

# Minutes - Dryad Board Meeting - 10 June 25

Attendance: Andrew Beckerman (Chair), Jennifer Gibson (Executive Director), Bekah Darksmith, Jason Williams, Jake Carlson, Mona Romanetti, Scott Edmunds,, Devika Madalli, Brooks Hanson

Apologies: Barbara Ebert, Ian Mulvany, Dan Potter, Jenny Muilenburg

## Summary

The June board meeting began with attendance confirmation and approval of previous minutes.

Jen presented a health check update, highlighting that the platform is stable with one change since May. External relations has improved with Jess joining, though still under pressure. A significant revelation was made regarding the volume of data: instead of 600 new datasets monthly, the actual number is 1,600. To address this, two new full-time curators have been added recently. But the health indication for curation has been lowered until there is greater stability.

The financial discussion centered around budget approval for 2025-26. Bekah presented the budget, noting shifts in both revenue and expenses. The budget includes Large data fees from partners for the first time, and publisher DPC revenue projections based on 18-month actuals. The final deficit budget increased from 379K to 428K. The cashflow position has improved due to a significant consortium membership.

Jon Treadway's business model analysis was presented by Jen, revealing that expert support, partnerships, and integrations are central to the business. The board discussed transitioning from a membership model to a nonprofit service provider model while maintaining strong community engagement.

## Topics

Health check review of platform, external relations, and curation

Budget approval and financial position review for FY25-26

Business model discussion and organizational transition

Vote on shifting vocabulary from member organization to partner service organization

# Review

## Health Check and Curation Volume Update 00:02:05

Jen reported platform stability following resolution of bot issues in May. External relations improved with Jess joining the team, though pressure remains on partner renewals and marketing. A significant discovery revealed actual curation volume is 1,600 datasets monthly, not 600 as previously thought. Two new full-time curators were added to address this volume - one in Chennai, India and another recent hire. The board discussed potential AI tools to improve curation efficiency and the need for better workload management metrics.

## Budget Approval and Financial Position 00:14:47

Becca presented the 2025-26 budget with a deficit increase to 428K from 379K. Key changes include new Large data fees from partners revenue stream, publisher DPC revenue projections based on 18-month actuals, and adjustments for discounts and waivers. Curator salary and pension contributions were modified. Cashflow position improved significantly with a new consortium membership, pushing back the October 2025 danger point. The budget reflects operational reality while supporting strategic objectives, with conservative projections for partner renewals.

## Business Model Analysis 00:49:04

Jen presented John Treadway's comprehensive business model analysis highlighting expert support as a primary value proposition. The Kano analysis of 35 active platform users revealed researchers prioritize support services over technical features like metadata and versioning. Value proposition research included input from institutions and publishers beyond researchers. The business model canvas identified three key pillars: expert support, partnerships, and integrations. With  $\pm 80\%$  of income now coming from partnerships and integrations, the board discussed transitioning from a membership model to a nonprofit service provider model in line with the above data while maintaining strong community engagement.

# Decisions

Board approved the FY25-26 budget with projected deficit of 428K

Board authorized Jen to develop proposals for updating Dryad's definitions and refining its organizational model

Finance Committee will implement new KPIs to monitor curation expenditure against budget

Dryad team to explore potential AI tools to support and scale curation processes

## Issues

Issue: Curation team facing significantly higher volume of submissions than previously understood

Solution: Added two new full-time curators and planning to hire a management position

Issue: Clunky back-and-forth between bookkeeper and management

Solution: Looking into hiring fractional CFO support in the new year

Issue: Need to refine organizational identity and vocabulary around membership

Solution: Board to review proposals for transition from member organization to nonprofit service provider model

## Action Items

Jen to explore hiring a fractional CFO to improve financial management

Jen to pursue transition plans from member organization to nonprofit service provider

FinCo to monitor curation expenditure relative to budget and assess resource needs

Jen and team to develop detailed proposals for organizational structure changes