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Indiana University Digital Library Program

Digital Library Federation Forum

March 31, 2000

www.dlib.indiana.edu



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Digital Library Program (DLP)




- Established in September 1997.
- A collaborative venture among the University Libraries (IUL), University Information Technology Services (UITS), and the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS).
- Partners contribute financial resources, primarily in the form of staff and equipment.
- UITS and IUL provide majority of resources, with SLIS functioning as a research partner.

UITS Strategic Plan

- UITS Strategic Planning coincided with the creation of the Digital Library Program.
- Four working groups made recommendations for information technology priorities.
- Three of the four identified digital library funding as a priority.
- The result has been significant one-time and base funding for equipment and technical staff from new state appropriations for higher ed IT.

Indiana University

- 8 campuses, with the flagship campus in Bloomington.
- A second large campus in Indianapolis, with the medical school and a second law school.
- Libraries are funded by the campuses.
- UITS is funded systemwide.
- UITS partnership in the DLP requires a systemwide orientation.

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- Purview of the program extends to all campus units and all campuses of the university. No unit required to participate, but no unit is excluded. Difficulty conveying the scope.
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Purpose of the DLP:

- To provide financial support and additional human resources for existing digital initiatives, including LETRS, the Library Electronic Text Resource Service, VARIATIONS, the digital music library, and DIDO, an image database in the School of Fine Arts Slide Library.
- To provide infrastructure, financial support, and expertise to develop new digital initiatives across the campuses of Indiana University.

Organizational Structure

- Digital library steering committee, whose role is primarily budgetary.
- Digital Library Program Administrative Team, which is at the center of DLP planning and operations.
- DLP staff who work exclusively on program projects and operations.
- DLP staff who have joint assignments.

Staff

- Funded by the IUL and UITS.
- Majority of the staff funded by IUL.
- Majority of the equipment and other technology support funded by UITS.
- Balance is shifting, with new UITS staff added.
- Temporary staff from grants will continue to grow.

Number and Type of Staff

- 8.5 FTE permanent appointed staff in the DLP
 - 1 librarian
 - 6 information technology professionals
 - 1 support staff
- 2.5 FTE appointed staff who spend varying amounts of time on DLP work
 - 4 librarians
 - 1 information technology professional

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- 2 FTE grant-funded appointed staff
 - 1 librarian
 - 2 support staff

Issues Related to Organizational Structure

The present organizational structure has existed for the past two years, but as the program develops we are beginning to address questions regarding

- Staff: Who supplies it and what kind?
- Staff assignments: Some of the staff report to UITS and some to the library. How do we coordinate this staff?



- Funding: UITS has more available funding for staff, but we need more librarians. How will we secure the funding?
- Spanning the university: How do we extend DLP support to all of the IU campuses?



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Transition from Project-Based to Program-Based Digital Library Work

The IU Digital Library Program has always been program-based. We have undertaken digital projects, both internally-funded and grant-funded, but the basis of the program was digital library operations – LETRS, VARIATIONS, and DIDO.

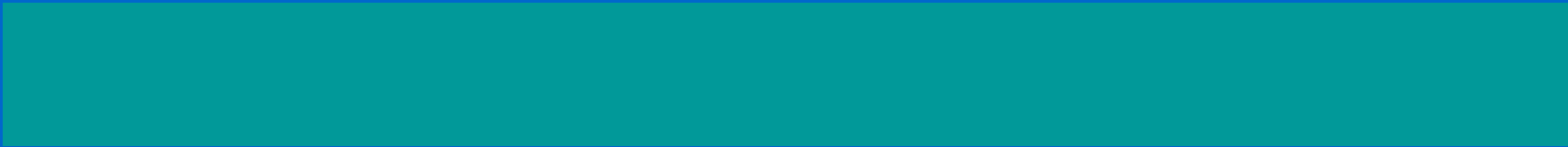
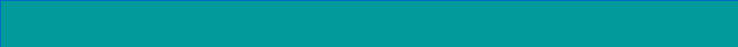

We have used digital projects to gain additional experience in creating digital collections for research. Previous experience with text only.



Early Project Goals

- Build upon existing expertise in providing digital resources, existing collection strengths, and discipline-based expertise.
- Capitalize upon institutional infrastructure and related expertise – networking, mass storage, copyright.
- Gain additional experience in creating digital resources in new formats, for a broader range of users.



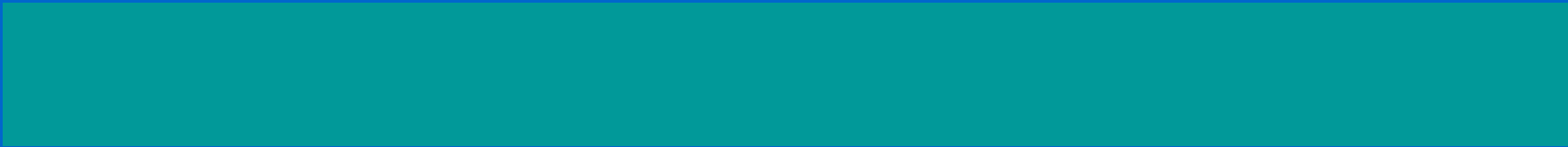
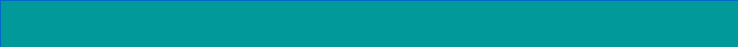

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- Develop expertise in grant writing for digital projects.
 - Add to the body of Indiana cultural resources on the Web.
 - Add to the body of knowledge about digital libraries through research and development.
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Recent Project Goals

- Foster cooperation among Indiana University librarians and archivists in creating and providing access to digital resources.
- Move from project-based problem solving to cross-project problem solving.
- Publish new kinds of information resources on the Web – periodical indexes and working paper archives.
- Develop collaborative projects with other institutions.

Library and Information Technology Staff

- Funding for staff comes from IUL and UITs, with the library funding IT professionals, librarians, and support staff.
- The concept behind the DLP Administrative Team is to include both IT professionals and librarians with complementary expertise.
- Project teams include a similar mix of individuals with essential, but different, skills, knowledge, experience, and expertise.

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- Joint development of new positions, recruitment, and hiring.
 - A history of cooperation, in the development of the IUL online system and in the creation of LETRS in the early 1990s.
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Emerging Issues

- Funding is more plentiful for technical positions than for librarian and support staff positions. How will we secure funding for the non-technical staff we need?
- Currently, reporting lines are complicated. As the program grows and projects increase, this has the potential to cause confusion. How do we coordinate the work of people who do essentially the same work but report to different people?

Collaboration and Partnership

Collaboration: to work, one with another; cooperate, as on a literary work – or a digital library program.

Partner: 1. a person who shares or is associated with another in some action or endeavor; associate.

2. one of two or more persons who contribute capital to establish or maintain a commercial venture and who usually share in the risks and profits.

DLP Partners




- IUL, UITS, SLIS
- DLP and IUB library units: Lilly Library and University Archives.
- DLP and other library units: Indianapolis University Library and Calumet Region Archive.
- DLP and non-library units: Archives of Traditional Music, Workshop on Political Theory and Policy Analysis.
- DLP and other institutions: Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC – Big 10 plus University of Chicago)

Potential Problems

- Some partners may not understand that the partnership comes with responsibilities. They believe that the DLP will do all of the work, to their specifications.
- Some partners may not understand the need for using standards and best practices.
- Some partners may not have the staff skill or expertise to make a meaningful contribution to the project.

Successful Partnerships

- Discuss expectations early in the process. Begin writing a project proposal, outlining responsibilities and outcomes. Be realistic and clear about time commitments.
- Written agreements are best in a partnership, but partners external to the university have shown a reluctance to put agreements in writing. Insist.

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- Grants facilitate partnerships, because they force participants to define roles and relationships. Everything must be in writing. This makes working together easier in the long run, although the process of determining those roles may be difficult. Establish need for adhering to standards.
 - Even with written agreements in place, a partner may fail to fulfill their commitment to a project or an operation. Always have a contingency plan, especially on a grant-funded project, which must be completed on time.
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Evaluation

- To date, overall success has been measured by accomplishments.
- Success of digital library operations largely measured by use and perceived user satisfaction.
- Success of projects to create digital resources measured by usability testing.
- Beginning to experiment with user feedback on the Web site for the Hohenberger Photograph Collection.

Building Expertise

- Build upon related experiences and existing background. Focus on projects that have components requiring existing knowledge and new knowledge.
- Strength in humanities computing. Will probably continue to focus in this area in short-term, although CPR project is a departure.
- Need to develop staff internally. Difficulty with recruitment and retention. Possibility of providing more formal relationship with SLIS in training.

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Institutional Expectations

Speculation: A worldwide library of multimedia digital resources, that will fulfill the needs of all types of university users – and in some cases, students at all levels and members of the general public. The digital library will exhibit all of the best characteristics of the traditional library, with the added functionality that electronic resources offer. All contribute. All benefit.



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Contact Us

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