

7-1-2007

Rethinking CARLI Collections Awards Task Force Final Report to the Board

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois

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Recommended Citation

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois, "Rethinking CARLI Collections Awards Task Force Final Report to the Board" (2007). *CARLI Task Forces*. Paper 2.
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DATE: July 20, 2007

FROM: Rethinking CARLI Collections Awards Program Task Force

TO: CARLI Board of Directors

At its May 18, 2007 meeting, the CARLI Board of Directors established a task force to prepare recommendations to reconfigure and strengthen the Collections Enhancement Awards Program. In order to implement the changes recommended, the task force was instructed to report to the Board at its July 2007 meeting. The task force met on June 6 and reached the following consensus on the scope and direction for the CARLI Collections Awards Program.

The Collections Awards Program needs revitalization:

- The program should become more innovative
- The program should demonstrate improved impact
- The program should operate under clearer and more rigorous rules
- The program will continue to be collaborative and primarily partner-based, including partners who may not be CARLI members

The success of the Collections Awards Program will best be measured by increases in access to information resources across the state. This can be accomplished in four basic areas:

- Establishing a new emphasis on the discovery of resources
- Continuing the commitment to the systemic analysis of resource strengths and weaknesses
- Supporting the conversion of print resources held by member libraries into electronic and digital formats
- Focusing acquisitions on resources in all appropriate formats, which benefit the broadest possible students and faculty at CARLI member libraries

Specific programmatic initiatives may include, but are not restricted to:

- Acquiring materials never purchased that demonstrably strengthen the statewide collection
- Converting materials from one format to another that is more accessible to students and faculty
- Creating or enhancing bibliographic access for current collections in support of resource sharing
- Creating access to unique collections (e.g. archival collections, student newspapers)

- Conducting research and analyzing access to current collections and on the program as a whole
- Maintaining last physical copy(ies) within the state

To achieve the above objectives the task force recommendations:

Establish an annual theme for the Collections Enhancement Awards Program.

While a particular theme may not be applicable to all CARLI institutions, the theme should change annually, so that, over time, all CARLI members will have an opportunity to participate in the program.

Allocate \$100,000 to support the conversion of materials from physical formats to electronic/digital formats, in order to make them more readily accessible for resource sharing.

Possible project: Fund an Open Content Alliance (OCA) digitization workstation and staff to be housed on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. The workstation can digitize approximately 3000 books (250-300 pages each) per year. CARLI members would submit proposals to have volumes digitized.

Allocate \$50,000 - \$70,000 to enhance bibliographic access to current collections; and/or analyze current collection strengths and weaknesses.

Possible projects: Add holdings information for serials; create electronic guides to archival collections; perform targeted analyses in designated segments of the state's current collection; review the history and impact of the collection enhancement awards.

Allocate \$80,000 - \$100,000 to acquire materials never purchased.

This portion of the program would remain similar to the past program. Awards would be tied to the clearly articulated annual theme for the program. The provision of bibliographic access and the ability to track and report usage would also be required for awards. The digitization of materials would be supported, as well.

The rules governing the Collections Enhancement Awards should be modified by the Collections Working Group and approved by the Board of Directors prior to soliciting FY 2009 proposals. The revised rules should:

Broaden the concept of "partners" for collaboration to allow for inclusion of historical societies, museums, etc.

Consider multi-year proposals

Tie the purchase of materials under the program to agreements to serve as last copy repositories for the area(s) collected

Require the timely cataloging of all materials purchased under the program. The expectation communicated to those seeking awards that full bibliographic access will be provided within two months after receiving materials purchased with CARLI funds.

Require the demonstration that a collection analysis has been conducted to justify the value of the proposal.

In addition to these recommendations, the task force suggests that:

A CARLI group, such as the Collections Working Group should investigate what other digitization technology is available so that future years may fund a project that would digitize non-book materials at a central location.

Members of the Task Force

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