HELIN Consortium LORI Grant Focus Group Summary of Responses

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Highlights and Key Issues from the HELIN Digital Repository Focus Groups, July 15, 2014
Four Focus Group Meetings 7/15

- Technical Infrastructure Group
- Content Creation/Standardization Group
- Management and Marketing Group
- Project Sustainability and Funding Group
Deciding on the technology isn’t the big deal, the platform used to search for information is more important.

Data wrangling is the hardest part of any repository project.

Use open source platforms.

If using an open source platform, the project will need to pay for technical staff.

Think about centralizing preservation.

There should be a responsive design process that puts users first, that is branded and it has to expand for different audiences and consortiums.
Think about 3D printing, and other creative and “out of the box” initiatives like digital collections that can be deposited by the public

Develop a statewide registry of digital objects

RI based, RI initial focus

HELIN must build out based on a business plan

The repository will be built out for the CHIs first, and there are 460+ of them. They need an ambassador—maybe there is a team of ambassadors to reach out?
Dublin Core is the metadata choice
It would be helpful to have local implementation guidelines developed
There are very few individual–institution digital collection development policies in place; over 50% of the group thought it would be useful to have guidance in this area
It would be good to have some thematic development or loose themes to follow for content creation
Content Creation standards are ad hoc; statewide recommendations would be helpful
The repository should have requirements that participating institutions will share copyright information, or clear copyright before materials are put up.

A lot of institutions aren’t concerned about copyright, they are more interested in getting credit/citations (politeness).
Content Creation – Problems and Positives

- Presentation is important
- Dead links are an issue for current projects
- Discoverability is critical—Google optimization is very important
- Reports on how people found your materials—what keywords were used to get to the object—what the phrases were is something that has been helpful at individual institutions
- Pick lists/controlled vocabulary/authority file are really important to the project
- Keyword searching is desired
- RI should think about creating a statewide vocabulary
  - When it comes to keywords and using a downloaded controlled vocabulary, TGM is downloadable, Geographic names will also be downloadable...
Management and Marketing Themes

- There is an assumption that the repository will tell a story about the state.
- Connecting separate collections and pulling together a narrative seen as important.
- Most institutions have some Rhode Island history—institutional history as it talks about themes for the history of the state. Notable people, places and the culture of Rhode Island.
More Marketing Discussion

- There is a lack of experience around the table in terms of marketing—that is something that the libraries and non-profits don’t understand but the Museums and Historical Societies do have marketing people and there should be outreach to those community members
  - More marketing folks on Steering Committee or Working Groups—look to some of the Historical Society folks for ideas
  - Marketing to colleagues within the community that already have the content
  - Public libraries should be represented
Arts and Culture and economic development do mesh well already. Museums and historical societies, historic sites are huge economic engines themselves.

The OSHEAN group will have to be brought to the table in order to make the repository work.

Fee structures need to be developed for the sustainability of the initiative.

Diversified funding stream is going to be critical to repository success.

The best capital the project has is personal capital.
Further Sustainability Discussion

- There should be surcharges if e-commerce was created, pay for services, maybe a fee to harvest metadata
- No funding model should constrain innovation
- There should be a 10 year model for phases
- Explore steps to move toward a state trust model?
- Models for sustainability should be studied
Audiences/Users Identified

- Scholars, researchers, graduate students, residents, those interested in history, genealogists
- Public interested in general history
- Related but distinct—looking for visual materials; Artisan designers, Graphic designers, Interior designers
- Faculty and students
- Business community
- Education—K–12 audiences
- College students
Desired Support Services

- Roving archivist, cataloger
- Shared resource person for copyright info
- Best practices for digital capture/content creation, metadata
- Getting started, then upgrading and revising guidelines
- How users can use the materials
- Best practices are key, and focusing on intellectual control is important
- Having shared resources: webinars or email or telephone calls or a downloadable pdf
More Desired Support Services

- For Economic Development organizations that generate content—some guidance about what would be relevant and what should they keep—the collection development policies and collection assessment piece
- Creating a “toolkit” on how to assess collections, have a resource bank and to ask for help in state—an authoritative source
- A roundtable in the local area and at the state level
- See what other people are doing. Someone can present their project; the group can develop programs about current projects
- For the small to mid-sized group—what drives everything is funding. A collaborative effort and subsided source is key—to have a fund that supports the “have-nots” will be key
- More general education about DPLA is necessary soon
Action Steps

- Branding is really important—Work on selecting a name for the project; make a short video and a tutorial about what this is…Donna has a model—the IMLS Connecting to Collections CD
- One-page write up (abstract/precis) which can be used for grants and as content for a website
- Digital glossary of terms—FAQ developed
- Invite the head of RI Tourism to attend digital steering committee meetings
- Discuss with the RI Foundation
  - brainstorm with them to talk about how this might work going forward—get their input and ideas
  - Set up a fund with the RI Foundation and make a major marketing campaign to get people to donate funds—many prominent families do stay in the state and this may have appeal