**Summary of the**

**Northeast Regional Library Print Management**

**Planning Meeting**

Tuesday July 9, 2013

The Yiddish Book Center

Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Building

1021 West Street

Amherst, MA 01002

**Project Overview**

In spring 2013, Five Colleges, Inc. received a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to conduct an 18-month planning activity to collect information about libraries’ interest in shared storage of print materials, to develop or adapt a business model or models for managing one or more regional print collections of monographs (and serials and journals if there is interest) and to confirm libraries’ willingness to participate in one or another of the developed models. Project Directors Neal Abraham, (Executive Director, Five Colleges, Inc.) and Chris Loring (Director of Libraries, Smith College), along with the project’s Steering Committee (representing two dozen college and university libraries in the Northeast) convened academic library leaders in the region for in-depth discussions of options for localized and distributed strategies for shared storing of library print materials.

**Participants and Project Team**

Project leaders invited 138 libraries or consortia to participate in the planning project by responding to a survey and attending a kick-off planning meeting held on July 9, 2013 in Amherst, MA. Of the invited organizations, 87 responded to the survey and 92 organizations sent 106 attendees to the planning meeting. See the complete list of meeting attendees attached [or link].

In addition to the Project Directors and Steering Committee, the project will be staffed by:

* Lizanne Payne, Planning Consultant, with responsibility for developing and analyzing the survey, facilitating the kick-off meeting and later summarizing meeting, and advising working group efforts.
* Kathryn Leigh, Head of Access Services (UMass, Amherst) and Supervisor of the Five Colleges Library Depository, who serves as Project Coordinator with responsibility for leading the working group efforts and facilitating communications among all participants.

**Context: Overview of shared print programs and report on survey responses**

Lizanne Payne presented an overview of existing and planned shared print agreements in North America. She emphasized that the key factor distinguishing a “shared print agreement” from a “shared storage facility” is the retention commitment, in which the holding library agrees to retain the designated materials for a specified time period so that partner libraries may rely on their continued availability. She also pointed out that until recently most shared print programs had focused on journals but that most new efforts centered around planning for shared monograph collections.

Ms. Payne also presented summary results of the survey to which 87 institutions had responded. Key results included the following:

* Responses came from all academic library sectors: ARL libraries (10% of responses), university libraries (34%), college libraries (43%), and community college libraries (8%)
* About one-third of respondents said their library was already participating in a shared print program
* 78% said they expected to reduce their print monograph holdings within the next five years
* 60% said they are “very interested” in a possible Northeast Regional Shared Print program (with another 39% “somewhat interested”)
* 51% said their primary goal would be to “reduce duplication of widely-held monographs” with another 38% saying their primary goal is to “preserve monographs somewhere”
* Asked “what factors are most important in a decision to participate?”, the highest-ranked factors were “contents of the shared collection” and “type and speed of delivery”.

**Discussion: Operating principles**

After some initial description of the primary operating principles that need to be decided for shared print agreements (content and selection, location(s), retention and ownership, availability, and validation (condition review)), attendees responded to a straw vote to gauge their initial areas of interest:

* Widely Held Monographs: Very strong interest (almost all)
* Journals/Serials: Very strong interest (almost all)
* Rarely Held Monographs: Strong interest (about 2/3rds)
* Last copy monographs: Some interest (less than half)
* Monographs already in storage facilities (i.e. de facto): Not much interest (5-6 hands)

As a planning exercise, each table considered the aspects of content, location, availability, ownership, retention and validation to determine how to define each in models going forward.

Most common recommendations across all tables included:

• Content: About equal interest in rarely-held monographs, widely-held monographs, and journals

• Location: Centralized or distributed model depends on content. Either model would work if the material is accessible and delivered in a timely manner.

• Availability: Available collection (light archive) was the most preferred by far. Some recommended a related dark archive if copies were also available in a light archive.

• Ownership: Most preferred a model where original owner retains ownership.

• Retention: Most preferred a long time period with a built-in periodic review (such as every 10 years)

• Validation: Most didn’t get around to discussing this, but some said it would be too hard to scale up to accomplish physical review of millions of monograph volumes.

Key points emerging from the table discussions and plenary discussions included:

* Widely held vs rare is a false dichotomy. It depends on the context: an item that is rare within the region could be widely-held throughout the rest of the country.
* Circulation data is a critical part of this discussion. Redefine the question to include “little-used”.
* Dark/Light archive is another false dichotomy: ideally would have both.
* Difficult to define centralized locations vs distributed locations. Clarify definition to mean “centralized = held in a small number of specialized locations, probably high-density storage facilities” vs “distributed = retained in place in campus collections, could also be in campus high-density storage facility”.
* Avoid use of the word “storage”.
* There is a connection between ownership and location (transfer of ownership more likely in a centralized approach, original ownership more likely in a distributed approach).
* Centralized model is most efficient for space reclamation at donating libraries, but possibly harder to fund, harder to get political support.
* Distributed model may have a lower cost and easier to implement, requires trust in partner libraries.
* Delivery is a key consideration in any model.
* A formal agreement (MOU) is essential.

**Discussion: Organization structure and business models**

Lizanne Payne presented an overview of decision points needed for a shared print agreement, including:

* Organization structure: existing or new consortium, federation of existing programs? Informal agreement, formal MOU?
* Business model: What costs are involved? Who supports costs? How to insure sustainability?

Attendees participated in a straw vote about possible organization structures to gauge initial thoughts:

* Federation of existing programs? Most support (about 2/3rds of participants)
* New organization? A few
* Existing consortium lead the effort? None, no support
* Cover only unaffiliated libraries? None, no support

Comments included:

* A new organization may by-pass some existing political issues, but adding a new organization adds complexity to an existing set of relationships.
* Are there examples of federations? None identified.
* Can commitments to existing groups be extended to other groups?

Each table discussed possible organization structures, business models, and related issues.

* Federation model received the most support. Would require low barrier to participation, clear goals, could evolve over time, each individual institution would need to sign on
* New or existing consortium model seen as problematic
  + Can an existing consortium accept other members?
  + Who would not be covered?
  + Consortia cannot sign agreements for members (i.e. expectation is that individual libraries need to make commitments to other libraries)
* Business model: Consider base + use fees, tiered based on size, budget, use, # of transactions, amount of saved space

Major points that were raised include:

* Model chosen will play a large role in decision to join.
* Need doable scale
* Use an existing effort to test a model
* Federation may facilitate a large number of participants but may replicate OCLC
* Separate models for journals vs. monographs?
* Share policies and practices in existing consortia
* Activities worth paying for include central facilities, scan on demand, discovery, bibliographic control, audits, collection analysis

**Discussion: Other questions, issues, identify models for further study**

In an open discussion, attendees raised the following additional issues:

* Digital delivery needs to be an important part of discussion
* Pressures for space and access are currently on our minds but what concerns might we have 5 years down the road? Accreditation, faculty concerns.
* Need better tools to do collection analysis and indicate what is held where. OCLC collection analysis designed for individual library use, self-service analysis. Sustainable Collection Services (SCS) performs in-depth customized analysis for groups.
* Retain in place is an interesting model – but how do you implement? See examples in Maine and ConnectNY.
* Scale is challenging in this discussion. Creating another infrastructure / consortial agreement is also challenging.
* Loan periods: We currently loan different formats for different periods of time, can we offer a longer loan period for materials held in this agreement?
* Policies and practices for various consortia – what is common now? Consider existing models and how they can be revolutionized for the future.

**Breakout Discussions: Models and working group tasks**

As the last exercise, participants divided into communities of interest to discuss specific models. After some initial discussion, the following models were identified for further discussion:

* Little-used monographs
* Journals or serials
* Centralized vs distributed locations
* Private storage space for individual library collections
* Governance

Each group was asked to frame its discussion around this question: What would a working group discussing this topic be charged to address? Major points raised by each group are identified below.

Little used monographs:

* Concern about scale. We have successful models for journals…
* Develop tools – compare holdings and take future digitization efforts into account.
* Define ‘little used”?
* Be aware of differences in disciplines
* How many copes do you want to retain? – How many in OCLC?
* How do you decide which copies to keep?
* Validation issues
* Do we need to be involved with others nationally?
* Should imprint date be considered?
* Impact of future digitization efforts – and relationship of digital to print copies

Journals/serials:

* Quite different from monographs – different problems
* Is Five Colleges a possible solution?
* What other models are out there?
* What is the level of interest?
* What is widely held vs. rarely held in this context?
* OCLC problematic for journal holdings analysis
* Short term rentals
* Records management – lower standards (cheap) vs. archival standards

Centralized vs distributed locations

* Define each model – pros and cons
* Are these mutually exclusive?
* Is there a valid hybrid?
* How do you define costs of keeping in house vs. in a central facility?
* What are the costs of not doing something?
* How many volumes are we talking about?
* How do you determine size of facility – devise a strategy for this.
* Planning for growth – start-up vs. adding materials over time
* How do you address the short term space crunch some have?
* What is the role for dark archives? What model is most appropriate for dark or light archive – and what needs do each fill?
* Content vs. artifact
* How does the growing digital corpus factor into planning
* Existing facility vs. new?
* Comfort level with risk - # of copies, location and access
* Delivery – how does this affect planning
* How can retention decisions in decentralized model seem less arbitrary?

Private Storage Space

* Need to ensure climate control
* Would it be open to other print materials such as back reference sets, government documents, business records?
* What would be the transportation/delivery mechanism for intake and especially for retrievals?
* Consider different models and study the experience of others (e.g. Harvard, ReCAP):
  + Libraries lease space? Possibly cover most of the servicing costs to minimize additional bills?
  + Treat the space as a condo, e.g. section to be purchased by a library which then paid a “condo fee” for maintenance?
  + Charge more than “cost recovery” to build reserves for building future buildings?

Governance:

* What model provides the most effective participation? The most diverse representation? Incorporate private institutions and the currently-unaffiliated
* What is the return on investment?
* Define the mission
* Models for small, medium, large group?
* Define and align goals of federation with consortia
* Examine and assess consortial models – define best practices?

**New Name?**

Attendees also offered some suggestions for a name for the effort, to distinguish from the New England Regional Depository (NERD). Suggestions included:

* Shared Collections of the Northeast: SCONE
* North East Shared Trust OR North East Storage Trust: NEST
* North East Access Trust: NEAT

**Next steps**

Project Directors Neal Abraham and Chris Loring stated that the next steps are to:

* Synthesize feedback from the meeting and discuss with the Steering Committee on July 19
* Convene working groups beginning in the fall to develop recommendations around the identified models. Attendees were asked to indicate if they are interested in serving on a working group.