

# Sustainability Working Group Final Report—April, 2016

## OhioDPLA Sustainability Working Group Summary Report Recommendations and Matrix

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Submitted by the OhioDPLA Sustainability Working Group

Working Group members include:

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### Executive Summary

The Working Group quickly established an action plan, then in completely changed course following the December symposium. The newly revised priorities were to identify:

- Questions that need to be answered during the prototype
- Areas that should be counted, measured, and observed in order to accurately assess the true costs of a 3-year prototype program

Providing that structure and areas of concern will allow for data collection that inform possible scenarios for a sustainable model. During the time remaining the Working Group created various recommendations, a matrix of questions, and a mock budget.

### Working Group Charge and Summary of Groups Activities

The original Sustainability Working Group charge was to provide recommendations for financial sustainability for the Ohio DPLA hub, specifically it was outlined as:

“This group will address both **funding/financial sustainability**, and how to grow contributions to Ohio DPLA and add new partners. As the program matures, Ohio DPLA will need to consider how the collections will be used and reused for learning, a major DPLA initiative. This group will need to work *closely with the Advocacy working group* to explore strategies for the development of DPLA exhibits. This group will also consider *what activities will follow* after initial Ohio DPLA implementation.”

After our initial group meeting in September, our group members set out to research all the existing hubs and their sustainability to find models or elements to recommend. We developed questions to ask of the hubs and contributed them to a larger survey instrument which included questions from all of the Working Groups. Those questions never went to the hubs, instead we discussed the questions with DPLA representatives at the Steering Committee meeting held in conjunction with the Symposium.

In what became the absolute high point of the DPLA Symposium December 2, the State Library of Ohio (SLO) graciously agreed to fund a 3 year prototype program. Given the short time frame of this planning process, the model for the prototype is still being determined and thus leaves this group in the difficult position of needing to advocate sustainability recommendations for a model which doesn't yet exist. The working group co-chairs met with the project consultants, representatives of the major partners (SLO, CMH, and OPLIN) and governance co-chairs on Jan 6 to discuss. All agreed the group should instead focus our efforts on starting to recommend a framework to determine what information (financial and otherwise) we would need to track during the prototype in order to with sustainability planning in the future. In meeting with the consultants, it was suggested we map major elements to the various responsibilities outlined in the "responsibilities diagram" drafted by Meghan Frazier and Liz Bishoff. This report includes assumptions, considerations, recommendations and as well as mock budget and matrix.

### **Overall Considerations and Recommendations**

- The information in this report should be taken into consideration by the State Library as they create a business plan.
- The inability to get information on other projects' sustainability plans was a major challenge. When appropriate, the Executive Committee should further pursue seeing other hubs' sustainability plans
- At this point (i.e. pre-prototype) sustainability and budget costs are moving targets
- It will be important to manage expectations around costs and how they will likely change over time (i.e. prototype funded for 3 years, after that participants need to understand there will be costs )

### **Recommended Actions for the Executive Committee**

- At the end of this initial planning period, when the Sustainability Working Group dissolves, we recommend that sustainability be taken on by the Executive Committee in order for long term sustainability issues to remain in the forefront. We suggest they form a subcommittee to focus on these activities.
  - The composition of the Executive Committee should include a member at large
  - Leadership of the Executive Committee should rotate
- In order to focus the subcommittee's work, we recommend that the Executive Committee work to determine overall goals for the 3 year prototype. Goals to consider including are:
  1. Determination of total cost of implementing OhioDPLA
  2. Identifying a sustainable organizational structure
  3. Determination of how many organizations need to participate to cover costs
  4. Determination of an acceptable time horizon for recovering costs

### **Detailed Considerations for Prototype Activities**

- Begin to monitor matrix elements immediately. It is imperative to track both actual and in kind costs; we want to be able to base decisions going forward on relatively realistic sense of costs. Therefore information gathering should occur quarterly throughout the 3 year

prototype. It is also strongly recommended that all components are gathered monthly for the first quarter to ensure that information is set up and tracked effectively.

- Consider sustainability models and financial elements after the first year of the prototype with an eye towards being able to recommend a sustainability model at the end of year two. In this way a solution could be identified and partners nailed down for a smooth transition from year three to post prototype.
- Outline what happens in years 2, 3, 4 (prototype and beyond)
- Assign themselves or a sub-group the task of exploring a wide range of elements related to financial sustainability:
  - Explore models around:
    - membership models with options member/nonmember pricing
    - tiered pricing, recognizing that there are many options to consider:
      - volume of records
      - number of collections
    - consulting or assisted models
      - i.e. institutions pay for dedicated assistance or contracted metadata creation or review
  - Grant funding - this should be considered as supplementing the model for special projects (such as educational endeavors, new functionality) and not as core funding due to the sustainability issues with that
  - Start working with cultural heritage organization directors to ascertain “temperature” on rates (i.e. what are directors willing to pay/contribute?)
  - Create various scenarios for funding. Some are outlined below but each have pros and cons. Options include:
    - “A” bucket institutions pay more up front. They’re used to paying toward the “greater good.” But where’s the line?
    - Institutions begin with higher start-up fee, then switch to lower ongoing fee
    - State Library has the lion’s share; everyone else puts in a small manageable amount from Day 1
    - Hold those payments to form the bridge that covers costs as the State Library backs away in years 3, 4
    - Nominal fee to start. Goes up as State Library backs away in years 3 – 4
    - LSTA as ongoing source of support
    - Small prototype that’s “closed” until the technology piece is up and running
- Identify a sustainable organizational structure
  - What kind of organizational structure will sustain the advisory committee and the working groups?
  - How are members appointed?
  - Do we need to get buy in from institutions to support this work?
  - How do we project continued equipment, infrastructure, and supply costs?
    - Where do we look to continue this funding?
- Identify the capacity of participating organizations
  - What is the minimum in-kind investment an institution can expect to make to in order to participate?
  - Can the work of Community Engagement Centers be sustainably run as in-kind contributions of the employees’ home institution?
    - What is the real cost of an in-kind contribution by a CEC?

- Does this need to be a part of a job description to be sustainable or can we count on volunteerism?
- What kind of buy-in do we need from employers?
- Are the funded positions at the SLO the positions we actually need long term?
  - Are these positions best located within the SLO
  - Can the SLO continue to support the in-kind contribution of administration?
- Where should we look to extend funding?
- Determine true costs of DPLA Ohio
  - start-up costs
    - Technical infrastructure
    - Establishing CECs
  - Ongoing costs to maintain and expand the number of institutions participating in OhioDPLA
    - Onboarding costs for a CEC
    - Onboarding costs for a cultural heritage institution
    - Are the costs of onboarding the B C D bucket institutions more/less than onboarding the A bucket institutions?
    - Amount of time and technology organizations would need to invest to become members of OhioDPLA – will vary from institution to institution
- The subcommittee should work with Advocacy group to create talking points about the value of participation. Elements could include:
  - Exposure of collections
  - CEC structure
  - Webinars
  - Participation in DPLA hackathon events
  - Training (train the trainer, policies, copyright, CC0 metadata, etc. Must be specifically related to metadata & DPLA, not Digitization)
    - DPLA created some training with Gates \$\$
    - MN has those resources on their website
  - Marketing (website/social media)
  - Aids that will be created
  - Getting metadata in shape
  - Getting collections harvested
  - Other?

## **Additional Resources**

A draft matrix is attached as an appendix. The matrix has a wide range of financial elements to track, both actual cost and cost share. We also strongly recommend the gathering of other elements such as stats which will play into sustainability. It is imperative that these be gathered as early as possible as other hubs have found they are unable to track this too late. It should be factored into the technological infrastructure so we can support arguments about the value of the hub which will be critical in gaining partners and allies.

A draft/mock budget is also attached as an appendix. What would it look like if all potential parties in the state contributed some amount of money? The budget reflects a scenario in which all institutions paid something. Dollar figures were chosen arbitrarily. The first worksheet is an institution list and the second is the mock budget.

## **Appendices**

- *Matrix: OhioDPLA Prototype: Sustainability Tracker*
- *Mock OhioDPLA Budget*