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Data-driven call to action for the archival proactive custodianship from AI-generated images publics' perceptions

Datenbasierter Handlungsaufruf zur proaktiven archivarischen Treuhänderschaft für KI-generierte Bilder auf Basis der Wahrnehmung durch die Öffentlichkeit

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Abstract

Problem: This study addresses the challenges of proactive archival custodianship regarding synthetic media, focusing on public perceptions of AI-generated images representing Brazilian Pomeranian Language intangble assets as part of the Germanic cultural heritage in Brazil. It examines how public feedback on AI outputs can inform archival practices from the moment of record creation in an intercultural context. **Objective:** The objective is to evaluate proactive archival custodianship in a Portuguese-dominant country (Brazil) by analyzing community perceptions and attitudes toward AI generated images prompted by Pomeranian descendants, positioning archivists as socio-technical mediators. **Method:** Adopting a qualitative, exploratory approach, the study collected data through a non-probabilistic snowball sampling strategy (N=75) via web to capture public attitudes toward the authenticity, utility, and preservation of AI-generated images. **Results:** Key findings demonstrate strong community support for institutional intervention: 82.7% of respondents advocate

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for creating official records in Brazilian Pomeranian Language, while 82.4% identify Generative AI as a systemic risk for overwriting or distorting authentic Pomeranian intangible heritage. Finally, 78.7% recognize AI-generated images as valid objects for preservation, emphasizing their role in educational (77.3%) and cultural (74.7%) transmission. **Conclusion:** The findings indicate a paradigm shift toward participatory archival mediation. Rather than acting as passive repositories, archival institutions must expand intellectual control beyond physical media to encompass prompt logic, paradata, and community-guided contexts, provided that new record types empower Brazilian Pomeranian Language speakers while safeguarding oral heritage against AI use issues in record creation and algorithmic erasure.

keywords: Recordkeeping, Intelligent information technology, Visual electronic media, Cultural documentation, Cross-cultural archival competencies, Gen AI Digital Globalization Risks.

Zusammenfassung

Problemstellung: Diese Studie untersucht die Herausforderungen proaktiver Archivierung (Proactive Custodianship) im Umgang mit synthetischen Medien. Der Fokus liegt auf der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung KI-generierter Bilder, die im Kontext des germanischen Kulturerbes in Brasilien immaterielle Kulturgüter der brasilianisch-pommerischen Sprache repräsentieren. Es wird analysiert, wie öffentliches Feedback zu KI-Erzeugnissen archivische Praxisprozesse von der Aufzeichnung (Record Creation) im interkulturellen Kontext steuern kann. **Zielsetzung:** Ziel ist die Evaluierung proaktiver archivischer Verwahrung innerhalb eines portugiesischsprachig dominierten Landes (Brasilien) durch die Analyse von Community-Wahrnehmungen und -Einstellungen gegenüber KI-generierten Bildern, die von Nachkommen pommerischer Einwanderer mittels Prompts erzeugt wurden. Dabei werden Archivarinnen und Archivare als soziotechnische Vermittlerinnen und Vermittler positioniert. **Methodik:** Die Untersuchung folgt einem qualitativen, explorativen Ansatz. Die Datenerhebung erfolgte über eine nicht wahrscheinlichkeitsbasierte Schneeball-Stichprobe (N=75) via Instagram, um gesellschaftliche Einstellungen zu Authentizität, Nutzen und Archivierung KI-generierter Bilder zu erfassen. **Ergebnisse:** Die zentralen Ergebnisse belegen eine starke Unterstützung für institutionelles Handeln im Gemeinwesen: 82,7 % der Befragten befürworten die Erstellung offizieller Aufzeichnungen (Official Records) in brasilianisch-pommerischer Sprache, während 82,4 % generative KI als systemisches Risiko für die Überschreibung oder Verzerrung des authentischen immateriellen pommerischen Erbes identifizieren. Zudem erkennen 78,7 % KI-generierte Bilder als archivfähige Objekte an und betonen deren Rolle bei der pädagogischen (77,3 %) und kulturellen (74,7 %) Weitergabe. **Fazit:** Die Ergebnisse weisen auf einen Paradigmenwechsel hin zu einer partizipativen Archivvermittlung. Anstatt lediglich als passive Verwahrstellen zu agieren, müssen Gedächtnisinstitutionen die intellektuelle Erschließung (Intellectual Control) über physische Trägermedien hinaus auf Prompt-Logiken, Paradaten und community-geführte Kontexte ausdehnen. Dadurch wird sichergestellt, dass neue Schriftguttypen Sprechende der brasilianisch-pommerischen Sprache einbeziehen, während das mündliche Kulturerbe vor

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Problemen beim Einsatz von KI bei der Aktenerstellung und vor algorithmischer Auslöschung geschützt wird.

Schlüsselwörter: Schriftgutverwaltung (Recordkeeping); Intelligente Informationstechnologie; Visuelle elektronische Medien; Kulturelle Dokumentation; Interkulturelle Archivkompetenz; Risiken generativer KI in der digitalen Globalisierung.

1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of the emergent "document society" (Buckland, 2017, p.17) in Information Science remains relevant to understanding information practices, wherein records function as material and socio-technical artifacts negotiated within complex social relations. Within Buckland's functional framework, a record is defined not just as a physical medium or local storage conditions, but as a form of information with socio-culturally relative trustworthiness (Buckland, 2017). If we are living in an emergently documented society, then scientific knowledge about it is sine qua non for understanding the real world. In the literature, we did not find research about the perception of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) and AI generated images used to document intangible culture related to migrant descendants and their archival proactive custodianship.

In tandem, archival theory has undergone a paradigm shift from passive custodial models toward participatory, community centered approaches. As Cook (2020) highlighted, archival institutions are increasingly called to become a shared participatory process. This theoretical evolution aligns with Gibbons' (2019) Mediated Recordkeeping Model (MRM), which positions recordkeeping as a culturally mediated process negotiating the space between personal digital interactions and collective recordkeeping pluralization.

Despite these conceptual advancements, the proliferation of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) presents challenges to digital recordkeeping and preservation. While Gen AI platforms enable communities to use intelligent systems to produce visual representations of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), these commercial tools are fundamentally ill-equipped to ensure essential requirements, such as provenance, authenticity, integrity, reliability, trustworthy and long-term digital preservation (Duranti, 2022).

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A case is found among Brazilian Pomeranian Language (BPL) speakers, as part of Brazilians of Germanic Heritage (BGH) residing predominantly in Brazil (Küster, 2025; Morello & Silveira, 2023). In Brazil, the linguistic cultural center for the BPL is the municipality of Santa Maria de Jetibá, located in the state of Espírito Santo, as documented in the inventory by Morello and Silveira (2023). In this municipality, local legislation established the Pomeranian Education Education Program (PROEPO) to integrate the BPL into the school curriculum, as highlighted by Foerste, Peres, and Küster (2016).

Within Espírito Santo, other linguistic-culturally significant municipalities include Santa Leopoldina, Vila Pavão, Laranja da Terra, Pancas, Domingos Martins and others (Morello & Silveira, 2023). Furthermore, active speech communities are found in Pomerode (Santa Catarina), the Serra dos Tapes microregion in Rio Grande do Sul (encompassing Pelotas, São Lourenço do Sul, Arroio do Padre, and Morro Redondo) as pointed out in Morello and Silveira (2023). In these States, BGH constitute the second largest European heritage group immediately following the Italian descendants. Historically subject to state-driven linguistic assimilation and institutional neglect, BPL traditions have remained overwhelmingly oral, resulting in a severe absence of official written and visual records within state archival repositories. Today, BPL descendants increasingly deploy Gen AI image generators on social platforms to rewrite pieces of visual narratives of their heritage, replacing authentic memory or facing permanent data loss.

The aim is to understand archival proactive custodianship in an intercultural context: BPL speakers as BGH in a Portuguese language country (Brazil), from the anonymous opinions and perception-based feedback derived from AI-generated images prompted by BPL descendants. This object converges to understand better the archival proactive custodianship from a diverse point of view and considering the emergent activity of documentation of intangible culture (IC) heritage by non-experts using Gen AI in documenting BGH cultural assets within the context of public information.

While systematic literature searches in Scopus and Web of Science reveal growing professionals on AI applications in archives (e.g., Modiba, 2023) and general public perceptions

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of AI (Irsic & Gjergjek, 2024), a significant empirical gap persists regarding public perception of GenAI-generated visual records of intangible culture and their implications for proactive archival custodianship.

This is a relevant topic because this study operates on the frontier of the public recognition of AI-generated documents of IC prompted by BGH descendants in a context of a heritage loss scenario. In particular, the State neglected the BGH IC and insisted on decades of evasion, denying the right to create the first Brazilian Pomeranian Language (BLP). Written or visual records do not appear at all in official documentation in archives or other public administration structures. Thus, we seek to produce knowledge to be used in favor of granting accessibility and visibility to the BGH IC sub-group, particularly BPL.

Therefore, this generational change poses a risk to the digital documentary heritage associated with recording IC heritage activities in cultural and education sectors of public administration. If BGH are considered as 'producers' (Duranti, 2015) of documents generated by Gen AI, and if proactive custodianship can ensure this digital heritage is correctly created, yielding its intended benefits for researchers, the public, and the communities themselves, the question arises: Why don't they hear the voice of people? This leads to the following investigable question: What are the attitudes towards AI generated images prompted by BPL descendants? Can these images be utilized, and can they inform or disseminate knowledge to provide a better understanding about the archival proactive custodianship in an intercultural context (BPL speakers in a Portuguese-language country)?

To address this gap, this study examines the anonymous publics' perceptions regarding GenAI-generated visual artifacts and analyses whether these can inform and operationalize proactive archival custodianship in intercultural settings. Specifically, this research addresses the following question: How do publics' perceptions and attitudes toward GenAI generated images inform the expansion of intellectual control and proactive custodial mediation in an intercultural context, such as BPL as BGH culture in a Portuguese language country (Brazil)? By framing the archivist as a socio-technical mediator, this paper argues for an expansion of

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archival intellectual control to bridge algorithmic production, community identity, and formal recordkeeping requirements.

2 PROACTIVE CUSTODIANSHIP IN THE AI AGE

Considering the increasingly AI digitized landscape in nowadays, the boundaries of record management and archival science are shifting in direction to information science as pointed out by Gibbons (2019) on the Mediated Recordkeeping Model (MRM) elaborated to understand the emergent community archives that persist in mediation between the digital platform user (personal memory) and the pluralization of the collective recordkeeping that happening in an extra-official archival dimension during the process of mediation (Gibbons, 2019).

In this case, understanding user perception is a necessary part of the mediation process, which includes comprehension of the respective mediated object (a thing) that can be produced, collected, organized, classified, described, stored, retrieved, processed, transmitted, treated, preserved, and described, thus serving as the material for various fundamental endeavors in society.

Buckland (2017) and Gibbons (2019) provide a perspective that puts users, information, and culture at the center of a debate about the records creation, respecting the evidential status of archival documents. Given that, we assume public opinion as the starting point of our study. It's relevant to remember that in archival studies and information science, public perception of AI is as important as expert opinion.

The contemporary socio-technical landscape is increasingly defined as an emergent "document society" (Buckland, 2017), where records are not merely stored objects but material artifacts produced to negotiate social relationships. Within this framework, the record's value is derived from its functional logic as an evidential device, an instrument of trust used to navigate bureaucratic or administrative systems, rather than its physical format. Complementing this is the MRM, which positions archival science as a discipline of mediation between digital platform users and the collective pluralization of records (Gibbons, 2019).

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Modiba (2023) studies the risks and benefits of AI in digital records and shows key benefits for technical areas such as faster capturing and classifying of records, better handling of large document volumes, improved integration with existing systems, and enhanced support for indexers and metadata sets. Here, for the very first time in the literature, we are seeking to fill a gap with our research that focuses on how society (public opinion) views AI (Irsic and Gjergjek, 2024) and 'what' the data can contribute in terms of new understandings for proactive archival custodianship.

Proactive archival science acknowledges that the archivist acts as a cultural mediator who can intentionally shift institutional focus toward the inclusion of community-held knowledge systems and the pluralization of the primary information sources from history, public administration, or other uses.

The contemporary socio-technical landscape is increasingly characterized by an emergent "document society" (Buckland, 2017), wherein records serve not merely as passive, static media, but as material and functional artifacts negotiated within dynamic social relations. Within this framework, a record derives its evidential value from its functional role as an instrument of institutional or socio-cultural trust rather than its physical or digital format (Buckland, 2017).

As Generative AI transforms digital creation, the boundaries of records management and archival science are increasingly shifting toward broader information science paradigms, particularly the concept of mediation as explored by Deschamps (2019). This evolution is well captured by Gibbons' (2019) MRM, which frames community archiving as a continuous mediation between personal digital interactions on social platforms and the pluralization of collective records. Within MRM, understanding user perception becomes an essential component of analyzing how digital records, including AI-generated images, are produced, contextualized, and integrated into broader cultural memory structures.

By centering users, information, and culture within record creation, scholars like Buckland (2017) and Gibbons (2019) challenge traditional custodial limitations. While existing archival scholarship on AI primarily examines institutional risks and computational efficiencies, such

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as automated classification, metadata extraction, and ingest acceleration (Modiba, 2023), little empirical attention has been given to public perceptions of AI in community heritage contexts (Irsic & Gjergjek, 2024). Examining public attitudes provides empirical data to inform how archival proactive custodianship can adapt to algorithmic creation.

Proactive archival custodianship reframes the archivist as an active cultural mediator who intentionally expands institutional boundaries to incorporate community-held knowledge systems and to pluralize archival information sources. From Buzaglo (2002), it's possible to argue that archival intellectual control must evolve from asking "What is this object?" to examine "What is the cultural logic behind its keeping?" By relying on traditional archival hierarchies like fixed 'series' and 'items', official repositories often marginalize oral traditions and render them invisible(Schellnack-Kelly, 2024).

Expanding intellectual control requires archives to bridge the gap between community orality and formal "recordness," providing that cultural values, symbols, and community representations are embedded directly into recordkeeping structures, metadata, and paradata analyzed by Cameron, Franks and Hamidzadeh (2023).

3 METHOD

Using a qualitative, exploratory approach, this study examines proactive archival custodianship based on anonymous opinion data managed according to Article 1 of Resolution No. 510 (Conselho Nacional de Saúde, 2016), which exempts anonymous public opinion research from ethical committee review. Given that the study is similar in its methodological approach to work by Dreisiebner, März and Mandl (2021) because it relies entirely on anonymous public opinion data and does not collect identifiable personal or sensitive human data, it operates in accordance with national ethical guidelines for social and human sciences research (Conselho Nacional de Saúde, 2016, Art. 1). Sustaining a dialogue, the research engaged directly with material culture via in situ investigations in Santa Maria de Jetibá to validate the authentic representation of BPL heritage. Documentary observations were conducted at 'Pommer Kultur,' Waidadt Hüus, municipal offices, the Municipal Chamber, and local house-museums.

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Data collection and organization were conducted between July and October 2025 using a non-probabilistic exponential snowball sampling technique. The research was disseminated digitally via Instagram using a profile (tai.vile) created specifically for this study, targeting users who have similar characteristics represented by Föeger (2025) in the AI image catalog. Dissemination was carried out through non-intrusive interactive posts ("Stories") featuring link stickers that directed users to a semi-structured online questionnaire hosted on Google Forms, supplemented by direct messaging sent to cultural heritage practitioners and advocates and initial seeds. Participants were encouraged to share the untracked survey link within their respective networks. To guarantee complete respondent anonymity and direct focus strictly toward perceptual and attitudinal dimensions regarding archival custodianship and Generative AI, socio-demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, income, and precise geolocation) were intentionally omitted from the instrument design. Consequently, response data were collected via an external platform without gathering user IDs or IP addresses. While snowball sampling inherently limits population generalizability due to network homophily, it enabled rapid cross-referral dissemination across the target digital community, yielding a total of N = 75 valid responses (100% completion rate). The target population consisted of individuals engaged with BPL/BGH cultural heritage. The data collection instrument comprised nine thematic blocks combining 5-point bipolar Likert-type scales, categorical multiple selection items, and open-ended text fields (though no qualitative responses were submitted for the open-ended prompts). The instrument structure and underlying objectives are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 - Structure of data collection instrument.

Question ID.	Theme	Question type	Main purpose
Q1	Profile of the respondent	Multiple selection (14 options)	Understand how respondents relate to BPL culture and identity
Q2	Authenticity	Five-point bipolar scale	Estimate attitude about the images as authentic and credibly representations of BPL culture

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Question ID.	Theme	Question type	Main purpose
Q3	Cultural recognition in Gen AI images	Five-point bipolar scale	Estimate whether respondents recognize intangible heritage in the images
Q4	Benefits and uses of in Gen AI images	Multiple selection (12 options)	Identify perceived uses and values of AI-generated images
Q5	Preservation value of in Gen AI images	Five-point bipolar scale	Estimate support for preserving AI generated cultural documents (opinion about if should the images be preserved for future generations)
Q6	Archive opportunities	Multiple selection (13 options)	Identify possible roles for public archives and cultural mediation
Q7	Digital preservation uncertainty	Five-point bipolar scale	Estimate awareness of reliability and durability problems (perception of understanding that the reliability and long-term preservation of digital documents created by generative AI are uncertain)
Q8	Future interest and participation	Multiple selection (9 options)	Identify what respondents would like to learn or do next
Q9	Cultural risk and AI literacy	Five-point bipolar scale	Estimate awareness of cultural erasure risks and the need to learn AI (Perception about recognition of the importance of learning how to use AI to protect BPL cultural heritage in the age of AI)

Source: Authors (2026).

The five-point bipolar scale were structured as follows, adhering to the sequence presented in Table 1: Q2 (Representativeness): 1 = Not at all representative to 5 = Extremely representative; Q3 (Recognizability): 1 =Unrecognizable to 5 = Easy to recognize; Q5 (Agreement): 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree; Q7 (Comprehension): 1 = I don't get it at all to 5 = Totally understood; Q9 (Recognition): 1 = I don't recognize to 5 = I totally recognize. In accordance with journal space limitations, all 48 options from the multiple-selection questions are presented here in an abbreviated format.

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To minimize confirmation bias, the questionnaire incorporated controversial historical and cultural imagery (e.g., traditional Pomeranian wedding rituals and the Hochzeitsbitter, as documented by Rölke, 2016). The visual stimuli used in Q2 (15 images), Q3 (16 images), and Q5 (1 image) were selected from a digital-born catalog of Gen AI images prompted by a BPL descendant (Föeger, 2025), selected according to Schellenberg's (2003) criteria for archival cultural and informational value.

Quantitative data derived from closed-ended questions and Likert scales were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically absolute frequencies (n) and relative percentages (%) based on the fixed sample size (N=75). In alignment with qualitative exploratory frameworks (Morse, 2003), numerical results are presented to provide contextual baseline support for interpreting qualitative attitudes rather than to claim statistical generalizability. Qualitative feedback from open-ended text fields was examined using thematic content analysis to contextualize quantitative trends within broader theories of proactive custodianship and mediation (Duff, 2010; Deschamps, 2019).

Data was also collected in physical spaces using snowball sampling (e.g., displaying QR codes linked to online forms in Santa Maria de Jetibá and in-person recruitment). Following methodological adjustments, the project will return to its original research objectives once public perceptions are better understood. Additionally, AI-assisted tools (Julius IA) were used to generate Python scripts for automated data processing, optimizing computational efficiency.

Large Language Models (Google Gemini) were employed as real-time tools to assist with English translation, style harmonization, text refinement, structural organization, to iterate on sections clarity, organize methodological frameworks, standardizing citation data, formatting references, optimization, and supporting text improvements.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The empirical sample (N=75) reflects a population deeply connected to BPL as Germanic-Brazilian Heritage (GBH). The majority of respondents (70.7%) self-identified as BPL

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speakers, and BPL is a complex case that preserves some of the Pomeranian language, as pointed out by Hartwig (2020). According to Küster (2025), BPL is a variation of the Plattdüütsch, and BGH is a large category that includes descendants from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, and Liechtenstein who are BPL speakers or not. Establishing this profile is essential for interpreting the empirical findings within their proper socio-historical context. Historically, the presence of them is related to historical records dating back to 1824 (Janke, 2019), that the majority of Germanic migrants to Brazil come from Prussia via North Germany, including the old Pomerania region. After Italians, Germanics forms the most significant immigrant group in Brazil and given this majority, the possible impact in the data collected reflects the population that had their attention captured by the call to the link for this anonymous opinion research. We assume that most were probably BGH or people who self-identify with this group (Morello e Silveira, 2023). Even though there is a predominance of respondents who identify with a Germanic identity, there is diversity in attitudes toward differences between actions like interventions or archival mediation (Duff, 2010), record standardization practices, and the perceived benefits of Gen AI (Table 2).

Table 2 - Public Perceptions of Potential AI Opportunities and Applications (N=75).

AI Opportunity Category	Responses (N=75)	Percentage (%)
Creation of official records in BPL	62	82.7%
Development of infoproducts	49	65.3%
Standardization records creation	42	56.0%
Income generation through using AI	37	49.3%
Participation in cultural projects using AI	27	36.0%

Source: Authors (2025).

It is a key finding that the overwhelming majority of respondents (82.7%) favored the creation of official written records in BPL. This result places public archives and archival institutions directly at the center of community demand. These results demonstrate that respondents expect public archives to function beyond passive storage facilities. Instead, there is a clear demand to transition toward participatory, community-centered archival models, as

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articulated in Gibbons' (2009, 2015, 2019) mediated model. This is an unexpected result, because the claim to be recorded is not usual or popular, and this is a topic that usually is considered as technical. The positive attitude towards establishing official records of BPL (82.7%) signals a clear clamor for archival proactive custodianship, particularly to establish action lines to the creation of written records that encompasses the linguistic universe and the IC. This BGH and BPL archive is using AI and digital technologies. It is a digital archive that is linked with cultural information, and since Buckland (2017) defines information-as-thing by its culturally dependent function (being used as evidence), the role of archival proactive custodianship is to ensure that information from archives is maintained in a continuum regardless of where the data physically sits. This approach extends beyond passive custody, incorporating the technical and professional application of CONARQ Resolution No. 38 (Brasil, 2013) directly into record creation practices. Doing so ensures the development of a digital archive tailored to BPL speakers and BGH heritage through the implementation of creator guidelines within an intercultural environment. If archival institutions function as mediation spaces and archivists act as proactive facilitators (Cook, 2020) or mediators, archival intervention must begin at the point of record creation. In the digital age, a core scope of these activities involves the integration of Gen AI, which directly impacts fundamental archival qualities such as integrity and authenticity. This premise applies directly when documenting BGH intangible cultural activities using AI within public cultural and educational administration. Another significant finding is that 65.3% of respondents favored the development of information products, specifically a Dictionary.

As Cook (2020, p. 465) notes, this requires "...moving away from being elite experts behind institutional walls to becoming mentors and facilitators who work in the community to encourage archiving as a participatory process shared with many in society..." This quote is particularly relevant when documenting BGH intangible culture (IC) using AI within municipal administrative, cultural, and educational offices. This task is complex because the intercultural context here is not only a territorial one. The creation of BPL written records needs to consider the post-territorial era, where the Duchy of Pomerania (1121–1637) and the Province of Pomerania (1815-1945), as studied by Schleinert (2022), no longerexist as a

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sovereign state; therefore, the archive itself becomes an official legitimate territory where this identity can be preserved, mediated, and negotiated.

Public archives could, in this direction, guide the 'how to create' authentic records, including the standard to use Gen AI in record creation. The implication for proactive custody is definitive: the archivist must be transparent about the 'naming' (description) that is cultural as language, according to Buckland (2017). Based on this author, the selection of terms and taxonomic categories must explicitly acknowledge what they exclude and how they are interpreted by the community. In descriptive terms, the archivist must be accessible and easy to understand. The umbrella of the "Germanic" category in the BGH shows why it is relevant to use this term to include individuals with Austrian, Swiss, Luxembourgish, Dutch, and Prussian-Brazilian origins, based on the fact that each contributing dialectal diversity that impact IC associated with BPL speakers. By transparently documenting the logic behind these classifications, the archivist qualifies the archive into a new design space of cultural and socio-technical mediation. Therefore, such proactive custody is relevant to reach users and audiences who, for socio-historical and linguistic reasons, remain alienated from traditional and official archival systems. In this context, where"Pomerania" has ceased to exist as a political-administrative entity, the selection of archival identifiers transcends mere labeling; it must become a space for collaborative description and participatory metadata design. This is because classification is not a subsequent administrative reflection, but an intrinsic component of the record's meaning for BHG and BPL speakers.

This proactive approach engages communities who have historically been alienated from formal archival systems. Since "Pomerania" no longer exists as a political entity, metadata design and descriptive choices transcend juridical administrative labeling, becoming participatory spaces for collaborative cultural description.

Another unexpected finding appears in Table 3: the relatively low interest in NFTs and distributed ledger technologies (34.7%), which may stem from a lack of technical familiarity or infrastructure. When asked about future engagement, participants prioritized active learning and community-centered research over speculative financial applications.

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Table 3 - Future Engagement Intentions of Participants (N=75).

Intent Category	Responses (N=75)	Percentage (%)
Understanding more about AI	53	70.7%
Understand the relation between AI and archives	46	61.3%
Test the use and possible benefits of AI	38	50.7%
Learn to document the IC	37	49.3%
Participate in a collaborative research	28	37.3%
Experiment creating NFT art	26	34.7%

Source: Authors (2025).

Although cryptographic hashes and blockchain architectures can support provenance verification and chain-of-custody tracking from record genesis, participants prioritized foundational digital literacy. The high interest in understanding AI (70.7%) and exploring its intersection with archival systems (61.3%) indicates that archival proactive custodianship must incorporate AI and information literacy into its scope of mediation (Deschamps, 2019). Developing user-friendly guidelines or manuals for AI-assisted record creation represents a form of artifactual mediation. Information production about the documents is a form of archival mediation (Duff, 2010); a practical manifestation of proactive custodianship that addresses potential recordkeeping defects before records enter passive storage repositories. Regarding the evaluation of Gen AI visual records generated to document BGH intangible culture, respondents ranked the potential uses and values of intelligent systems across several functional and cultural categories (Table 4).

Table 4 - Recognized potential benefits, uses, and values of Gen AI visual records (N=75).

Benefit/Use-Value Category of Visual Digital Records AI Generated	Responses (N=75)	Percentage (%)
Educational use	58	77.3%
Use for cultural transmission	56	74.7%
Communicative use	51	68.0%
Value for cultural memory	51	68.0%
Cultural uses	47	62.7%

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Value for knowledge	46	61.3%
Cultural values	46	61.3%
Propaganda and marketing use	38	50.7%
Artistic or aesthetic value	38	50.7%
Use for digital leisure	36	48.0%
Commercial use	23	30.7%

Source: Authors (2025).

The term "cultural values" draws on Meneses' (2009) framework, which identifies aesthetic, ethical, emotional, pragmatic, and cognitive values attributed to cultural assets. Meneses notes that while the attribution and enjoyment of these values are often collective, the cultural use of heritage can also operate in de-territorialized contexts. Distinguishing "cultural transmission" (74.7%) as a category between general communication and cultural use is important: digital platform users frequently engage in cultural diffusion, but cultural memory requires activation to persist like archives as memory activators, as conceptualized by Aldabalde and Grigoleto (2016, p.12). The significant number of 70.7% can be related to AI literacy needs that can be fit within the scope of proactive archival custodianship, because they promote an interference (mediation) before or since the record creation. The record or image itself is not memory, but rather the instrument through which memory is activated. The high recognition of value for cultural memory (68.0%) underlines the archival responsibility involved in managing documents with legal and socio-cultural implications. The results (Table 3) show that the respondents are not merely approving or rejecting AI, and it suggests that cultural archival mediation associated with AI and information literacy must be included in archival activity.

In practical terms, archival proactive custodianship means, for instance, the elaboration of a manual of AI use for record creation designed for novice users and non-experts is an example of artefactual mediation and a product of a proactive custodianship mentality, which in turn practically means not waiting for simple storage as storage and acting first to prevent obstacles and defects of archival record type. In addition, to fulfill public mandates and respect

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cultural rights, archival institutions and archivists must universalize archival services for BGH communities, promoting inclusive practices for BPL speakers. Public cultural and educational agencies, representing the highest-rated application areas (77.3% and 74.7%), face multijurisdictional challenges when managing creative, collaborative, and AI-generated visual records (images).

Denying or disregarding AI-generated visual records is counterproductive; non-recognition does not resolve the practical reality of how a BPL descendant documents intangible heritage in digital environments. When asked whether AI-generated images authentically represented BPL intangible heritage, 78.7% of respondents expressed a positive perception when reviewing depictions of traditional wedding rites and Easter customs. Responses were distributed as follows: 5 (54.7%), 4 (24.0%), 3 (10.7%), 2 (5.3%), 1 (5.3%). Overall, 89.3% of the respondents have a positive attitude that Gen AI visual records can serve as authentic cultural representations when prompted by BPL speakers' descendants.

Avoiding confirmation bias was chosen a controversial figure that represents 'Hochzeitsbitter' studied by Rölke (2016, p.577-579) with an alcoholic drink in the marriage inviter role, it's possible to think about values, symbols, and other elements in BPL speakers as a large group of BGH that preserve IC. The image of drink under the protestant moral cannot be congruent with the well accepted costume and different versions of the same rite can be transmitted. This contradiction about alcoholic drink is probably not new and has historical roots- it stems from the fact that a part of the rural population is rooted in Protestantism (Lutheran moral code) disseminated by German pastors who went to Brazil (Granzow, 2009).

Regarding long-term preservation, 78.7% of respondents agreed that AI-generated visual records produced within proper contextual frameworks should be preserved for future generations. The central question for research on proactive archival custodianship is whether AI-generated visual records should (or should not) be preserved for future generations, because this is a societal and archival issue: applying technology to preserve the full diversity of cultural expressions. In addition, 78.7% of respondents agree with the long-term

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preservation of visual records produced in the context of the document, the intangible heritage, using the intelligent system.

When evaluating the overall cultural authenticity and credibility of Gen AI in generated cultural representations (visual records) on a 5-point scale, responses were distributed as follows: 5: 38.7%, 4: 20.0%, 3: 26.7, 2: 5.3, 1: 9.3. Concurrently, 82.4 % of respondents acknowledged that unmediated AI deployment carries risks of overwriting, replacing, or misrepresenting BPL intangible heritage. This risk perception does not contradict the general acceptance of AI images as authentic representations; rather, the perceived risk pertains to potential algorithmic bias, commercial misuse, and unmediated deployment, rather than Gen AI itself. Furthermore, 89.3% of the participants correctly identified the synthetic origin of the visual records. This demonstrates how authenticity is perceived when Gen AI is used for BPL speakers' descendants to create documentation. As Buckland (2017) notes, records function as encoded evidence linked to perceived trust rather than absolute truth, and perceptions of trustworthiness are shaped by cultural context.

When 78.0% of respondents view decedent-prompted AI images as authentic representations while the remaining respondents are aware of long-term preservation needs (58.7%) and technology risks (82.4 %), there is a clear rationale for integrating AI literacy with archival literacy. Because 61.3 % of respondents expressed interest in understanding the relationship between AI-generated records and public archives, a conceptual dialogue is needed between "AI culture" (Bushey, 2024) and local "archival culture."

Because archival culture is rarely innate to daily civic life, archival institutions must serve as active environments where recordkeeping principles are communicated and practiced. The recognized values for cultural memory (68.0%) and knowledge production (61.3%) support moving proactive custodianship toward an applied framework. While proactive custodianship traditionally focuses on intellectual control and physical provenance (Cook, 2013), managing AI-generated records requires re-examining the diplomatic distinction between actio (the transaction, functional action, or event) and conscriptio (the formal legal-administrative mechanism through which an action is turned into a legally binding, authentic record, or

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scriptura (Bellotto, 2006; MacNeil, 2000). As Menne-Haritz (2004) argues, this re-examination implies understanding actio as the underlying structure of administrative business processes, where the record's authenticity and metadata control fundamentally depend on interventions at the moment of creation. The transition from passive curation to proactive custodianship isn't merely a policy change; it is a mediation evolution (from information mediation to sociocultural mediation) required to keep the concept of "the record" relevant in a digital, AI driven world. Furthermore, it is of specific relevance for oral traditions and oral use of the systems. When confronted with the BPL speakers' needs, a primarily oral "universe, " the traditional archivistics paradigm views it as "non-existent" because there is no"written series" or "original creator" in the classical sense. To satisfy the mission of record offices and archives to preserve human records of activities (including cultural activities), it must expand to include the intangible context.

From this context, the Record Office (or public archive) must provide the metadata, ontologies, and paradata regarding BPL intangible culture to provide semantic infrastructure to allow the AI models to reflect the community's digital representation rather than a stereotype. The archivist is no longer a "guardian" of what is a record, but a cultural mediator of "recordness." That is a new concept emerging, the proactive custodianship is the intellectual control not just as a technical descriptive act; it is a cultural contextualization that validates the 'how' of oral transmission as equal to the 'what' of written record. In this sense, original order and organicity must now be interpreted through contemporary producer-user dynamics. BGH and BPL documentation should respect community perspectives, including oral traditions.

As Buzaglo (2002) notes, theoretical concepts expand when they encounter empirical constraints that they cannot address without evolving. Traditional intellectual control frameworks struggle to accommodate unwritten BPL traditions that lack a single "original" creator in the classical diplomatic sense. Expanding a concept is a rational necessity to maintain its core function in new operating environments. To preserve community memory in the AI age, Archival Science must expand intellectual control from "What is this object?" to "What is the cultural logic behind this act of recordkeeping?" AI models can represent oral traditions, albeit with limitations; archival institutions must step in to bridge this gap. In this

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context, proactive custodianship operates as a socio-technical mediation process: the archivist assists oral communities in translating intangible heritage into digital record formats, providing that community values and recording logics are embedded within metadata structures.

This approach expands archival description beyond physical records to capture processes of cultural transmission, transforming oral heritage into verifiable "recordness." This evolution transforms the archivist's role from a gatekeeper of physical holdings into a mediator of recordness. Proactive custodianship becomes an act of cultural contextualization that validates oral transmission logics alongside formal written records.

Given the demand (82.7%) for formal BPL archives, an opinion characterizing a collective clamor for imagery and documentary visibility, this research recommends the immediate implementation of a record type from a record typology. To ensure evidentiary value from the point of genesis, the following record types should be prioritized for creation and capture: board minutes, record from secretary of education or culture, official course catalogs, non-current student transcripts, BPL manuscripts, cultural maps, official correspondence, cultural and/or educational projects dossiers, development/fundraising campaign records, yearbooks, official student newspapers, exhibition dossiers, artistic records, art documentation and social media clipping.

The results point to an engagement of archives with emerging technologies, since 61.3% of respondents recognize the value for knowledge and also 61.3% seek to understand the intersection between AI-generated documentation and public archival systems.

Despite State educational programs focused on BPL, a persistent shortage of formal written records is still obvious. In this context, Generative AI can serve as a strategic tool for visual self-representation and digital inclusion, enabling oral storytellers to generate documented heritage through AI speech-to-text and community-guided visual prompting.

This necessitates a conceptual dialogue between 'AI culture' (Bushey, 2023) and local 'archival culture', both representing emerging frameworks for existing archival institutions. Despite

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municipal educational programs targeting BPL, a persistent scarcity of formal written records remains. In this institutional vacuum, Gen AI can serve as a strategic tool for visual self representation and identity affirmation. Furthermore, it lowers technical barriers by enabling non-literate community members to participate directly in recordkeeping, such as documenting oral traditions via AI-driven audio transcription. The empirical data strongly support this technological mediation: 82.7% of respondents favor AI-assisted record creation, provided BPL speakers remain the primary agents driving data input.

5 CONCLUSION

The key findings suggest the recognition of the AI-generated images as representations of BPL culture, with 89.3% rating their authenticity positively and 78.7% recognizing elements of BPL intangible heritage. Respondents saw the images mainly as useful for education, cultural transmission, communication, knowledge, and cultural memory, and 77.3% supported preserving them for future generations. At the same time, 84% expressed awareness that AI could overwrite, erase, or rewrite Pomeranian culture, while only 58.7% clearly recognized the long-term preservation uncertainties of AI-generated digital documents. The consensus regarding official BPL records indicate a transition from strictly Portuguese-centric archives to bilingual, multimodal repositories (combining text, image, and audio). This shift requires developing community-centric information products, such as a dictionary, requested by 65.3% of participants (Question 6, Option 4), and actively acquiring diverse materials, ranging from personal family archives to folk-dance association records, through participatory collection strategies. Expanding on this knowledge exchange, University of Hildesheim researcher Caroline Ferreira applies lexicographical frameworks to document minority languages, focusing on her Pomeranian dictionary project started in July 2026.

Overall, the findings support a participatory archival cultural mediation in which archives mediate not only the AI-generated images but also their information cultures, prompts, contexts, paradata, and metadata. From the results, this study demonstrates that public perception can serve as a basis for re-evaluating archival practices in the AI age. Empirical findings reveal high public acceptance of Gen AI-generated visual records as culturally

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authentic representations of BPL intangible heritage, particularly for educational, communicative, and cultural transmission purposes. However, this acceptance is paired with an acute public awareness of algorithmic bias, misrepresentation, and the risk of heritage erasure. Rather than signaling passive trust in generative technologies, these perceptions reflect a collective mandate for active, mediated custodianship. The aim was to understand in the archival proactive custodianship in an intercultural context BPL from the anonymous opinions reached. Many respondents want to become more capable participants. This supports the development of information, documentary, cultural, and archival mediations practices. This study identifies practical activities to a new archival custodianship in the 'document society' (Buckland, 2017) focus on socio-culturally relative trustworthiness related to AI-generated images, namely: AI literacy programs, prompt-writing activities, archival literacy to creating records, collecting community archives, developing educational materials, supporting research (including documents with cultural value), providing data, teaching digital literacy, establishing documentation standards, connecting archives with living cultural practices, oral-history and documentation training, collaborative image evaluation, community metadata projects, community workshops, digital preservation education and intergenerational cultural documentation.

The contribution of the study to the literature is to understand perceptions of AI-generated images in archival custodianship. and how these imply an archival and cultural mediation, including the following aspects: community involvement, recognition of cultural practices in AI-generated images, not just archival authenticity but also perceived authenticity, possible uses since creation (cultural, educational, communicative, artistic, and memory-related uses of these documents), the sociocultural role of public archives in AI literacy awareness of cultural erasure and manipulation risks. In this particular case, the archival custodianship must provide integration with BPL speakers and their descendants, help document and preserve Pomeranian cultural practices as BGH culture without distorting, replacing, or erasing them since document creation. This is relevant for community archives and MRM (Gibbons, 2019), because perceptions of trustworthiness are inherently cultural (Buckland, 2017); Gen AI visual outputs should be preserved as documented cultural interpretations rather than unmediated

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objective representations of intangible heritage. Under the mediation paradigm, archival institutions must mediate not only the synthetic records themselves, but also their underlying information cultures, prompt logics, production contexts, paradata, AI literacy, and metadata.

This research focuses on the central idea that scientific thinking can be contributed by the public opinions and attitudes of non-experts reaching the public outside the university and college walls. In this aspect, this is also a call to construct the first digital international Pomeranian repository in the world and in history, starting with intangible culture shared by Brazil and Germany or other countries. For a future agenda between Brazil and Europe, it's possible to envision how the Collaborative European Digital Archive Infrastructure may be used to start a Pomeranian repository featuring the AtoM archival system.

Finally, the archivist's responsibility is to preserve the document alongside its contextual evidence, limitations, and provenance, provided that communities maintain the agency to negotiate and revise its meaning over time. Mediating or translating this proactive custodianship into practice requires integrating AI, archival, and information literacies directly into community engagement. Operationalizing this framework includes establishing standardized record-creation guidelines, conducting prompt-writing and oral history workshops, facilitating collaborative image evaluation, and leading participatory metadata initiatives.

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Use of artificial intelligence: In accordance with scientific integrity guidelines established by CNPq, the German Research Foundation (DFG), the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA), and European Union transparency frameworks (EU AI Act, Art. 50), the authors declare that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies were used solely as non-authorial, artefactual-mediators during the preparation, computational processing, and drafting of this manuscript. AI tools do not meet authorship criteria and are not listed as co-authors. The human authors retain full accountability, intellectual ownership, and final responsibility for the originality, scientific validity, factual accuracy, theoretical interpretations, and data integrity presented in this work. All AI-assisted outputs, code, citations, and textual refinements were critically evaluated, verified for factual accuracy and bias, and edited by the authors. The specific tools and their respective roles are detailed below: Multimodal Large Language Models (Google Gemini): Utilized as a real-time auxiliary tool to support English translation, style harmonization, text refinement, structural organization, meta-refinement of AI-use disclosures, and optimization. Specifically, it assisted in iterating section clarity, organizing methodological frameworks, suggesting additional literature resources, requesting relevant citations, simplifying complex passages to enhance readability, supporting information exchange, standardizing citation data, and formatting reference lists; Julius AI: Employed for data analysis, formatting support, standardizing citation data, formatting reference lists, and generating Python scripts for automated data processing to optimize computational efficiency. Claude (Anthropic): Utilized specifically for structural layout formatting, transferring, and adapting the finalized text and data into the CI Express template.

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