

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Dear CRL Global Collections Stakeholders –

Greetings from surprisingly sunny Chicago! I'm writing with an update of my engagement efforts and some information about next steps.

Thank you to everyone who attended one or both Town Halls. From the chat I was able to see every group was represented! As this was my first exposure to the member community, I appreciate the warm welcome and direct conversations. The passion, enthusiasm, and expertise of our members across the global collections and programming community is impressive and the level of member engagement across CRL is invigorating! I'm confident that we are going to continue to do great work as a community of experts dedicated to building and fostering a diverse and equitable global knowledge ecosystem.

By far the primary takeaway from the Town Halls is that there is unevenness in understanding of what CRL is doing with global collections, why it is doing it, and how you as community members in a membership organization can meaningfully engage and influence these activities.

Communication/Outreach Plan

To continue my efforts to ensure as many members as possible receive the same information at the same time, I intend to send weekly e-mail updates with notes on my engagement activities. Consider this update the first of many in the weeks ahead. My goal here is to establish regular communication so stakeholders are fully aware of what is happening, what is not happening, and how to participate.

Community Engagement

Earlier this week, I was part of a very productive meeting of the [CRL International Collections and Content Group \(ICCG\)](#). Since I am new to CRL, and the Area Studies community, getting expert counsel from ICCG is a gift I intend to leverage for all our benefit. Based on the productive and open conversation with ICCG, it is clear to me that CRL needs to adjust our change management timeline to allow for fuller community engagement. I realize that people are eager to get back to work and that many feel that this has already taken too long but in my short time here I've heard far too many times from the membership that they did not feel involved or represented in the planning process. CRL is a member organization, and we need to slow our train until everyone is on board. I have already let know Greg of my assessment in this regard, and he is broadly and enthusiastically supportive of taking a "to go far we have to go together" approach.



I am scheduling personal meetings with each ICCG member to hear about their individual experiences and learn from their unique perspectives. I am also entering the phase of my engagement where I am meeting with each individual program, to hear about the unique challenges, priorities, and questions from each group. I ask for your patience as I embark on this phase of my learning; engagement is a time-consuming process, but the benefits will be worth the time spent.

Leadership Meetings

In terms of prioritization, I plan to meet first with the programs that have official meetings in the immediate future. This includes GNARP (March 1), SEAM (March 13), SAMP and SAOA (March 15). Rest assured, I plan on meeting with each group, but it will take time. I will provide updates on what I learn in these meetings in subsequent e-mail updates. Also note, since we have aligned the fiscal reporting of the various programs with the regular quarterly reporting of the CRL business office, the next round of financial reports for each group will go out by end of week. Going forward, reports will run quarterly, in line with CRL's standard accounting workflows.

Implementation Advisory Task Force

I am pleased to announce that the Global Collections Implementation Advisory Task Force has been [announced](#). As you would expect, I will be an active Task Force participant and aim to bring the perspective of the global collections programs to the Task Force's work. You can expect to engage with the Task Force in addition to the community engagement I am embarking on as CRL's senior lead for Global Collections. At this point, I do not think we can have too much community engagement because of the clear message that this has been lacking.

As I have mentioned before, I came to CRL because I was inspired by the presentations at last year's [CRL Council of Voting Members](#) meeting. I was inspired by [Greg's Postcolonial Knowledge Commons keynote](#), and the momentous effort to [re-imagine our future](#) in support of Area Studies, International Studies, and global collections. I respect the expertise of the members and the history of our programs. I am here to ensure that we grow together instead of growing apart. I appreciate your ongoing patience and support as we all work together to move CRL forward and plan out our next 75 years.

- Kevin