

OCUL Communities Guidelines

Purpose

OCUL Communities are formed to:

1. Promote and encourage the advancement of services in OCUL member institutions;
2. Provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas pertaining to particular services and areas of expertise;
3. Stay in touch with projects and innovations across member institutions and beyond;
4. Seek opportunities to improve individual and shared infrastructure for existing and emerging initiatives.

Process to Establish a Community

Communities submit a proposal to the OCUL Executive Committee, with a copy to the OCUL-PA Chair, including:

- Terms of reference, indicating a description of the topic being addressed, anticipated timeframe (short-term or ongoing)
- Proposed plan of activity
- Proposal supported by, at a minimum, ten library staff from normally at least one-third of OCUL institutions
- Nomination for a moderator for a two-year term

Once formed, Community membership is at the discretion of OCUL member institutions. A Community may include more than one person from an institution.

Where appropriate, Communities may wish to propose a modified governance structure to support their plan of activity.

Reporting/Decision-making

In general, the OCUL Communities work by consensus with votes only undertaken in rare and exceptional circumstances. OCUL Communities are self-managing. At times, Communities will choose to collaborate on specific shared initiatives. In situations where Community members are asked to make an institutional commitment, only one member should act as institutional representative.

Communities are expected to report annually each spring in order to keep OCUL informed of activities and to highlight new developments. These brief annual reports, as well as other reports as necessary, are provided through the Community Moderator to the OCUL Planning and Assessment Committee.

Communication

OCUL encourages inclusive and two-way communication practices which support effective discussions. A Community's correspondence and documents are available to all staff in member libraries. In some circumstances, a Community may need and may request a confidential web space to support its work.

Work Plan

A general plan of activity for the Community is developed when the Community is first formed and then each Community provides a brief annual report. In addition to these, if Communities are requesting OCUL project funding and staffing support, a work plan for the coming year, organized according to OCUL's strategic plan, should be produced. At a minimum, the work plan lists proposed projects, including the project leads, time frame and estimated costs if any. The annual work plan is provided through the Moderator to OCUL-IR, OCUL-SP, and/or OCUL-PA as appropriate.

Moderator responsibilities

Duties include:

- Arranging meetings; soliciting members for agenda items.
- Liaising with all relevant OCUL committee Chairs.
- In collaboration with members, updates of the work plan.
- Correspondence with outside agencies when necessary.
- Liaising with other Community Moderators to organize joint agendas

The Moderator will solicit members for interest in becoming the new Moderator 6 months prior to the end of the two-year term.

Administrative and Financial Support

OCUL provides:

- Electronic communication support (list-serves, wiki space, teleconferences, etc.)
- The opportunity to meet in person annually in conjunction with Scholars Portal Day or other conferences and events. Travel and other meeting expenses are the responsibility of the member's institution.
- Funding on a project basis, with priority assigned to projects that advance OCUL's strategic directions. Requests for such funding are made to the Executive Director as part of the Community's annual work plan.

It is expected that any administrative work of the Community will be carried out by members of the Community, without the support of OCUL staff.