

Joining DLF Aquifer

Aquifer Participation and Management Are Based on the Shared Commitment of Its Members

DLF Aquifer is an integrated program of the Digital Library Federation based on objectives fundamental to the DLF mission. Aquifer is comprised of member institutions exercising a shared commitment to work together to enhance access and use of digital resources for teaching, learning, and research. Leveraging their mutual commitment and collaborative spirit, Aquifer members participate in coordinated efforts to exploit the collective value of their rich digital collections for users worldwide.

Essential to these efforts is the application of common standards and best practices and the shared development, testing, and application of tools for selecting, organizing, and providing access to valued digital content. Confident that libraries contribute educational and cultural value through cooperative endeavors to organize and disseminate information, Aquifer encourages and enables collaboration among libraries and archives, and with scholars and other partners. While focusing on tangible means and achievements, it is envisioned that future broad-scale alliances will be stimulated by and modeled on the DLF Aquifer experience.

Membership

Shared Commitment is the underlying principle upon which DLF Aquifer governance, management, and membership are based. This principle is reflective of basic elements of the digital library movement and the principle tenants articulated at the founding of the Digital Library Federation. Only DLF members may join Aquifer, but partnerships with other institutions will be established as appropriate to selected initiatives. All DLF members are encouraged to join.

Joining Aquifer requires that an institution commit to collaborative participation in mutual endeavors designed to enhance the value and effective use of digital resources managed by member institutions and allied partners. Achieving these goals requires that each member contribute in equivalent manner in realizing collaborative outcomes. Operationally, Aquifer is dependent on contributions of personnel and other resources by member institutions. Therefore, membership is defined by the willingness of an institution to participate fully in Aquifer planning and programs and to share access to its digital collections. Similarly, if an institution no longer wishes to maintain such a commitment to Aquifer, an institution should convey its intention to withdraw from membership.

Since Aquifer activities are primarily organized through Working Groups, the extent of institutional contribution required has been defined as being equivalent to staff participation in two Working Groups or to the hosting of a shared service. Characterizing the extent of such involvement isn't simple because of the need for elasticity in activity and membership levels within the various Working Groups, but the annual value of participation is presently [2006] estimated at \$27,000.

Notification of intent to join Aquifer should be conveyed by a letter to the DLF Board President, with a copy to the DLF Executive Director. An intention to withdraw from Aquifer membership should be similarly conveyed to the DLF Board President with a copy to the DLF Executive Director. A minimum of six months notice is required in order that necessary operational adjustments can be made.