

To: Orbis Cascade Alliance Council

From: Shared Content Team, WEST working group
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Subject: Canceling the Alliance's consortial WEST membership

The following analysis is offered in partial fulfillment of the following [Shared Content Team](#) goals:

“In light of recent changes to the funding structure, articulate the ongoing value of WEST in a report to the Board and Council [and to] consider new directions for the program and other distributed print archive initiatives ”

SCT's next steps:

1. Clarify the relationship between WEST and the Alliance DPR. SCT advises that a formal MOU process be undertaken with SCT providing initial language for review by the Policy and Coordination Committee.
2. The Alliance should consider the DPR to be a legacy project and make no efforts to expand or further develop it.
3. The Alliance should not reconsider rejoining as a WEST consortial member for five years.
4. As appropriate, SCT may bring formal recommendations to the Board in June.
5. SCT has proposed to offer an information and discussion session about WEST at the Summer Meeting.

Why is the Alliance letting its consortial WEST membership lapse?

Since 2011, the Alliance consortial membership supported WEST by bundling membership fees for the Alliance's smaller libraries. WEST is now reaching the end of their grant funding and needs to replace approximately half of its revenue in FY16. This is being accomplished by raising membership fees, implementing a new tiered pricing model, and reducing costs.

The new model no longer includes a discounted price for consortia, and the fee increases for the participants range from 65% to 450%. Council opted not to include WEST in its FY16 budget, so libraries may make independent decisions about whether to continue their participation with WEST directly.

What are the benefits of an institutional WEST membership?

Access to more than 12,000 journals (17,000 titles); preservation of the scholarly record; automated collections analyses and support for archiving decisions and collection comparisons via CRL's PAPER system; expanded opportunities for participation as archive holders and holdings contributors; and substantial opportunities to reclaim collections space by removing "low-risk" titles available in WEST.

What are the effects of cancelling the consortium membership on our member libraries?

Libraries will lose access to WEST holdings. Libraries that weeded their journal collections based on WEST holdings should give serious consideration to an independent membership. The consortium fee and independent member fee are the same for 2016, so libraries are not financially penalized for this decision. In addition, non-member libraries will no longer have an opportunity to contribute their holdings to WEST unless they join.

How does cancelling the consortium membership affect our WEST Archive Holders?

Libraries' long-term obligations as WEST Archive Holders will continue without change, regardless of current membership status. These libraries are advised to join as independent members of WEST. Archive Holders are obligated by the terms of the original contract to continue WEST workflow procedures for the loaning of print volumes, scanning of requested content, and ongoing validation tasks. See the WEST document [Access Guidelines for WEST Archives](#) for a list of these ongoing responsibilities.

Current WEST Archive Holders included in the Alliance membership:

1. Oregon Health & Science University
2. Seattle Pacific University
3. Southern Oregon University
4. The Evergreen State College
5. Willamette University

What effect does the end of consortium membership have on existing DPR commitments?

The DPR titles are a part of WEST and will remain so throughout the stipulated retention time frame. Libraries must continue to honor the DPR commitments they made with the Alliance pending any further decisions.

Is it possible for an Alliance library to join WEST for archive access only?

No. WEST relies on the collaborative efforts of its member institutions to build a comprehensive backfile of titles. Therefore, actively contributing holdings information is a key component of meaningful participation.