

Report on Collective Activities August 29, 2005

A brief survey was sent to the Idaho library community via the LibIdaho electronic mailing list on July 27, 2005. Nine (9) responses were received. A summary of the responses and other information collected can be found on the following page. Due to the low number of responses, it is unlikely that the information collected is a complete reflection of collective activities taking place in Idaho.

The committee recommends the following before proceeding:

1. Identify a purpose and desired outcomes for performing a needs assessment .

The second step in the charge for the committee is to “Assess the needs of the membership with regard to these activities.” Creation of an assessment tool requires a clear understanding of the purpose and goals of the assessment. Unless stated otherwise, the act of performing the needs assessment implies that ILA has a desire to create programs/services to meet those needs. Is that the case? In order to achieve an adequate response to the needs assessment, those being surveyed will require some understanding of the purpose/goals of the assessment. In addition, the committee lacks a clear understanding of the purpose and desired result of the charge.

- What is the desired result?
- What will be done with the collected information?
- What product(s)/service(s)/activities will result from the needs assessment?
- What is ILA’s role in providing that product/service/activity?

2. Identify clear definitions of the collective activities to be assessed.

The desire to learn what activities are already in place is admirable. Unfortunately, the broad ranging activities that are in place make it difficult to place projects in specific categories. Responses indicated a need for clearer definitions of collective activities with examples.

3. Create a more narrow focus of collective activities.

In responses to the survey, only a few indicated any desire to pursue collective activities. More indicated that more details about a specific activity would be needed before they could respond.

4. Focus on Idaho Bibliographies by partnering with FARRIT and the University of Idaho.

ILA has the strengths of its membership, an active committee focused on Idaho materials (Idaho Book Award), and a statewide reach. FARRIT and the University of Idaho have strengths in their existing projects that identify and make available information resources with an Idaho focus. A partnership could combine the strengths of all the organizations and demonstrate the value of collaboration. More importantly, Idahoans would have greater access to the information.

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Idaho Collective Activities

Below is a summary of collective activities happening in and among Idaho libraries. Information was provided in response to a query sent to LibIdaho and information collected by the committee.

Coordinated Collection Development

- FARRIT – Finding All Resources Relating to Idaho Topics. “It is an open-ended, continually expanding project, collecting information on all kinds of special Idaho-related resources in Idaho libraries.” See <http://www.lili.org/farrit/>
- The medical libraries in Idaho try to coordinate collections by informal agreements and sending materials to the Idaho Health Sciences Library if needed before discarding from their collections.
- VALNet does it informally
- NIAL cooperative (NIC, UI Law, LCSC, UI) has elements of coordinated collection development.

Virtual Reference

- Existing shared service in Treasure Valley (Boise Public Library, Boise State University, and Ada Community Library). In 2005-06 the service is expanding to the Magic Valley with the addition of College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls Public Library, and Burley Public Library. Partners in the project have indicated a desire to expand service to include library partners statewide. At this time the project is coordinated by a team of representatives from all partners. Further expansion will require centralized coordination.

Digitization Projects

- Idaho State University is working on a project (LSTA funded) that will establish standards for other digitization projects in Idaho
- University of Idaho has been working with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to digitize some of their documents
- The Idaho State Library is working on a pilot project to digitize select State Documents in an effort to make their content more accessible to school students

Collaborative Projects with Community Groups

- Ada Community Library participates in the Cultural Triathlon program with a number of community groups and other libraries. The program is coordinated by a team of representatives of the partners.
- A variety of community partnerships are in place with libraries around the state. Most tend to be very localized and coordinated by staff at the library.

Idaho Bibliography

- University of Idaho’s Special Collections has an Idaho bibliography project
- FARRIT has a collection of Idaho bibliographies on their website:
http://www.lili.org/farrit/Bibs_index.htm