Orbis Cascade Alliance
Content Creation & Dissemination Team
DPLA Proposal for the Board of Directors
2015 October 9

The Content Creation & Dissemination Team proposes that the Alliance become a DPLA Service Hub for Alliance members, launching in 2017 January. We are seeking approval of this concept from the Board in October and Council in November in order to proceed with full budget implications for Board and Council consideration in 2016 February and March.

What is DPLA?
The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) is a national-level portal for digital content from libraries other cultural heritage institutions with value-added search and browse features. DPLA focuses on shared values of maximal openness to cultural heritage, a strong public spirit, an emphasis on collective action and collaboration across many institutions and individuals, and free democratic access to knowledge. With an application programming interface (API) and maximally open data, DPLA is used by software developers, researchers, and others to create novel environments for learning, tools for discovery, and engaging apps. This opens up curation to our researchers and is a vital support for things like digital humanities. The director of DPLA is Dan Cohen, one of the leaders in digital humanities activities. DPLA is made up of a network of hubs across the US; they aim to complete their network by the end of 2017.

Institutional Impacts and Advantages
- DPLA is making progress in its quest to support teaching and learning. In their 2015 whitepaper (http://dp.la/info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Using-Large-Collections-in-Education-DPLA-paper-4-9-15-2.pdf), Dan Cohen and Franky Abbott acknowledge that examples of DPLA providing that support are emergent, and that some barriers will take work to overcome: "DPLA needs to do more to adapt and highlight its value to potential educational users by building resources that help them focus on relevant content more quickly. We are not alone in this pursuit; other large collections of online humanities content remain underutilized because they haven't made their way into the workstream and syllabi of educators." DPLA has laid out a plan for addressing those gaps that focuses on large-scale curation and outreach to key audiences.
- DPLA brings together collections scattered at institutions around the country and offers ways to interact, teach, and learn with those collections. The ability to not only discover materials related by subject and/or creator is not new; providing a platform for creating learning and teaching tools is. This is a dynamic venue in which we can move beyond specialized, institutionally-based resources for teaching and learning.
- Based on consultation with institutions (including Clemson University, University of Montana, University of Idaho, and the University of Washington) that currently contribute content to DPLA, we conclude the following about the institutional experience:
  - DPLA offers another venue for content exposure and equalizes that exposure across institutions regardless of collection size, reputation, or infrastructure.

- It's the nature of unique collections that they are often scattered or split. DPLA offers an institution a space where collections are re-united and placed in context. Rather than the somewhat limited experience of teaching with or learning from a small representational sample, faculty and students can gain depth and understanding not possible within the limited institutional space.
  - Metadata cleanup required to participate in DPLA is low to moderate impact. Much of it can be automated or addressed by paraprofessional staff.
  - For library staff, the big value in joining DPLA is the community, support, and metadata standardization that makes their work easier and less time-consuming. This is consistent with the Alliance's Strategic Agenda: Do things once, do things the same, do things together.

Elements
- Create a DPLA Service Hub (this simply means multiple institutions; a Content Hub is a single institution) for Alliance members. Consideration of becoming a DPLA Service Hub for non-Alliance members is a possible future discussion but would be a separate decision for the Board and Council.
- Review and adopt base-level digital content metadata standards this fall. Standards are under review/revision and will be circulated mid- to late October to CCD Representatives. Depending on the reactions, they could be place by the end of 2015.
- Plan for compliance with standards, basic level validation tools to ensure compliance, and very little normalization or cleanup in order to lightly fund central staffing for aggregation.
- Standards will apply to new metadata; cleanup of legacy metadata will be at participating institutions' discretion.
- The CCD Team recommends using the existing metadata harvester developed for Archives West for aggregation. CCD continues to pursue unique content aggregation in Alliance Primo as its other priority goal; they are mutually complementary initiatives.
- Whether to feed digital objects to DPLA only or to create a regional aggregation in the SILS or another interface remains an open question. CCD is happy to document financial impacts of both approaches but would appreciate Board and Council feedback.
- Although CCD will offer an option for DPLA to be supported by all Alliance members in January, this is more likely an opt-in offering of the CCD Program, similar to the current offerings of the Archives & Manuscripts Collections Service (EAD database, archival collection management). Unlike the A&M Service, DPLA would not be open to non-Alliance members at this time.

Future Details
Details of recommendation that CCD will continue work on after Board and Council discussion in October-November:
- Costs of implementation.
  - CCD will seek approval of concept in order to create a budget in time for FY17.
  - DPLA re-grant funds for hub development are not available to us as they are limited to Knight Newspaper communities.

- ○ Funding possibilities include Oregon LSTA and foundations.
  - ○ The Team recently learned that DPLA will have a tiered membership model starting January 2016; no further details available at this time.
- ● Direction for centrally funded staffing.
  - ○ As per the Collaborative Workforce model, options for centrally funded work (W1) include Alliance staff, member staff, or contract staff. The latter could include Mountain West Digital Library (MWDL). CCD Team will present specific options for staffing in January as part of the budget process.
  - ○ MWDL's fee structure is by institution. It is probably only financially viable to work with them if we negotiate a consortial price.
- ● Relationship with DPLA
  - ○ The DPLA data exchange agreement is currently a year-by-year; both parties can back out with a 30-day notice.
  - ○ We will seek more information on how this agreement does or does not change with the DPLA's emerging membership model.

Timeline

CCD proposes the following process based on when information is available us:

- ● October 15-16: Seek Board support with fuller proposal
- ● November 12-13: Seek Council permission to proceed with budget models and external funding
- ● January 19: Full budget model and cost distribution options presented to Board and, if approved, integrated into FY17 budget
- ● March 10-11: Council votes on FY17 budget, including DPLA
- ● 2016 Spring: External funding applications
- ● 2016 July: DPLA application
- ● 2017 January: Assuming DPLA application is accepted and we proceed on their nomal timeline: Go live