

PITT-CMU LIBRARIES COLLABORATION EVENT



2/17/2015

A Brainstorming Activity

52 staff members from the University Library System and the Health Sciences Library System at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University Libraries discussed four questions related to the future of their collaboration and generated new directions for activity.

Participants were asked to think about four questions:

What does it mean to be a great library in the 21st century?

As only one of many ways to consume information, how do libraries find ways of adding value?

Identify trends and their impact on the library in the next ten years.

From a user perspective, what is the boldest way we could collaborate?

To prepare, participants consulted:

<http://guides.library.pitt.edu/future>

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THINKING ABOUT OUR FUTURE

A Great 21st Century Library

A great library in the 21st century is driven by what the user needs to be successful. How do they research, present, interact, study, and create? The great library provides a seamless technology experience, intuitive access to information, flexible physical space, and responsive services at the point-of-need. In invisible and visible ways, the great library nurtures collaboration across disciplines, between peers, between users and the library, and across institutions. Users are inspired to create and interact in both the physical and digital space.

The great library is a dynamic and modern place to be for its users and its staff. Staff are empowered to propose ideas, try them, and even fail. Staff innovate, collaborate, and assess to improve services and processes. Staff and services are integrated into the teaching, learning, and research cycles of the institution. Researchers think of the great library first when they need to organize, share, and curate their work. The great library scans and responds to the many environments in which it operates: locally for user needs, institutionally for driving goals, and internationally for trends. The great library shows leadership in, not reactions to, changes affecting the academy.



Word cloud of the top 25 words from participants related to being a great library

Adding Value

Participants noted that our libraries add value to our communities in the following ways:

Research: by life cycle support for the research experience of our users; recognizing and assisting with the active research process; and providing assessment and learning in the conduct of research by adding authority, expertise, and consulting to the research endeavor.

Access: by assisting with open access management; providing access to services, publications, and unique collections; giving access to information via consortia contracts and ILL; and creating seamless access between sources.

Users and their needs: by embedding librarian services that take us to the space of our users; providing tools for users that simplify processes; providing education and instruction services; providing e-resources support for remote users; and focusing on users by developing connections with them.

Data: by supporting research data management activities that inform proper protocols and policies; providing data and scholarly communication services; teaching research groups how to follow proper metadata practices; assisting with open data sharing globally; and promoting open access.

Resources & Service: by purchasing credible resources; providing qualified librarians to assist patrons in locating that information; connecting resources to make them available from anywhere, anytime; collaborating on resources so access is provided to all users; and assisting with the navigation of our vast amount of resources by creating library guides available 24/7.

Recognizing Trends

A wide variety of trends were identified that are impacting academic libraries now. Most will presumably drive more change over the next ten years, though predictions of their longer-term impact were limited.

- **The focus on data/data management:** the growing response to “big data”; open data and related mandates; data preservation; text/data mining; and the recognition of data beyond the STEM fields (e.g., digital humanities).
- **New/expanding roles for libraries and their staff:** supporting the research life cycle; the library as publisher; advocacy for scholarly communication/publishing issues; rethinking service models (e.g., embedded librarians); librarians as researchers; new types of collaborations with student workers; and showcasing ideas/research to foster collaboration.
- **Changes in the academic environment:** evolving service populations (e.g., more non-traditional students and adjunct faculty); new teaching models (e.g., flipped classroom); focus on transparency and assessment; digital/information literacy; multi-device environments; and students as creators.
- **The focus on “open” models:** open access and related mandates/advocacy; open science; open licenses; and open knowledge sharing.
- **Highlighting local/unique collections:** promotion and increased accessibility (e.g., digitizing); taking advantage of related expertise; and increasing diversity and specialization among libraries.
- **Collaborative approaches to collections:** collection development; digitizing; purchasing power; mitigating flat budgets/rising costs; and consolidating off-site storage.
- **Redefining physical space:** open/flexible space; learning commons; collaboration/makerspaces; and transformed physical collections.

“Libraries in the 21st century have a lot to contend with, from coffee houses . . . [to] the internet. Being a library at this time seems to be a balance of all of these factors. One of our biggest draws is having professionals to supplement all of the other amenities. [We] need to connect with the people who need to use the library - to provide excellent service in face to face transactions, as well as the comfort and familiarity, without compromising the collection.”

– University Library System open survey respondent

COLLABORATION THREADS

Participants identified a myriad of collaboration threads, large and small, that the libraries can intertwine. Some of these ideas are being applied in pieces by libraries across the US and have been in place for many years. Most of these ideas have not been attempted together in a deliberate coordination by two regional education and economic cornerstones as part of a large-scale effort.

Existing Library Threads (the here and now)

- Transform physical collections.
 - Coordinate collection management.
 - Combine off-site storage.
 - Weed duplicate materials.
 - Uniform policies across interlibrary loan services.
- Data management services.
- Reference and instruction.
 - Base on subject strengths and unique collections.
 - Share unique expertise across institutions.
- Publishing.
 - Combine library publishing efforts and expand; provide for joint publishing.
 - Coordinate approach to scholarly publishing issues.
- Transparent strategic planning.
 - Combine planning processes.
 - Involve users in planning.
 - Develop a common mission.
- Assessment of internal practices and external library impact.
- Specialized research support.
- Unique collections.
 - Utilize unique collections for all students in related courses and researchers and faculty in related disciplines.
 - Combine digitization efforts.



New Library Threads (the future)

- Create a think-tank on library innovation.
 - Team with various groups inside and outside the library.
 - Become a resource/training center for other libraries.
- New services beyond information. “Make something great.”
 - Library as Lab. Joint makerspace, hackerspace, tinkerspace, incubator labs.
 - Open education resources.
 - Open textbooks.
- Develop platforms/tools for resource access.
 - Promote seamless experience.
 - Joint web presence. Same website design and interface.
 - Catalog. Combine and share one catalog of local holdings.
- Joint license negotiation.
 - Influence vendors and pricing.
 - Deduplicate vendors and negotiate new contracts for resources.

- Negotiate for universal, seamless access.
- Research cycle model. Map existing services to the research life cycle and identify gaps.
- Function as a learning organization.
 - Create joint professional development.
 - Share expertise. Meet regularly. Develop a community of practice.
 - Share an intranet.
- Joint fiscal resources. Share budgets.
- Joint management.
- Share physical presence. Same policies for use privileges: e.g. item check-out, study room use. Become 24/7.
- Joint events. Exhibits, partnering to create programming.
- Cross-functional teams across systems.
- Joint marketing and communication.
- Create information tools that add value or increase understanding at point-of-need.

Institutional Threads

- Facilitate cross-institutional research.
- Open access mandate across institutions.
- Promote open science.
- Sign Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).
- Data management. Increased capacity for data storage and reproducibility. Open data policy.
- Grant opportunities.
- Promote start-up culture/entrepreneurial, do-it-yourself culture.
- Cross-system transportation/delivery.

Community Threads

- Explore city and county partnerships.
 - Open data Pittsburgh.
 - Carnegie Public Library.
- Explore corporate partnerships.
- Serve local entrepreneurial alumni.
- Partnerships/outreach with special population groups.
 - K-12 schools, veterans, seniors.



“I'd like us to...identify how we can shape the future and respond to and challenge trends rather than only follow trends.”

- *University Library System open survey respondent*

Bringing together the three library systems to discuss our future was an exciting opportunity. Participants were positive and engaged. We look forward to the next steps in this process.

- Submitted 3/5/15 by

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