

Aquifer notes for DLF Annual Report, October 2006

DLF Aquifer is a Digital Library Federation initiative. DLF Aquifer models and develops network-based, scalable solutions to make a growing body of digital library content easy to find and use across institutional boundaries. DLF Aquifer draws upon digital content pertaining to American culture and life to create a distributed open digital library that will be implemented differently in different places, to support the work styles and preferences of faculty, students and scholars.

2006 Accomplishments

At their March 16, 2007 meeting, the Mellon Foundation board will review a proposal from the Digital Library Federation to support core DLF Aquifer activities for two years, beginning in April 2007. The funded project will build on the foundation created through:

- [DLF Aquifer MODS portal](#) hosted by University of Michigan Digital Library Production Service, indicating the service potential richer descriptive metadata could enable.
- [Asset Action experiment](#) hosted by Grainger Engineering Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, enabling digital objects from various sources to be presented in a consistent manner to the content consumer.
- Standards, best practices, studies and policy development
 - MODS Implementation Guidelines for Sharable Metadata
 - Study of obstacles to exposing richer metadata and recommendations for removing them
 - Collection submission agreement to insure DLF Aquifer collections will be available over time
 - Architectural policies and principles
 - Institutional survey report setting a baseline for usability and assessment best practice development

Future Plans:

The focus of the Mellon funded project, called *DLF Aquifer Development for Interoperability Across Scholarly Repositories: American Social History Online*, is to create a distributed open digital library. The project will make DLF Aquifer collections available to faculty and students in a variety of ways, through a commercial search service, within a course management system, through federated search software and to citation management software. This will be accomplished through development of an interoperability architecture, further development of asset actions and development and implementation of other data models to enable distributed collections to be used as one. The project includes a significant assessment component.

DLF Aquifer will also seek additional outside funding to support development of metadata cleanup and enhancement routines and services in the coming year. Within the working groups, researching and documenting best practices for usability and assessment and documenting the methods used to insure development is user-driven will complement the grant-funded projects.