BC ELN – Institutional Repository Survey
Summer 2012

Contents

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1. Executive Summary

Strategy 3.2 of the BC ELN Strategic Plan calls for BC ELN to:

> Articulate and implement an appropriate role for BC ELN in managing open access archives [e.g. Institutional Repositories (IRs), Learning Object Repositories] and supporting adoption by BC ELN partners.
> http://www.eln.bc.ca/view.php?id=1947

In the summer of 2012, BC ELN partner libraries were invited to participate in an Institutional Repository Needs Assessment Survey. Results of the survey illustrate strong interest on the part of partner libraries in pursuing a collaborative institutional repository.

- 12 libraries rated their potential level of interest in a collaborative IR as 8/10 or higher.
- 6 libraries have definite intentions to develop an institutional repository in the very near future.
- 9 are considering implementation.
- 5 libraries have existing institutional repositories; none of these libraries are completely satisfied with current software, suggesting potential for expansion of a collaborative IR in the future.

Libraries indicate a variety of local needs that a collaborative IR would meet, with cost savings and technical support being the most frequently cited needs. Local branding and autonomy are an essential component of a collaborative IR project.

2. Next Steps

Partner libraries' responses to the survey will continue to provide guidance during the next phase of the IR project. BC ELN will form a Concept Committee which will be tasked with determining whether a collaborative IR approach is feasible, and making recommendations on issues such as desired features and 3rd party- vs. library-hosted options.
BC ELN will also communicate with partner libraries around services which may meet library needs for certain specialized material types, e.g., BCcampus's proposed Curriculum Guides initiative and the BC Digitization Coalition's digital collection hosting service.

6 libraries intend to develop an IR in the near future.

9 libraries are considering implementation of an IR.

12 libraries rated their interest in a collaborative IR as 8/10 or higher.

There is great interest in the Library and in the institution as a whole in creating an IR.
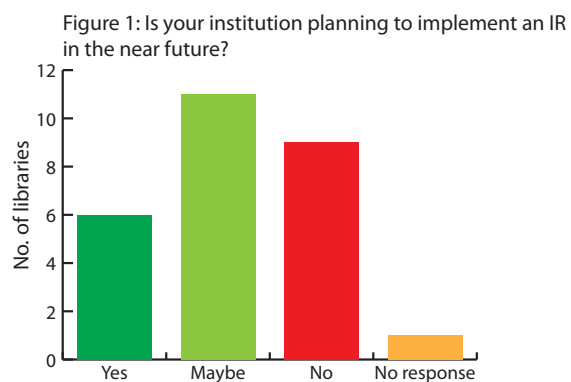- Kwantlen Polytechnic University

We feel the timing to propose an IR is right... but we also don't have the level of technical support at our institution...
- University of the Fraser Valley

3. Background

IRs were a topic of significant interest at the December 2011 BC ELN All-Partner Meeting. In response, the May 2012 issue of BC ELN Connect feature article highlighted existing institutional repositories in BC: http://eln.bc.ca/newsletter/201204/article.html.
Thirty-one BC ELN partner libraries (100%) participated in the Institutional Repository Needs Assessment Survey.

Figure 1: Is your institution planning to implement an IR in the near future?

4. Institutions Without IRs

- 26 of the 31 libraries do not currently have an IR.
  - 6 plan to implement an IR in the near future.
    - 2 have specific software in mind.
  - 3 express interest in implementing an IR in the near future.
    - 2 have investigated IR options, but face budgetary and technological restraints.
  - 11 libraries responded that their institution might be planning to implement an IR in the near future.

Most of those who commented express interest; one institution is interested, but states that they lack IT resources and support necessary for successfully implementing an IR. Nine libraries respond that they are not planning to implement an IR in the near future. Of these, one states that they would like to implement an IR within 3 years. See figure 1 for a graphical representation of this data, and see below for detailed comments.

Comments – Is your institution planning to implement an IR in the near future?

Institutions that answered "Yes"

British Columbia Institute of Technology: *BCIT Library may add the Innovative Interfaces IR product to the suite of LIS we maintain. There is growing demand for a centralize[d] institutional repository to store, arrange, describe and access born digital files.*

University of Northern British Columbia: *We have selected Islandora as the software to support our IR and are working on software to ingest electronic theses and dissertations into the IR. We expect to have the IR publicly accessible in 2013.*

Justice Institute of British Columbia: *We have a fairly new Applied Research Department, plus we have more graduate students.*

Kwantlen Polytechnic University: *There is great interest in the Library and in the institution as a whole in creating an IR. Work has been done to locate a suitable provider of a turnkey model for an IR at [our institution] but the budget request for this was denied for this fiscal year.*

University of the Fraser Valley: *We've been investigating various options for an IR. We feel the timing to propose an IR is right. However, our preliminary research on products has us concerned. We probably don't have the budget for a fully-hosted product (such as Digital Commons) but we also don't have the level of technical support at our institution for a non-hosted system.*

Institutions that answered "Maybe"

Camosun College: *We are interested in an IR for learning objects, institutional reports and research, etc.*

Emily Carr University of Art + Design: *Interested in implementing an IR, but lack the IT resources and support currently.*

Okanagan College: *Our college has announced that it plans to increase the amount of attention it pays to applied research and is hiring a new administrator to provide leadership in this area. I have pointed out that access to an IR could be a beneficial or even essential piece of this strategy. But we have no definite plans to implement one at this time.*

3

Thompson Rivers University: *Very preliminary at this point due to staffing uncertainty.*

Yukon College: *Interested in exploring possibilities and options.*

Institutions that answered "No"

Columbia College: *We currently have a small collection of photos, brochures calendars and a few items of historical*

interest. *It is not anticipated that there will be interest to parties other than to our college staff. We do not have sufficient staff to manage an IR.*

Langara College: *We have digitized some BC Studies publications that were out of copyright (as a project). Documents housed at Internet archive (archive.org)*

Vancouver Community College: *Not in the near future, but we would like to have one within 3 years.*

5. A Collaborative BC IR: Interest and Needs
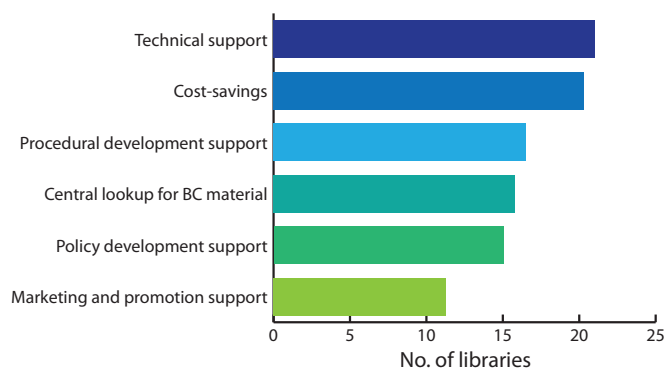
Top Rated Benefits of a Collaborative IR:
- Technical support
- Cost-savings
- Procedural development support

Top Rated Future IR Content:
- Institutional archival documents
- Scholarly works
- Other educational resources

Figure 2: Benefits of a Collaborative IR Important to Institutions

Libraries expressed a variety of reasons a collaborative approach to IRs would benefit their institution, selecting as many as applied. Technical support and cost-savings were the top two reasons. For further detail, please see figure 2.
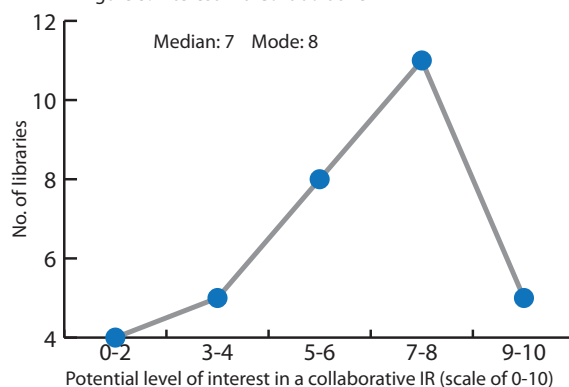
Three libraries wrote in additional benefits of a collaborative IR important to their library. They cited open source and metadata standards, digital materials preservation, offsite back-ups, the ability to highlight institutional content to their own users, and technician time-savings as important benefits to their institutions.

Figure 3: Interest in a Collaborative IR

Libraries indicated whether they were potentially interested in a collaborative IR given that it meets their institutional needs. On a scale of 0 to 10, with indicating high interest, the mode was 8, median 7, and average 6. For a visual representation of these results, see figure 3.
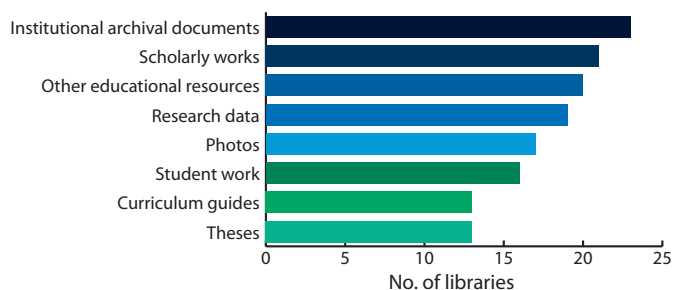
Institutions indicated the types of materials they would like to place in an IR; the results displayed some diversity in needs among participants, but largely similarities. Twenty-four libraries responded to this question.
- 100% stated they would place institutional archival documents in an IR
- 91% would include scholarly works
- 87% would include other educational resources.

Other types of resources varied from over half of the libraries to over 80%. For more detail and a visual representation of this data, see figure 4.

The vast majority of libraries stated they were interested in housing a mix of open access and restricted content on an IR. Five libraries indicated open access only, and no libraries indicated restricted content only.

Figure 4: Future IR Content

No. of libraries
Institutional archival documents
Scholarly works
Other educational resources
Research data
Photos
Student work
Curriculum guides
Theses

6. Benefits and Downsides to a Collaborative Approach

Libraries responded in detail regarding the overall benefits and downsides they saw from a collaborative approach. Shared expertise, an emphasis on shared service, and consistency for users in the province were commonly-cited benefits. Some institutions suggested that a great benefit would come to smaller institutions that might not have an IR otherwise. A potential downside repeated by several institutions was the possibility that individual institutions' content might not be distinct from the others. Institutions have an interest in highlighting their own research and other material, and making it easily accessible to users. Please see the detailed comments below for more information.

British Columbia Institute of Technology: *Benefits would be shared learning and moving technically in the same direction with industry trends. Downsides are potential risks of loss of funding or loss of support outside our institution.*

College of New Caledonia: *Downsides, possibly shared costs will be too high, hopefully a formula would weigh contribution/amount used etc. Also possibly the identity of the institution (e.g. search just my 'stuff') would be lost or hard to find in a large shared repository (hopefully not, with today's robust systems).*

Justice Institute of British Columbia: *No downsides.*

Kwantlen Polytechnic University:
Positive:
- *shared expertise*
- *opportunity for collaborative projects and collections*
- *shared promotion of open access model*

Negative:
- *Potential loss of local control over look & feel and branding (including of persistent URLs)*
- *confusion over 'ownership' of content among contributors/users*
- *long-term commitment required*

Okanagan College: *Consistency with government's emphasis on shared services*
Consistent access for both creators and users of knowledge across B.C.

If time and expertise spent on various IR support activities could be pooled and shared, that would be a tremendous advantage to all of us.
- University of British Columbia

These type of collaborative projects carry credibility and help to influence senior administrators (to get funds and allocated staff to the project.)
- Justice Institute of British Columbia

Royal Roads University: *Downsides: that our content would get lost in the whole (one of the main reasons for our repository is to highlight our institutional research), that loose quality standards about what is submitted would make the tool ultimately unappealing and unused, support possibly not being robust enough and the project ultimately being abandoned.*

Benefits: Perhaps we could consortially buy a product that is easier to support than our open source one is, without making it into a single repository.

Simon Fraser University: *Benefits would be for smaller institutions that do not have the resources to run their own IR. It would help populate the IR with more material. Perhaps a federated search of all BC post-secondary IRs would be a possibility.*

Thompson Rivers University: *The needs of a smaller institutions not being ranked as importantly as the needs of larger institutions.*

University of British Columbia: *If time and expertise spent on various IR support activities could be pooled and shared, that would be a tremendous advantage to all of us.*

University of the Fraser Valley: *UFV is definitely interested in a collaborative approach if it allows us to share costs and technical support. However, we aren't sure what is meant by a "collaborative IR". UFV would like its IR to be able to showcase UFV material and not have them intermingled with the accomplishments of other institutions. Our interest level indicated below (10) is based on the idea that UFV material would stand alone.*

University of Victoria: *For well established IRs like UVicSpace it may be a lot of work to join into a collaborative IR, but can see the benefits for smaller institutions that may not have an IR. We can see a benefit of just collaborating with other IR teams in a more formalized way for idea sharing.*

Vancouver Community College: *Huge benefits with collaboration – shared expertise – opportunities for prof. dev....*

Partner Institutions with IRs

Royal Roads
D-Space
http://dspace.royalroads.ca/docs/

Simon Fraser University
Locally developed Drupal
http://summit.sfu.ca/about

University of British Columbia
D-Space
https://circle.ubc.ca/

University of Victoria
D-Space
https://dspace.library.uvic.ca:8443/

Vancouver Island University
D-Space
http://viuspace.viu.ca

7. Current IR Situation

- 5 libraries indicated their institution currently has an IR
- None responded that their institution is "completely satisfied" with the current IR.
  - 1 library is "somewhat dissatisfied"
  - 4 are "somewhat satisfied" (see figure 5).

All institutions house scholarly works including research, articles, and books, as well as theses, other student work, and photographs in their IR. Some libraries also kept research data, other educational resources, and institutional archival documents in their IR.

Four of the five institutions included comments about other materials currently in their IR:

Simon Fraser University: *We also have university output that is not necessarily "scholarly", such as publications developed for community readership, not for other scholars.*

University of British Columbia: *lots of video and audio files (= other educational resources) will be adding photos this summer.*

University of Victoria: *maps audio recordings video recordings small data sets with dissertations.*

Vancouver Island University: *Special collections including digitized audio and transcripts of oral histories.*

Figure 5: How satisfied are you with your current IR?

Four out of five institutions ranked the technology needed to use their IR as "somewhat easy" or "not easy". Only one replied that this technology was "very easy" to use (see figure 6).

Four institutions would consider moving to a collaborative IR if one were available. One elaborated on conditions and concerns relating to a potential decision to join a collaborative effort:

Vancouver Island University: *Decision factors would be weighed against current solution and would include: Initial and ongoing costs; Autonomy wrt branding, configuration, policy definition, submission workflow, management, etc.; Availability and responsiveness of technical support; Flexibility of the solution to meet local existing and anticipated collection / preservation requirements.*

We would be interested in exploring possibilities of how a collaborative IR would work. We see there could be lots of complexities in moving content.
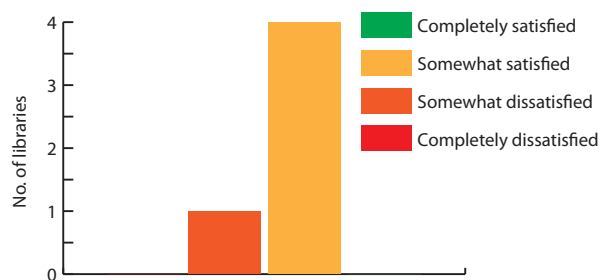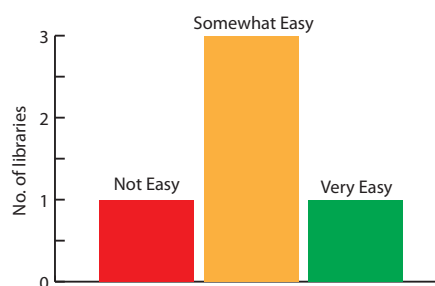
Figure 6: Is [your IR] technology reasonably easy to use?

8. Additional Comments

Seven libraries shared some additional comments at the end of the survey.

British Columbia Institute of Technology*: We would like to have access [to] some expertise in the requirements, interoperability, standards, and maintenance of IR. Not necessarily a collaborative software or server solution.*

Camosun College: *This is an exciting initiative and one I would be willing to volunteer time on.*

Justice Institute of British Columbia: *This collaboration would help our library to get this project going quickly. These type of collaborative projects carry credibility and help to influence senior administrators (to get funds and allocated staff to the project.)*

Kwantlen Polytechnic University: *I am very pleased to see the ELN exploring this issue. I believe that many small- to medium-sized institutions are considering establishing an IR, but may lack the funds and expertise to tackle it alone.*

Simon Fraser University: *It is a very good initiative, and although SFU has no interest in actually being part of a collaborative IR, I would be happy to provide any support to the endeavour.*

University of British Columbia: *Delighted to see you're doing this, and looking forward to next steps.*

Vancouver Community College: *Great idea.*

9. Respondents

31 (100% response rate)

Alexander College
Marc Breschuk

British Columbia Institute of Technology
Elizabeth Padilla

Camosun College
Sybil Harrison

Capilano University
Grace Makarewicz

College of New Caledonia
Katherine Plett

College of the Rockies
Shahida Rashid

Columbia Bible College
Richard Thiessen

Columbia College
Yvonne de Souza

Douglas College
Debbie Schachter

Emily Carr University of Art + Design
James Rout

Justice Institute of British Columbia
April Haddad

Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Todd Mundle & Chris Burns

Langara College
Patricia Cia

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
Linda Epps

North Island College
Mary Anne Guenther

Northern Lights College
Janet Beavers

Northwest Community College
Melanie Wilke

Okanagan College
Ross Tyner

Quest University Canada
Venessa Wallsten

Royal Roads University
Rosie Croft

Selkirk College
Gregg Currie

Simon Fraser University
Donald Taylor

Thompson Rivers University
Kathy Gaynor

Trinity Western University
Ted Goshulak

University of British Columbia
Hilde Colenbrander

University of the Fraser Valley
Brenda Philip

University of Northern British Columbia
James MacDonald

University of Victoria
Corey Davis & Katy Nelson

Vancouver Community College
Tim Atkinson

Vancouver Island University
Dana McFarland

Yukon College
Rob Sutherland