

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Is it appropriate to refer to Dimensions in Testimony as a hologram?**

No, the collection is not a hologram, although most interviews have been recorded to be compatible with hologram technology once it is developed. Holograms do not yet exist. When hologram display is developed, Dimensions in Testimony can be projected into a room in three dimensions. However, the content of the survivors' testimonies are at the center of Dimensions in Testimony, so new technological advancements will be carefully considered for their ethical implications.

## **How should one refer to Dimensions in Testimony?**

Dimensions in Testimony is a collection of interactive biographies. The collection was previously under the name "New Dimensions in Testimony," but in 2018 USC Shoah Foundation updated the collection name to what it currently is now.

## **How does Dimensions in Testimony work? How is it recorded and how does it play back?**

The Dimensions in Testimony interviewee is seated within a green-screen environment surrounded by cameras and in front of a microphone. The interviewer asks questions. Each answer is recorded as a separate video clip. Up to 2,000 questions may be posed – and answers given. This results in a bank of responses that can be prompted by questions posed verbally by the end user.

Using natural-language technology, the Dimensions in Testimony system transforms the spoken questions into search terms. The system then matches the search terms to the most appropriate interviewee response and plays back the associated video clip, resulting in a lifelike conversational experience.

The system logs every question and answer. To improve the accuracy of the system, trained staff at USC Shoah Foundation periodically review the system logs to make sure the most appropriate answer was chosen for each question. When necessary, staff manually make the link to the more appropriate response. As a result, the quality of the system improves with every question asked. The results are not immediate; rather, improvements take several days or weeks to process.

## **Where is Dimensions in Testimony currently shown? How can one access it?**

Dimensions in Testimony is designed for exhibitions in museums, memorial sites and other appropriate public spaces.

### **Are there plans to expand the distribution of Dimensions in Testimony? If so, how and where?**

Eventually, when technological advancement permits, it will become available for integration into schools via IWitness ([iwitness.usc.edu](http://iwitness.usc.edu)), USC Shoah Foundation's online education platform, as well as other educational applications.

### **Is it a replacement for the still living survivors?**

No. It does not replace the still living survivors. Dimensions in Testimony documents survivors' lived experiences as they remember them in their own words. The goal of the program is to save survivors' memories and carry their words forward into future generations long after the last of the living witnesses are gone.

### **Why is there a need for such an approach?**

Dimensions in Testimony documents survivors' lived experiences as they remember them in their own words. The goal of the program is to save survivors' memories and carry their words forward into future generations long after the last of the living witnesses are gone.

Since recording began in 2015, we have already lost three participants: Aaron Elster, Stanley Bernath and Eva Kor. This program is now the only way to have a question-and-response interaction with the pre-recorded interviews of these Holocaust survivors.

### **What assurances are made to ensure that Dimensions in Testimony is ethically produced and displayed?**

Holocaust survivors have been involved with Dimensions in Testimony since the concept began to be developed in 2010, with several serving on the initial consulting committee. Their guidance has shaped the principles that govern all aspects of the Dimensions in Testimony program.

Dimensions in Testimony interviewees are welcome to invite their family members to be on hand as they tell their story. During the interview, a USC Shoah Foundation staff member is dedicated to monitor the well-being of the survivor. Survivors themselves retain control of the interviewing process, so they can take breaks, stop recording and make other requests as needed.

We also closely monitor the exhibitions, which are governed by formal agreements to ensure that partner institutions present Dimensions in Testimony as intended. We do not alter, edit or manipulate answers that survivors give.