

Run-of-Show & Speaker Notes

ACM Birds of a Feather — Distributing the Community Media Archive • 90 min • 10–30 people

Your north star: talk less, capture more. Success is walking out with a stack of completed sign-up sheets, two or three names against the hard technical roles, and a clear read on whether the Archive Corps idea has a cohort's worth of takers.

Before you start

- Print the handout double-sided: roles on the front, sign-up form on the back. Bring extras.
- Bring pens. The single biggest failure mode is people meaning to sign up later and never doing it.
- Have the email-list sign-up ready — a sheet, or someone collecting forms at the door as people leave.
- Decide who scribes the open discussion so you can stay present.
- For the working block, line up a whiteboard, flip chart, or a shared doc on a screen — somewhere to draft the roster of who owns what.

The arc

0–8 min

Why I'm stepping back

- Keep it short, honest, forward-looking. Name the reason at the level you're comfortable with, then pivot fast to the future.
- **Frame:** *"This was never meant to live or die with one person. I'm here to hand it to a community, not to close it down."*
- Avoid: apology, doom, or a long backstory. People take their emotional cue from you — calm and optimistic keeps the room solving instead of worrying.
- With 90 minutes you can afford a round of quick intros here — name, station, and one line on what brought them. It warms the room and tells you who's technical before you ask.

8–20 min

What the work actually is

- **Say the scale, then immediately shrink it:** *"2,100 channels, 26,000 videos a month — that sounds impossible for any one of you, and it is. So we cut it into pieces a single person can hold."*
- Walk the pipeline once, plainly: channels → download → batch processing → upload to collections. With the extra time, pause at each stage and say what can go wrong there — it makes the roles concrete.
- Point to the handout rather than reading it aloud.

20–32 min

The five roles + Archive Corps

- Spend the most energy here. For each role, say one sentence on what it is and who it suits.
- **Emphasize the on-ramp:** most people can be a Channel Steward today with zero code. Operators and Maintainers are where you most need to find people — flag that openly.

- Name the transferability problem out loud (per-collection directories/scripts/metadata). Invite ideas; don't try to solve it live.
- **Then offer the second path:** “There’s another way in we’re thinking about — an Archive Corps, where instead of picking a role cold, you join a small training cohort first.” Stress this is an idea you’re testing, not a launch.
- **Lower the two fears:** it’s time-boxed (sketch: ~4 sessions over 6 weeks), and no archiving experience is needed — the cohort is the on-ramp, not a filter. Mention the hope that each cohort trains the next.
- Be honest that cadence is undecided. You’re asking whether it’s worth building, not signing anyone up to a schedule.

32–45 min

Fill out the form (quiet working time)

- Hand out the form, ask everyone to fill it in now, in silence. Protect this — it’s the whole point.
- Float around, answer quiet one-on-one questions, gently nudge the undecided to at least leave an email.
- With the longer slot, don’t rush people off the form — a thoughtful “which slice would you want” answer is worth more than a fast one.

45–68 min

Open discussion

- This is the segment the longer slot buys you — use it. Let real concerns surface instead of cutting discussion to stay on time.
- Prompts to keep in your back pocket if the room is quiet:
 - “What would make you confident enough to own a slice?”
 - “What’s the scariest single point of failure here, and who could shadow it?”
 - “If you’ve run yt-dlp or batch jobs before — what broke, and how did you fix it?”
 - “How should we make a per-collection setup something a newcomer can pick up?”
 - “Would a training cohort actually help you say yes — or is it a barrier? What format would make it worth your time?”
 - “What would a healthy version of this look like in a year — and what has to be true for us to get there?”
- Listen for the rare technical people. Get their names before they leave — don’t rely on the form alone for those.

68–82 min

Working block: who owns what

- **Turn talk into a first draft of a roster.** Put the five roles up where everyone can see them (whiteboard, flip chart, or shared doc) and start filling names against them — out loud, together.
- Frame it as provisional: “nothing here is binding, we’re just sketching what this could look like.” That lowers the stakes enough for people to volunteer.
- Group by natural slices people already care about — a region, a set of stations, a topic — and see who gravitates where. Self-selection beats assignment.
- Watch for gaps. If no one steps toward Operator or Maintainer, name it plainly and ask who’d be willing to learn — that’s your Archive Corps signal in real time.
- Capture the draft (a photo of the board is fine). It becomes the backbone of your follow-up email.

- Collect every form. Confirm the one channel: the email list. “Everyone who left an email is on it by next week.”
- Say out loud who raised a hand for Operator / Maintainer / Coordinator — public acknowledgment makes it stick.
- Set one concrete follow-up with a date: a first email to the list, or a short call for the technical volunteers.
- Thank the room and stop. End on momentum, not logistics.

After the session

- Within 48 hours, send the welcome email while it’s fresh: thank them, restate the five roles, and ask each person to reply with the one they’re taking.
- Follow up personally — not just on the list — with anyone who flagged Script Maintainer. That role is your highest succession risk; treat those names as gold.
- Keep a simple shared roster of who owns which slice. That roster, not any script, is what actually distributes the work.
- **Read the Archive Corps signal:** count the “yes, I’d join” boxes and read the free-text answers. If you get roughly one cohort’s worth (6–8) of genuine yeses, you have your mandate to run a founding cohort — reply to those people first.

If only one thing goes right: you leave with completed forms and named volunteers for the technical roles. Everything else can be fixed over email.