

Best Practices in Cooperative Collection Development

A report prepared by the
CRL Working Group on Best Practices in Cooperative Collection Development
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Mission and Methodology

The mission of The CRL “Best Practices” Working Group is to identify the circumstances or elements that either facilitate or work against the success of cooperative efforts in collection development and management and to distinguish the practices that sustain a viable and relevant cooperative project or program.

The Working Group adopted as its working definition of a cooperative collection development project that of the CRL Working Group that mapped current projects — “any collaborative activity characterized by planned, coordinated collection development and/or management. All collaborative enterprises, even informal working arrangements, are eligible for inclusion as long as they are active and viable.”¹ In order to develop a set of elements and best practices, the committee decided to conduct in-depth interviews with a sample number of projects whose viability, track record, and longevity, indicated they were carrying out what could be called “best practices.”

We used the 82 respondents to the Mapping Survey as an initial pool of potential interviewees, with the goal to identify around 20 respondents to interview. We wanted to obtain a representative sample of different categories of cooperative activities by size, focus, and makeup of participants. We also strove to have a representation of foreign cooperative projects. Projects from the Mapping Survey were evaluated in terms of the following variables: description of mission and activities, type of cooperation, subject and format, area of cooperation, and longevity. The committee members also weighed what we had learned from the published literature on cooperative collection development and considered projects that simply had earned a reputation as successful in the arena of cooperation.

The Projects

The committee conducted interviews with representatives from 18 projects, 16 of which had participated in the Mapping Survey. In the process of analyzing the projects for inclusion in our study, the committee found that the projects could be assigned to one of three categories:

- Type 1: selection of non-electronic monographs and/or serials

¹ See survey at <http://www.crl.edu/info/awccconf/ccdsurvey.htm>

- Type 2: shared electronic purchase or licensing
- Type 3: access, storage and preservation.

While some of the cooperatives surveyed were engaged in more than one of these types of cooperative activity, we chose to focus the interview on practices in a single category. While a listing and short description of each of the projects can be found in Appendix 1, it is useful to highlight some distinctive aspects about the projects and groupings.

Type 1: selection of non-electronic monographs and/or serials. Five of the six cooperatives in this category are composed of academic libraries. Three of these are devoted to cooperative collection development in the arena of area studies. TRLN has been a model of building cooperative collections among state institutions of higher education for years. CRL's Purchase Proposal Program represents a long standing successful membership-run consortium of research libraries. The one multi-type library cooperative in this category is the Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program (ICCMP).

Type 2: shared electronic purchase or licensing. Five of the cooperatives can be characterized as academic library consortia. The California Digital Library (CDL) and Florida's College Center for Library Automation (CCLA) are representative of large multi-campus public institutions of higher education. Louisiana's Academic Library Information (LALINC) crosses institutional lines in representing all public and private academic libraries. The Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC) forms a consortium of small privates in a single state. Northeast Research Libraries (NERL) crosses state boundaries to bring regional academic libraries together. The remaining project in the category, OhioLINK is a true multi-type library consortium and has been on the forefront of building shared collections in electronic resources for years.

Type 3: Storage, Access, and Preservation. This category contains the three foreign projects, two from the National Library of Australia (NPLAN and PANDORA) and one from Finland, the National Repository Library. The two Australian projects can be considered preservation cooperatives: one to preserve the nation's newspapers and one to preserve internet publications on Australia. The other three cooperative projects are in the area of archiving or storage: the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC) has a successful protected titles program; Information Alliance brings three separate regional academic institutions together to build shared collections of "little-used" materials; CONSORT consists of four Ohio colleges who cooperate to create a shared remote storage facility.

The description and analysis of opportunities, barriers, and best practices in cooperative collection development that follow are derived from the qualitative responses of the interviewees from each project to a set of over 20 questions. (See Appendix 2.) The findings from the interviews for each of the three categories are organized into three areas of analysis: formation and founding; decision making, organization and administration; and funding and infrastructure.

Opportunities, Challenges, and Best Practices in Cooperative Collection Development

1. Formation and Founding

1.1. Selection

For the six projects/programs that are concerned with selection and purchase of non-electronic materials, a common element that contributed to their strong foundation was a positive history of sharing resources and of cooperation. A tradition of collaboration gave the participants of the area studies' projects, in particular, "confidence and trust" to enter into agreements that would define and delimit their local holdings. Communication and transparency were critical to maintaining the trust once these selection projects were started. These cooperatives also pointed to the importance of commitment from the highest levels in the early stages. At the very least, there needs to be a perception from the top administrators that collaboration is good for the institution. The higher up the impetus came from to establish a cooperative collection development program, the more likely the chances that it will succeed. Director-level commitments, for example, put LAARP on solid ground early. New monies, from grants or elsewhere, can also be a decisive element of success for getting a collective on solid footing. LAARP, for example, obtained a foundation grant that served as seed money that drew initial participants in unexpected numbers.

A well defined focus and explicated goals combined with the ability to be flexible were essential even in the early stages of the shared selection cooperatives. The need for flexibility and agility were reinforced when initial decisions or actions had to be changed or overturned. CRL, for example, started with four programs and dropped two that were unworkable, centralized cataloging and coordination of collection policies. The other two founding programs, cooperative acquisitions and storage of lesser demanded materials, have been successful for over half a century. These cooperatives also pointed out the need to share the goal of creating a "collective library." The East Coast Consortium of Slavic Library Collections accepted that they could share the cost of acquisitions without sacrificing depth and breadth of collections once the participants adopted the principle of a shared library. ICCMP, however, made the very important observation regarding the establishment of their cooperative, that successful cooperation can help define and refine the participant's individual missions and goals. For all these cooperatives that are based on shared selection, especially the area study projects, the division of collecting responsibilities needs to be well defined and coherent in a way that is easily comprehensible to both selectors and administrators.

Just as a tradition of cooperation is an element of a successful start, the existence of longstanding allegiances or loyalties to institutions outside of the current cooperative can impede its success. Traditional relationships need to be transcended so they do not skew the priorities of the participating institutions. Strong individual personalities with competing agendas can create tension and work against the cooperative effort.

Another barrier that is confronted early on in this type of cooperative is the unequal distribution of commitment, effort, and money among the institutional partners. TRLN pointed out that one of the greatest challenges in defining selection responsibilities is separating out core areas for each campus from those that can be distributed among the partners. Some early acquisitions decisions had to be reversed as procedures and guidelines were not fully tested. LARRP warned that going into the uncharted waters of distributed collection development, takes more time than one bargains for. They did not realize initially that they did not have a great enough mix of knowledge about metadata, cataloging, and document delivery, for example, in the early formation of the project and that consultants would have helped to avoid some poor decisions. Logistical barriers should be anticipated. For example, cooperatives whose membership spans different states will confront additional state regulations for purchasing and sharing monies. In addition, in these types of projects in which efficient ILL is key, it became clear early on that costs for sharing in a distributed model can simply not be controlled in an agreement.

1.2. Shared Electronic Licensing

Strategic use of acquisition funds, commitment to communication, and a structure for input are all part of the best practices that put these consortia on a solid foundation. For the consortia that license and build shared electronic collections, a tradition of cooperation was just as important as for the print selection cooperatives. NERL, SCELCL, and CDL each had a history and “culture” of cooperation in a prior arena. The founders of SCELCL, composed of small private academics, saw early participants appreciating the opportunities of “banding together” and becoming part of a “system.” Common goals were articulated from the beginning among these projects. Impetus and resources flowing from the top administrators of the institution were widely pointed to as a critical element in establishing the consortia. For example, the University of Southern California’s University Librarian brought vision and funding that was necessary to SCELCL’s beginning. USC, as the single institution with a mission, continued to drive the agenda and solidified SCELCL in the early years. The founding director of the CDL provided vision and political connections that led this program to a solid start. He persuaded the president of the University of California system of the vision of a California Digital Library, who in turn championed it during its fledgling years.

Strong founding leaders understood the necessity of centralized funding for establishing a shared electronic collection. Both CDL and OhioLINK realized early on how a separate additional funding line brought immediate credibility to the initiative. They spoke to the need to leverage central funding to create common ground. It provided an “impetus for cooperation” (OhioLINK) and brought the unbelievers and doubters to see the benefits of cooperation. LALINC’s Board of Regents also realized the importance of bringing separate funding to the table to get buy-in of a shared collection program.

A deliberate pace and careful building of an advisory structure were important elements to achieve widespread support and buy-in. CCLA, the statewide consortium for

community colleges in Florida, cited the advisory committee structure as necessary from the beginning. No small challenge for a statewide consortium of 28 institutions, the advisory structure allowed for input from all sizes of colleges. LALINC noted that a well thought out committee structure with representation of various constituencies contributed to getting members to cooperate from the beginning. Planning for the CDL also was a process that involved all stakeholders from the system, not just librarians. While the CDL director knew planning could not bog down, he needed to allow time for widespread input. After 18 months of planning, the CDL had gained the confidence of the campuses. OhioLINK indicated that the pace of adoption and expansion needs to be deliberate. A slow pace will not overwhelm the members. Almost all mentioned the important practice of communicating early and often and of the necessity to make clear why one database was selected over another. Getting information out quickly, efficiently and making sure it gets read were a constant battle, but one worth fighting. The more complex the organization is, the more the need for “constant and redundant” communication.

NERL began and has remained the least structured of these consortia. NERL’s history underscores that economic necessity and opportunity are powerful preconditions for a cooperative collection development program. NERL’s founding, in fact, came about because vendors were offering discounts for consortia.

A challenge for the electronic resources cooperative was the difficulty local institutions had in overcoming their parochialism and thinking “globally” or in a statewide way. Moving beyond known boundaries and a fear of change and loss of control were barriers for a number of these consortia. Even in a system that is a corporate entity, such as the University of California, there also exists “the deep suspicion to centralized solutions” at the campuses. OhioLINK noted the problems of its members in adjusting to models of shared funding, common agendas, and single timeframes. CCLA found that early on local needs were raised, even when they might be in opposition to the combined need of 28 community colleges. As the selection group mentioned, CCLA members learned the need to be flexible and adaptable to time lines that might not be ideal. Large multitype consortia such as LALINC had to work hard to reconcile opposing needs and interests of its diverse membership. OhioLINK adopted a strategy of focusing on general reference resources because of the universal appeal of these as opposed to specialized resources. And as with those in the shared selection category, obtaining commitments from everyone to make the effort seem equitable was a challenge and contributed to the suspicion of the viability of the centralized model.

1.3. Access, Storage, and Preservation

A tradition of cooperation, shared vision and goals, and a flexible structure were important elements of a successful foundation for the Access, Storage, and Preservation Group. The CONSORT libraries in Ohio spoke of their cooperative being a “natural outgrowth” of elements that had been in place for some time. The fact that these libraries had a track record of successful programs in cataloging, information literacy, and government documents helped to give their selection-for-storage cooperative program a

solid and optimistic start. However, CONSORT also undertook the strategy to articulate the need for an explicit agreement on a common purpose and the vision behind it. Serious preparatory work to define and publicize the program gained buy-in. Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC), which involves seven independent institutions, had been working together for a number of years on reciprocal borrowing and document deliver when they launched their “protected titles” project. The project thus seemed like a “natural step” to take. NPLAN, involving a commitment by the state libraries of Australia to preserve and provide access to the country’s historic back file of newspapers, depended on a history of successful cooperation that gave the participants a desire to get off to a good start. They understood that there was a common problem of some urgency—the disappearance of Australian historical newspapers. The members shared an enthusiasm and passion for saving the newspapers that gave them all a sense of mission.

These cooperatives tended to set up a formal structure and set of goals, yet kept their set of objectives loose enough to adapt. This proved a successful strategy. As with other cooperatives the flexibility allowed libraries to commit without tight requirements and rigid accountability. PANDORA, composed of eight institutions, took on the daunting task of building a selective archive of their national heritage from the internet. The most important tactic in the beginning was just to make a start. Starting small and solving problems one at a time rather than trying to have everything in place, proved successful for PANDORA

These types of cooperatives were less likely than the other two to have access to additional funding sources, and they pointed to the lack of supplemental resources and funding as raising skepticism towards the cooperative project. Though not as pervasive as in the shared electronic projects, there was resistance by selectors to this kind of cooperative collection development. Information Alliance, the cooperative of three separate universities, found it a challenge to cultivate support from selectors whose participation was critical. For a task as enormous as PANDORA’s--to build a shared national repository off the ground, the absence of new money was a huge barrier. This group testified to the fact that it takes time to build staff support and to gain acceptance. The lack of the right expertise and the proper level and range of skills also proved a barrier in this arena of cooperation as in others.

2. Decision making, Organization, and Administration

2.1. Selection

For these cooperatives that must build shared collections of monographs and serials it is essential that individuals making decisions are committed to the idea of cooperation. What undermines commitment is both losing the glow after the cooperative is launched and the competition for the time of individual selectors, who have to balance commitments to the project and their local duties. SACWest made the compelling point that in these kinds of cooperatives, the goals of these cooperatives and the individual institutions cannot be at cross purposes or in competition if the shared program is to

succeed. One project noted that local needs must be perceived as being satisfied first before cooperative projects are built.

Decision making for the selection cooperatives is governed by standing agreements, guidelines for eligible materials, a nomination and voting process, or some combination of the above. The process for decision making for all but the most loosely structured projects involved a review or coordinating committee that recommended or evaluated purchase proposals. The ad hoc and loosely structured decision-making procedures were cited as allowing institutions the opportunity to work autonomously to meet institutional as well as consortia needs and goals. They cited the importance of the cooperative structure allowing for representation of the partner institutions and the use of the vote in the selection of materials as the best means to achieve that. LAARP noted that they created a “level playing field” for decision making by combining collection development librarians and library directors into a coordinating committee. The East Coast Consortium of Slavic Library Collections employs a rotating chair that coordinates meetings and projects. This model has proved very successful as information on vendors, acquisitions, and statistics gets shared and projects get moved along. Despite the variety of the structures and processes for selection decision among these cooperatives, they all felt they had been flexible enough to adapt over time, whether to growing membership or new technology. Adaptation included adding working groups, selector groups, or centralized support staff. Flexibility in the decision making process was echoed by all as necessary for making distributed collection building work. However, one cooperative noted that it is important to control the number of projects at any given time and to monitor the progress and communicate on that progress.

Communication and education remain a constant challenge. It was also clear that mechanisms to facilitate communication among selectors were essential. Communication devices ranged from web-based databases and templates to face-to-face meetings. Regular meetings were cited by one cooperative as providing the opportunity for librarians to share and develop ideas and to cultivate the goodwill necessary for cooperative projects. The cooperative needs to be more than a buying club but include educating people of the benefits of cooperation for all stakeholders. These cooperatives cited a number of barriers they confronted in the area of administration of their projects: the lack of institutional support, lack of comparable data from different institutions, lack of voter response, the difficulty of identifying the decision maker at an institution, lack of motivation, and the failure for members to meet obligations. These projects also had to guard against the negative impact of staff turn-over on the ongoing commitment to cooperation. It should also be noted that the commitment to representative decision making slows the process of decision making.

2.2. Shared Electronic Licensing

The structure for decision making for shared electronic cooperatives ranges from the simplistic “pay to play” model to the hierarchical committee organization. The most elaborate structures are designed to support a decision model based on consensus, not voting. NERL is the closest to a pure buying club and is thus quite nimble in responding

to vendor opportunities or member demands for resources. Yale provides the organizational home to NERL and three years ago hired a program coordinator who handles negotiations and billing. Like SCEL, members are either in or out of a deal so it is not necessary to reach a consensus. They have an annual meeting and rely on a listserv and closed website to discuss purchases. The less structured the decision making the more imperative that individuals respond quickly and share in the work. There are downsides to staying loosely and simply organized. For NERL, disparity in size and financial capability make it a challenge to meet the demands of the small affiliates while not hurting the interests of the core members

At the other end of the spectrum, CDL, CCLA, and OhioLINK have elaborate committee structures. These committees establish guidelines and criteria, evaluate projects, and make recommendations. Effective means for communication and for guaranteeing input are essential. CDL has put in considerable effort to realize a successful bottom-up process for identifying resources to license. Each subject area is represented by a bibliographer or selector group with a liaison to a steering committee for shared purchases. These groups are surveyed each year on resources of interest and then licenses are negotiated by the central CDL staff. The CDL director can make decisions to commit funding without oversight of a board, but works closely with the advisory committees to reach consensus. OhioLINK members also have a committee that has responsibility for selection and has the authority to create working groups or consult selector groups. The committee will consider an aggregation of databases as well as resources on a case by case basis. LALINC, as a consortium of library directors, sanctions a committee of reference librarians to select resources for shared licensing. SCEL also uses a product review committee of front line librarians to make selection decisions that are then implemented by the executive director. For the projects that aren't as "lean and mean" as NERL, the commitment to broad input and participation and an open atmosphere of decision making overcame the downsides of committee bureaucracy.

As with other types of cooperatives, member institutions need to hold a statewide or consortia wide perspective in selection that is over and above the interests of a single institution. This is one reason the CDL has created shared principles that are documented and promulgated. The lack of a shared philosophy among the NERL members creates what OhioLINK has worked hard to prevent—"never having all the libraries wanting to do something at the same time." OhioLINK noted that as members perceive the benefits of cooperation through wise selection, there is a willingness to take more risks—to trust in the cooperative body. At the same time, OhioLINK reiterated the importance of a big pot of centralized funds to acquire widely enough so that all members can find something to support and appreciate. If the deal is big and broad enough all libraries can see something in it to their advantage.

An important organizational aspect of the complex consortia is the existence of a separate centralized staff that carries out the negotiating, licensing, acquisition functions. CCLA noted that the existence of a centralized office for negotiating and licensing promotes a "worry free" atmosphere for participation and this certainly would be echoed by the others in the group. Those with centralized administrative staff point to the importance of

its participation as an active and equal partner in the enterprise of building electronic resources. The central staff of OhioLINK, for example, serves on taskforces and monitors subject groups, besides doing the yeoman work of data collection and analysis as a basis for decisions. Turf battles have been avoided because the participants who make the decisions don't have to worry about the money. Yet, for those with centralized staff, there will never be enough staff to carry out negotiations for all the electronic resources that the partners want.

Whether having a simple or complex structure of decision making, these cooperatives have adapted their procedures and organization over time as membership grew or more sophisticated technology was made available. SCEL C, which started out making decisions in a "poker game fashion," has successfully made their structure more elaborate in order to accommodate the exponential growth in its number of members. It has incorporated as a non-profit with by-laws, an executive director, and an executive board, which gives the program structure and direction. In this reorganization, SCEL C established a reserve fund that allows funding of the executive director to handle negotiations. SCEL C warned that one outcome of growth and formalization is apathy among members about governance. But SCEL C suggests that it is impossible to remain a pure "buying club" because issues of vendor and staff education and program evaluation soon arise. LALINC, like SCEL C learned that while you can start out with an informal structure you soon need to have central leadership and a paid staff. CDL has seen standing committees come and go, a resource liaison structure implemented, and a second level of licensing with its own procedures implemented. Clearly the ability to adapt and change with relative ease is a part of the longevity of these successful cooperatives.

Establishing good working relationships with vendors is something the majority of these cooperatives pointed out as important. In most cases this means educating them to the specific needs and wants of the particular consortium and the need to adapt licenses to different situations. Credit is given to vendors who are willing to work with these consortia to make the packaging of resources sensible. SCEL C noted that it would be impossible to succeed as they have without having "trained" the vendors to the unique and particular characteristics of their small, private institutions. Consortia will face a wide variety of vendor style and practice which calls for flexibility and ability to adjust to every new negotiation. CCLA spoke for all these cooperatives in citing the importance of paying attention to standards and trends in good consortia practice, in particular to ICOLC's work.

2.3 Access, Storage, and Preservation

Decision making for these types of cooperatives is driven very much by the local collection development policies and practices of the partners. For these kinds of cooperatives, a predominant challenge for policy making and implementation was that participating libraries had varying institutional cultures and organizational structures. Since channels of communication are different at each institution it is important to share as much information as possible and share widely.

For a national cooperative project like Australia's NPLAN, success or failure rides on the individual partners' responsiveness to the national plan to preserve the states' newspapers. NPLAN bemoans the varying levels of commitment to take action, make resources available, and to place value on their newspaper collections. The loosely defined obligations and lack of shared responsibility means partners lack the perception of "owning" the cooperative project. The result is both a lack of "organizational readiness" to respond and failure to address important issues, like digitization as part of the preservation strategy. Another interesting observation of NPLAN is that a centralized project that respects partners autonomy means that an uphill battle is faced in getting agreement on selection priorities. Thus, while the federated structure has allowed considerable local action in terms of microfilming for the project, the lack of rigor has contributed to a "backlog of business-critical issues." The knowledge of collections and knowledgeable preservation personnel also determine how successful participation is by a given state. However, the loose structure has allowed the partners to participate at a slow pace that suits them.

PANDORA, on the other hand, is very much a top down structure with the National Library of Australia calling the shots, developing selection guidelines, providing staffing, and developing tools for common use. One advantage of a centralized funding and decision making model, PANDORA points out, is that it simplifies the development of the program. The CDO's of the three institutions that form the Information Alliance manage the project, consulting with selectors. The IA pointed to the relatively quick decision making potential of their model in which CDO's coordinate the projects and make decisions. One challenge is being supportive of the selector's input. The selectors' limited roles means they do not necessarily think of the shared repository as a working option for collection management.

The two "last copy" projects require formalized collaborative decision making. CONSORT selection for storage and last copy are controlled by a Memorandum of Agreement. But they use a collection development committee who reports to the library directors for ongoing policy and procedural issues. CONSORT found that it was important to solicit faculty input and have them participate and support the decisions for storage selection criteria. They also learned that after a few years it was impossible to operate without a coordinator to assist with communication and implementation. They successfully pursued a grant to fund a coordinator for three years. Selection decisions for the WRLC last-copy journal project is managed to a great extent by a representative Collection Development Advisory Committee, while a centralized staff and budget take care of information technology and operations of the off-site storage facility. WRLC's library directors constitute the primary operating committee. They solicit input, follow well understood criteria for selection, review on a five-year cycle, and review all requests for cancellation.

3. Funding and Infrastructure

3.1. Selection

Shared selection consortia depend on commitment of local funding to the cooperative program. The availability of local collections dollars to put toward the collaborative selection projects is essential. In practice these take the form of membership fees, grants, or local resources committed to the program. These funds were either pooled for purchases by the central agency (CRL, LAARP) or ponied up to pay invoices for specific purchases or services by the individual institutions (TRLN, ECC, SACWest). Only ICCMP provided an independent, centralized line of funding for projects approved through the review and advisory structure.

As LAARP stated explicitly the advantage of combining local funding toward a cooperative program is that the leveraging of resources realizes a far greater provision of access to materials. Pooled or co-funded projects that cross state lines do face legal and administrative hurdles. Different state regulations affect how money can be spent to support programs at state institutions. The “pay to play” model has a wonderful simplicity to it and avoids the barriers of varying budget cycles. The disparity of budget size, however, means that institutions in this kind of a cooperative program participate on an uneven, ad hoc basis. If a project gets started on grant money strategies for moving to permanent funding are necessary if the project is to mature and stabilize. One consortium spoke to the advantage of central state funding: it negates the need for membership fees and broadens participation.

There is agreement on the key services that make cooperative collection development work among the shared selection cooperatives. Collections must be visible through a union catalog, a web finding aid, through webpage summaries/descriptions, or cataloged in the OPACS of individual institutions. CRL’s dues-paying members expect easy bibliographic access to the materials. CRL cites the web as a critical technology for members to identify the consortium’s holdings. Available data about the holdings of cataloged and uncataloged collections inform collective decision-making as well as supports end-user access.

Reciprocal interlibrary loan agreements are critical to the success of these programs. Arrangements for interlibrary loan must be in place whether charges apply or not. The granting of extended loans for research material to partners in the consortium or cooperative is an important practice. A key component of the infrastructure is the availability and accessibility of technical expertise and support. LAARP observed that if one of the member institutions is offering its technical support group to the centralized efforts of the consortium it is best if it is based in the library, so that the technologists are familiar with bibliographic data and records. Finally, ICCMP highlighted the importance of “training/teaching.” Part of any new bibliographer’s training addresses the benefits of cooperative collection management. .

3.2. Shared Electronic Licensing

Funding models and strategies varied from simplistic to sophisticated. NERL lauded the simplicity and efficiency of the “pay to play” model. It most directly responds to local

needs. Obviously, this model reduces the capacity of individual institutions to affect everything from prices to strategies. The “lean and mean” model requires only a website and listserv for communication.

The large statewide consortia in this group have developed funding models that are the most sophisticated and complicated among the types of cooperatives. CDL and LALINC follow a co-investment model, with varying portions coming from the central, state supported funding line. CDL uses the centralized funds strategically in cost-share models that allow small campuses to afford co-investment and to make consortial purchases worthwhile for the big campuses. They have also developed a Tier 2 program that allows participants to use CDL program personnel, but not funds, to pursue licenses. Both CDL and OhioLINK license a large number of electronic journal packages wherein individual campuses commit to maintain a base dollar amount and the consortium leverages that amount with modest central funds. Compelled to adapt to shrinking state resources for a central pool of funding, OhioLINK has developed a diverse set of funding strategies, integrating central and local funds. They have used the “war chest” approach where pooled local resources are matched by central funds to buy sets of databases. They have developed a second tier for more selective buying, where institutions “pay to play.” Finally OhioLINK has developed what they call an “NPR” model. Basically institutions make commitments to resources that OhioLINK can no longer afford to subscribe to but that they can’t do without. If the total amount committed is greater than the current cost, members pay OhioLINK rather than the vendor and the databases are made available to everyone. All of these statewide consortia note that their strategic use of separate funds contributes to the acceptance of cooperation and the willingness of participants to commit resources of their own. Central funds also allow flexibility from one budget year to the next. In restrictive budget years, OhioLINK points out, cooperation doesn’t mean you can “avoid the grim reaper. But you can minimize his harvest.”

A commitment to developing the technology that makes discovery and delivery beyond the “library walls” seamless, has been a fundamental factor in the success of the big electronic resources consortia. Features of this infrastructure include: a centralized library system, union catalog, database integration, article level linking from A&I databases, statewide document delivery service, and an ability to authenticate remote users. OhioLINK's development of its own tools, rather than buying off-the-shelf solutions defined by vendors, is not only cheaper but it has made its resources and services highly integrated. CDL has used the same strategy and makes clear that the advantages of investing in technical expertise are that it allows the development and use of tools that add tremendous functionality for the user. CDL has concentrated clout on their infrastructure. Sophistication and customization do not come without a cost to participants. Membership in these consortia requires that campuses commit resources for local trouble shooting, coordination, and communication.

3.3. Access, Storage, and Preservation

WRLC, IA, and CONSORT, the last copy and shared storage repository cooperatives, tend to rely on local staffing to implement their programs. Participating in cooperative collection development is perceived as an additional burden on local collection management resources. As one of these cooperatives looks ahead to moving off of grant funding they anticipate an uphill battle to sell joint collection development at the price of some local funding.

As with other types of cooperatives, the technological infrastructure that allows for quick identification and retrieval of resources is essential to the viability of the storage and preservation cooperatives. A union catalog that contains the records for materials in the shared projects is essential. Conversely, the absence of this type of infrastructure can prove a huge handicap. CONSORT expended time and resources at workarounds because one of their members was not part of the union catalog. Patron-initiated borrowing and an efficient document delivery system, including courier services among campuses were pointed to as basic to the success of shared storage projects. (CONSORT even commented that the fact that campuses were within driving distance made remote storage more palatable.) .

NPLAN admitted that availability of central funds to the participants would have proved a great boon to increasing the level of activity. It would have enabled them to exert a better quality of control and coordination of programs. Participation is uneven because partners depend on their own funding. NPLAN points to an interesting lesson they've learned with the microfilm preservation project. Because they did not make explicit basic infrastructure obligations of the participants, they are confronting certain risks that could have been avoided. These include inadequately checked film, storage facilities that do not meet optimum conditions for preservation masters, and inadequate storage facilities for paper copies. A shared storage facility for newspapers is being considered very cautiously by NPLAN, because of the lack of willingness by partners to store newspapers centrally.

Finland's NRL is successful because it is funded from the Minister of Education and the ongoing costs are less than 1% of the acquisition's budgets of all the university libraries in Finland. The availability of a sophisticated archive system at not cost to the partners has made the central funding model of PANDORA irresistible and the project successful.

Conclusion

A fine line exists between circumstances or elements that promote success in cooperative collection development and best practices or methods. At the risk of crossing that line, it can be said that successful cooperative collection development projects or programs seem to have a propitious foundation when three conditions exist: a history and tradition of successful cooperation; a commitment among participants to provide funding to the cooperative project, regardless of whether new monies are available or whether they emanate from local or central resources; and a shared commitment to the cooperative

mission. The value of a track record in a cooperative effort cannot be overstated in forming a basis for trust and the willingness to take risk and to move beyond the local to the global perspective. A “culture” of cooperation underlay the success of the cooperatives regardless of how simple or complex the goals and structure of the project were. For the types of cooperatives that were involved in building either print or electronic shared collections, two factors played an important role in their viability: vision and impetus for cooperation emanated from the highest ranks of the institution and new money flowed into the cooperative project.

There were also barriers that impeded cooperative collection development and needed to be overcome as part of a best practices approach. Perhaps the biggest challenge for all types of cooperatives was the variable levels of motivation, effort, and commitment that exist among partners. Administrators of cooperatives had to be able to adapt to this disparity, which manifests itself in indifference and lack of participation. Unequal access to funds and lack of supplemental funding hurt the cooperative effort. Finally, the battle between competing local and collective goals and concerns was constant.

While there were a number of laudable activities that were common among some or many of the cooperatives, there seem to be four categories in which all three types of cooperatives displayed best practices: communication and consultation; goals and focus of projects; flexibility and adaptability; and technological infrastructure.

Communication and Consultation

No practice seemed more important in all areas and stages of the three types of cooperatives than an effective system of communication and consultation. This included the following: a deliberate pace to allow time for consultation and buy-in during the foundation; an advisory committee structure that obtained broad input from and cultivated the support of line selectors and librarians; a practice of transparent decision making; and a commitment to consensus.

Goals and Focus

All the cooperatives defined goals and articulated the focus of their cooperative project in the context of the common good. These goals were promulgated and in some cases became part of the formal training of campus selectors. The more complex cooperative organizations strategically shaped funding, acquisitions, and infrastructure decisions in order to meet the defined goals of the cooperative effort. Finally, the cooperative goals were shaped to be in sync with the partners’ local goals.

Flexibility and Adaptability

Even the consortia with the most complex administrative structure were willing and able to be flexible in their objectives. They adapted to the circumstances of fluctuating budgets, expanding membership, uneven commitment and involvement among partners, and changing technologies. Adjustments were made in every arena of activity, from the decision making structure to the cost sharing models for participants.

Technological Infrastructure

Finally, all three types of consortia put resources into the technological infrastructure as an essential element for cooperative collection development and management. The infrastructure of services that proved sufficient for cooperative collection development in the past—the union catalog, ILL, document delivery, is no longer sufficient for these types of cooperatives. Linking and integration, remote authentication, and desk-top delivery are part of the basic infrastructure for discovering, managing, and delivering the shared collection. The cooperatives demonstrated their understanding of the importance of information technology by ensuring that they had adequate technological expertise and support.

The factors and practices that facilitated or retarded cooperative collection development for the 18 cooperatives in this study have largely confirmed what earlier studies have found. However, this study points out that one factor of the new dynamics and economies of cooperative collection development is the growing complexity and sophistication of consortia in the area of electronic resources. There is one type of behavior among such consortia who license resources that received little emphasis in previous studies of best practices: pervasive strategic action. Such action was seen in a range of activities, whether in the use of collection funds, deployment of staff, design of infrastructure, or vendor relations. It is important to analyze further the activities of such strategic cooperative development projects as constricting funding for collections and space makes it imperative that we build and preserve shared collections collaboratively.

CRL Working Group on Best Practices in Cooperative Collection Development

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APPENDIX 1

COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS INTERVIEWED **BY THE BEST PRACTICES WORKING GROUP**

The Best Practices Working Group selected 18 model cooperative collection development projects for in depth interviewing. Six were chosen in each of 3 categories: Selection and Purchase of Non-Electronic Material Projects, Shared Electronic Purchasing Projects, and Storage, Access, and Preservation Projects. (While most of the projects chosen could fit in multiple categories, each was interviewed in one category only.) The majority of the selected projects came from the survey work done by the Cooperative Collection Development Mapping Project Working Group (this group also arose from the 1999 Aberdeen Woods Conference). The Mapping Project Working Group was charged to develop a "tree of possible" CCD models and to develop a website database of current CCD. The results of the group's work can be found at: <http://www.crl.edu/info/ccd/ccdsurveyresults.htm>, which also contains links to original responses to the mapping survey. The brief descriptions of the selected projects below include, when possible, the names of project participants or links to project member lists.

THE PROJECTS SELECTED FOR IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Selection and Purchase of Non-Electronic Material Projects

Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program

(<http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm>)

Person interviewed: Arthur Young

Description: The Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program (ICCMP) was formed with the primary goal of enriching and strengthening "the collective information resources available to the customers of the consortium libraries and to the citizens of the State of Illinois" (Soete Plan, 1996). ICCMP is organized around three guiding principles: Cooperative Collection Management; Resource Sharing; and Continuing Professional Education. A list of participating libraries can be found at:

<http://www.niulib.niu.edu/ccm/ccmlibr.html>

TRLN Cooperation for the General Collections

(<http://www.lib.unc.edu/cdd/crs/coop.html>)

Person interviewed: Patricia Dominguez

Description: The goals of the TRLN Cooperative Collection Development Program are to enhance the collections of member libraries (Duke University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and North Carolina Central University) and provide better service to users by sharing access to specialized and expensive resources that do not need to be duplicated on individual campuses.

East Coast Consortium of Slavic Library Collections

(<http://www.princeton.edu/~nshapiro/eastconsrt.html>)

Person interviewed: Nadia Zilper

Description: The East Coast Consortium of Slavic Library presently numbers ten member institutions: Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, Harvard, The New York Public Library, New York University, Princeton, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Yale. The Consortium's work has included the following topics: collection development and acquisitions, including efforts to prevent needless duplication of serial and other periodical-like materials; collection description, assessment, and preservation, and the pursuit of coordinated grant-funded projects in these areas, including the creation of a cooperative preservation Slavic and East European area studies group, under the auspices of the Center for Research Libraries; the preparation of informative literature intended to assist and promote area studies research at member institutions; the electronic publication of a Union List of Newspapers; and identification and evaluation of electronic resources for the Slavic and East European studies field.

SACWest (South Asia Consortium West)

(<http://library.berkeley.edu/SSEAL/SouthAsia/sacwest/>)

Person interviewed: Merry Burlingham

Description: SACWest's mission is to share acquisition responsibility for materials from or about South Asia and to work toward cooperative activity for reference and web-based resources. University of California at Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Hawaii at Manoa, University of Texas at Austin, and University of Washington, Seattle are all members of SACWest.

Center for Research Libraries Purchase Proposal Program

(<http://www.crl.edu/info/cdpolicy.htm#II.D.1. PURCHASE PROPOSAL SERVICE>)

Persons interviewed: Carol Stukey and Mary Wilke

Description: The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) is an international not-for-profit consortium of colleges, universities, and libraries that makes available scholarly research resources to users everywhere. The mission of CRL is to foster and advance scholarly inquiry through cost-effective, cooperative programs that provide reliable access through traditional and electronic means to unique and unusual collections of library materials that are in all appropriate formats, international in scope, and comprehensive in disciplines. Lists of participating libraries can be found at:

<http://www.crl.edu/info/crlmem.htm>.

Latin American Research Resources Project

(<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/arl/about.html>)

Person interviewed: Eudora Loh

Description: The Latin Americanist Research Resources Project (LARRP) is a cooperative initiative that seeks to improve access to the array of research resources published in Latin America. Its goals are to restructure access to collections and resources on a comprehensive scale and to improve electronic access and document delivery

systems for Latin Americanist resources. Through the concerted reallocation of library collection budgets, enhanced coverage of "non-core" materials is provided in an inter-connected network of collections. The participating Libraries are ARL institutions (<http://www.lanic.utexas.edu/cgi-bin/arl/listlibs>) and two non-ARL members: the Felipe Herrera Library of the Inter-American Development Bank and Florida International University. In 2000/2002, five Latin American Partner Institutions (<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/arl/lapartners>) were invited to join the project under the provisions of a United States Department of Education grant.

Shared Electronic Purchasing Projects

Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC), Inc. (<http://scelc.org>)

Person interviewed: Rick Burke

Description: The Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC) was established in 1986 to develop resource-sharing relationships among the libraries of private academic and research institutions in California. The consortium seeks to explore issues related to electronic and digital information and to promote the creation, access, use, management and maintenance of this information for the benefit of faculty and students in SCELC institutions. A list of consortium members can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/isd/partners/orgs/scelc/scelc_consortium.html.

California Digital Library (<http://www.nhcuc.org>)

Person interviewed: Beverlee French

Description: The Cooperative Database Licensing Project facilitates cooperative purchasing of electronic databases among the member libraries of the New Hampshire College & University Council (NHCUC). The New Hampshire College and University Council (NHCUC) is a non-profit consortium of 13 four-year, public and private institutions of higher education in the state of New Hampshire. A list of the member libraries can be found at: <http://www.nhcuc.org/library2.htm>.

NERL: NorthEast Research Libraries consortium

(<http://www.library.yale.edu/NERLpublic>)

Person interviewed: Ann Okerson

Description: The NorthEast Research Libraries consortium (NERL) comprises 21 academic research libraries with the common objectives of access and cost containment, joint licensing, and possible joint deployment of electronic resources. A list of members can be found at: <http://www.library.yale.edu/NERLpublic/NERLMembers.html>.

College Center for Library Automation (<http://www.ccla.lib.fl.us>)

Person interviewed: Lisa Close

Description: CCLA's mission is to provide service and leadership in statewide automated library and information resources to enhance the educational experience at Florida's community colleges. This mission is accomplished by providing access to shared information resources; ensuring effective use of technology through training, support, and consultation; researching and implementing suitable new technologies; and providing library advocacy for issues of concern to community college libraries. A list of Florida's community colleges libraries can be found at:

http://www.ccla.lib.fl.us/libraries/colleges/comm_colleges.asp.

Louisiana Academic Library Information Network Consortium (LALINC)

(<http://www.lsu.edu/ocs/louis/about/about8.html>)

Person interviewed: Ralph Boe

Description: Louisiana Academic Library Information Network Consortium (LALINC) is comprised of all public and private academic library directors in Louisiana. The LALINC committees (Executive, Information Literacy, Preservation & Disaster Preparedness, Research and Development, Resource Development, Staff Development) help investigate potential initiatives and guide LOUIS (the Louisiana Library Network) in the design and implementation of statewide library endeavors which have been approved by the Louisiana Library Network Commission.

OhioLINK--Ohio Library and Information Network (<http://www.ohiolink.edu>)

Persons interviewed: Tom Sanville and Carol Diedrichs

Description: The Ohio Library and Information Network, OhioLINK, is a consortium of Ohio's college and university libraries and the State Library of Ohio. Serving more than 80 institutions, OhioLINK's membership includes 17 public universities, 23 community/technical colleges, 39 private colleges and the State Library of Ohio.

OhioLINK offers user-initiated, non-mediated online borrowing through its statewide central catalog. It also provides a delivery service among member institutions to speed the exchange of library items. OhioLINK has cooperatively licensed over ninety research databases covering a variety of disciplines as well as licenses to full-text journals. A list of members can be found at: <http://www.ohiolink.edu/members-info/mem-links.php>.

Storage, Access, Preservation

WRLC Protected titles program (<http://www.wrlc.org>)

Person interviewed: Lizanne Payne

Description: The Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC) is a regional resource-sharing organization established by seven universities in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to expand and enhance the information resources available to their students and faculty. The Protected Titles Program coordinates the retention of core journals ("protected titles" program). A list of members can be found at:

<http://www.wrlc.org>.

Information Alliance (<http://www.lib.utk.edu/~alliance>)

Person interviewed: John Haar

Description: The Libraries of the University of Kentucky, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Vanderbilt University have embarked on an alliance between the organizations to strengthen library user access to regional information resources, and link information experts formally and informally. The Information Alliance IRIS project fosters broad collection development and access for its members. A user of any of the libraries has the benefit of three major research collections, each of which has unique strengths. IRIS maximizes dollars spent on information by the three cooperating institutions through signing cooperative license agreements with vendors for databases; jointly purchasing expensive, but infrequently used materials; and cooperatively archiving and preserving little used books and journals.

CONSORT Cooperative Collection Development Project

(<http://www.wooster.edu/library/oh5/cccd/default.html>)

Person interviewed: Margo Curl

Description: A project of four members (The College of Wooster, Denison University, Kenyon College, Ohio Wesleyan University) of the Five Colleges of Ohio with the shared CONSORT online catalog. The purposes of the project are to maximize the strength, currency, and diversity of the individual and consortial collections and to reduce the need for building additional library space on the individual campuses.

National Repository Library (<http://www.nrl.fi>)

Person interviewed: Pentti Vattulainen

Description: The Repository Library is meant to be a repository to be shared by all libraries in Finland as the most economical way of storing library material. The basic function of the Repository Library is to receive and store the material transferred from other libraries and to offer the material for the use of other libraries.

National Plan for Australian Newspapers (NPLAN)

(<http://www.nla.gov.au/preserve/nplan.html>)

Person interviewed: Colin Webb

Description: NPLAN is a cooperative activity aimed at collecting, locating, preserving and making accessible all published Australian newspapers. Optimally an original print copy is preserved in an Australian library. Each state library assumes primary responsibility for the newspapers published in its state. NPLAN is a cooperative initiative of all seven State Libraries and of the National Library of Australia.

PANDORA: Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia (<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/index.html>)

Person interviewed: Margaret Phillips

Description: The PANDORA Project was set up to further the initiative of the National Library of Australia to ensure long term access to significant Australian on-line publications. Its aims include establishing an archive of selected Australian online publications, and developing policy and procedures for the preservation and provision of access to Australian online publications, and developing a proposal for a national approach to the long-term preservation of these publications.

APPENDIX 2

BASE QUESTIONS USED FOR THE BEST PRACTICES INTERVIEWS

Selection and Purchasing of Non-electronic Materials Questions

1. Formation/founding

- a. What factors in this area contributed to success of the project or cooperative entity?
- b. What barriers did you face and/or overcome in founding the project?
- c. What lessons did you learn?

2. Decision making on selection and management of HC Serial/Mongraph titles?

- a. What kind of structure and process do you have in place for selection?
- b. What elements have contributed to success of selection and management process?
- c. What kind of structures and process do you have in place for user feedback and input?
- d. How has the structure and process changed over time?
- e. What particular barriers have you faced and/or overcome?
- f. What lessons have you learned?
- g. What factors in this area contributed to success of project?

3. Organization and authority

- a. What kind of management structure is in place and how has it changed over time?
- b. How are decisions made?
- c. How has this contributed to success of the cooperative project?
- d. What lessons have been learned of things to avoid or overcome in such a structures?

4. Funding

- a. Describe the decision process of actually purchasing the titles. Does one member buying abc titles and another buying xyz titles? Or is money jointly contributed to a central pool and invoices are paid from this?
- b. Describe the funding strategy and how it has changed?
- c. How has the funding strategy contributed to the success of the project?
- d. What barriers had to be overcome and what lessons have been learned?

5. Technological Infrastructure and Services to support shared acquisition

- a. What are the important elements of the infrastructure? How is it decided where to store the titles? (eg., common remote site storage with borrowing privileges for all members in project, one library stores abc titles, another xyz titles, etc.)
- b. What are the important elements of services (eg., union catalog, desk top delivery, no charge ILL to other members in project, special loan periods for returnables to other project members?)
- b. How has this contributed to success of project?
- c. What lessons have you learned in this area (eg., how is it worked out when one library has the item out on loan to a second library and a third library (in the cooperative group) wishes to borrow the item?)

Shared Electronic Purchasing Questions

1. Formation/founding

- a. What factors in this area contributed to success of the project or cooperative entity?
- b. What barriers did you face and/or overcome in founding the project?
- c. What lessons did you learn?

2. Decision making on selection and management of electronic acquisitions

- a. What kind of structure and process do you have in place for selection?
- b. What elements have contributed to success of selection and management process?
- c. What kind of structures and process do you have in place for user feedback and input?
- d. How has the structure and process changed over time?
- e. What particular barriers have you faced and/or overcome?
- f. What lessons have you learned?
- g. What factors in this area contributed to success of project?

3. Organization and authority

- a. What kind of management structure is in place and how has it changed over time?
- b. How are decisions made?
- c. How has this contributed to success of the cooperative project?
- d. What lessons have been learned of things to avoid or overcome in such a structures?

4. Funding

- a. Describe the funding strategy and how it has changed.
- b. How has the funding strategy contributed to the success of the project?
- c. What barriers had to be overcome and what lessons have been learned?

5. Technological Infrastructure and Services to support shared acquisition
 - a. What are the important elements of the infrastructure and services (eg., union catalog, digital asset management system, desk top delivery, directory)?
 - b. How has this contributed to success of project?
 - c. What lessons have you learned in this area?

Storage, Access and Preservation Questions

1. Formation/founding
 - a. What factors in this area contributed to success of the project or cooperative entity?
 - b. What barriers did you face and/or overcome in founding the project?
 - c. What lessons did you learn?
2. Decision making on selection and storage of materials
 - a. What kind of structure and process do you have in place for selection?
For storage?
 - b. What elements have contributed to success of selection and management process?
 - c. What kind of structures and process do you have in place for user feedback and input?
 - d. How has the structure and process changed over time?
 - e. What particular barriers have you faced and/or overcome?
 - f. What lessons have you learned?
 - g. What factors in this area contributed to success of project?
3. Organization and authority
 - a. What kind of management structure is in place and how has it changed over time?
 - b. How are decisions made?
 - c. How has this contributed to success of the cooperative project?
 - d. What lessons have been learned of things to avoid or overcome in such a structures?
4. Funding
 - a. Describe the funding strategy and how it has changed.
 - b. How has the funding strategy contributed to the success of the project?
 - c. What barriers had to be overcome and what lessons have been learned?
5. Technological and physical infrastructure and Services support shared storage and access?
 - a. What are the important elements of the infrastructure and services (eg., union catalog, storage facility, digital asset management system, desk top delivery, directory,...)

- b. How has this contributed to success of project
- c. What lessons have you learned in this area?

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