initiatives.