

Case study

Research, cite, teach: One tool for every role What every researcher and student should know about JSTOR's Workspace



Connie Robles

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Summary

Connie Robles, a PhD candidate in Latin American art history, used JSTOR's **Workspace** to streamline her complex research process, organizing articles and images in one place while maintaining citation accuracy. What began as a tool to manage a sprawling dissertation soon evolved into a source of inspiration for teaching, helping her design assignments that foster students' research and digital literacy skills.

Connie's academic path began in Santiago, Chile, where she worked as an assistant professor before starting her PhD journey at [Boston University](#). Her work as a Latin American art historian involves weaving together complex visual and textual narratives that span geographies and centuries. Like many PhD students, she was juggling multiple responsibilities: managing vast quantities of resources across several projects, handling teaching assignments, and conducting both in-person and online archival research.

While Connie used Zotero to streamline her bibliographic work, she also needed an intuitive tool to keep her sources organized—something more functional than browser bookmarks, but less cluttered than her Downloads folder. For her, [JSTOR's Workspace](#) became the ideal middle ground.

"I had to keep track of so much," Connie shared. "My dissertation bibliography alone is 35 pages, single spaced. Between images, journal articles, citations, and downloaded files, things can get messy fast."

Enter JSTOR Workspace

Connie first encountered JSTOR through her university's library portal. During the pandemic, she began exploring more of what JSTOR had to offer, including Workspace. While other online databases and museum websites offer similar "create your own folder" features, JSTOR's Workspace made the most sense for her research and teaching.



Llama Figurine. 1400–1532. The Cleveland Museum of Art.

“For researchers, keeping a record of your research is probably more important than anything else. Almost more important than what you say about the research, because if you can't track back your sources, you can't really use it, you know.”

The integration of JSTOR and Artstor allowed her to save both articles and images in a single, organized space. This discovery and integration, as she puts it, “changed the game.”

JSTOR Workspace became her central hub: a place to collect, sort, and return to scholarly articles and high-resolution images with ease. Whether she was organizing references for a chapter or building a visual gallery of architectural details, Workspace allowed her to save time, reduce digital clutter, and work with confidence.

“I used to dump everything in my downloads folder and hope for the best. Now, with Workspace, I can actually find what I need—when I need it.”

Managing images as sources

As an art historian, images are central to Connie’s research and teaching. JSTOR’s integration of Artstor’s image collection allowed her to treat images with the same scholarly rigor as texts—saving, annotating, and citing them all in one place.

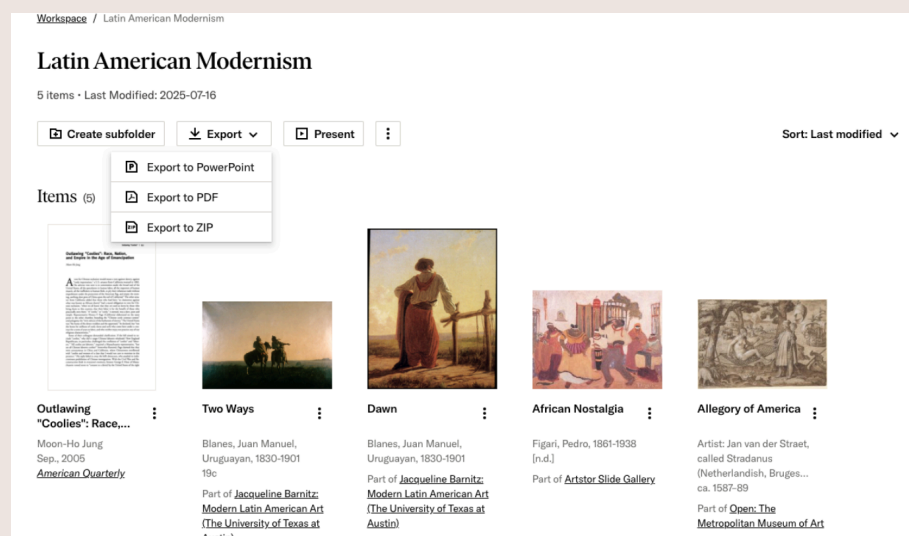
“I found incredible photographs of buildings I had visited in Spain—better quality than the ones I took during my own fieldwork. Being able to save those directly into Workspace, alongside articles, made my visual analysis so much stronger.”

When it came time to cite those sources, JSTOR’s built-in citation tools and export options made it easy to stay organized and accurate. By exporting RIS files from JSTOR and using Zotero, Connie feels her citation workflow is even more efficient than that of some professors who still manage their bibliographies manually instead of using citation management tools.

From research to the classroom

Workspace didn’t just support Connie’s dissertation—it began shaping her teaching practice as well. As she transitions into adjunct roles at institutions, she’s integrating Workspace into her course design.

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Chimú. Earflare with ritual procession. 1350–1470 CE. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

“I’m planning to have students create their own folders as part of assignments. Imagine asking them to curate three articles and three images on a topic they care about—it’s a way to teach research and interpretation together.”

The potential for collaborative or in-class activities is high. With features like [note-taking](#), [folder sharing](#), and [exporting items to PowerPoint, PDF, and ZIP](#), Workspace becomes not just a research tool, but a teaching tool.

Designing with the future in mind

For Connie, JSTOR Workspace represents something larger than just a folder system. It’s a flexible, intuitive space that grows with her professional needs whether she’s preparing lectures, applying for jobs, or conducting independent research.

As she puts it, “We all want to be the perfect researcher that keeps track of everything, but we’re not! A tool like Workspace saves me time and common missteps. It lets me focus on what matters: writing, thinking, and teaching.”

She’s now exploring ways to deepen her use of the platform, such as taking advantage of notes, comparisons, and even using Workspace to back up materials for conference presentations.

Educator insight

Connie discovered Workspace on her own—but you can guide your students’ research and organization from the start by introducing them to Workspace early on.

Try this in your class:

Ask students to use Workspace to build a mini research project. They can collect relevant articles and images, add notes to each, and share the folder with you. It’s an engaging and impactful way to build scholarly habits and digital research literacy.

“Don’t just use JSTOR for reading—use it to think. When your ideas and your sources live together in one place, everything clicks.”

Unlock a free all-in-one tool for research, citation, and teaching

By [creating a free individual JSTOR account](#), you can take advantage of this all-in-one digital resource to streamline your work. The intuitive Workspace interface makes it easy to get started, and if you need help, our support team has created [a step-by-step guide](#) to help you become a Workspace pro in no time. Ready to dive in?

[Get started with Workspace](#)