

[RE:CON]VERSATIONS ::
ARCHIVE-FACING PROCESS DIALOGUE DOCUMENTATION FAQ
[edited 11/2020]

Mission:

[\[RE:CON\]VERSATIONS](#) was originally started for the OS online platform as a project / series that would encourage dialogue-driven process/practice conversation around performance and other ephemeral programming which would otherwise be lost to the record.

During this time, however, we had also instituted the practice of doing author interviews with all OS collaborators, which we would include in the back of each print:document, and soon we began including these conversations as part of this series. This inclusion / these conversations about the back end of the creative process (and in particular seeing these as essential corollaries to creative output) has been a core component of the OS since its origins. It works in tandem with the [Field Notes](#) series, begun about the same time. The Q&A / archive-facing process framework as an essential element of our production mission is described in our project agreements as well.

FAQ:

- ***Do I have to complete this Q&A? Why do you ask us to do this?***

As was explained in the onboarding process as well as the basic OS onboarding / terms literature, (so, as you know!) at the Operating System, we aren't thinking about our publications or projects as capitalist objects for purchase and short-term consumption, nor are we primarily driven by popularity or feasibility within an industry or market. Our publishing initiative is often something we describe as "archive-facing," meaning that we are interested in changing the landscape of work available both in print and online, both now and in the future.

In part, this project considers what creative *output* we want to make sure secures a place in the record—perhaps to enjoy deserved consideration and acclaim at a later date, but moreso to ensure that a more accurate range of humans and projects makes it into the archive at all than what the institutions and hierarchical structures ordinarily allow.

In keeping with this, we believe it is important to publish these works with archival, scholarly intention: knowing that a future reader may not have access to accurate contextual or biographical information for each creative practitioner, we encourage them to tell their own story, thereby writing their own narrative rather than potentially falling into false erasure, invention, or other creative hagiography around the *life* of the practitioner responsible for the making of the work, as we've seen happen so many times in the past.

- ***Do I have to answer all the questions? What if they don't quite fit my project?***

No, but do know that the point of these questions is to have archival information about you as a person in the world accompanying your project, not just info about the project. Answer them to the best of your ability or feel free to edit the questions to make them more applicable!

- ***Why these questions? can't you provide me with ones about my specific project?***

These questions were designed to be generative and open-ended enough to help prompt our collaborators in such a way that they are able to talk about their creative process / practice in general, as well as get deeply and specifically into the project itself. They also address certain aspects of creative life and social justice, service, community, etc, that are important to the OS's mission, specifically. We encourage you, as the practitioner, to include as much information as you want about the project itself, and perhaps to even recommend or draft additional questions you'd want to answer! This consistency in form is important to us, as it creates a real catalog of answers around these topics from all our collaborators over our many years of operations.

- ***Can I add other material either online or to the book?***

Please! You are not only welcome but strongly encouraged to include other archival material, ephemera, prompts, multimedia, indexical information, scholarly notes, essay, other interviews, etc. to the documentation we do around your project, both online and in print. It would need final approval, of course, but the answer is almost always yes. You can also consider doing [field notes](#) entries if that makes sense for your project.