

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Center for the Future of Libraries Update

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Update on activities of the Center for the Future of Libraries, including progress on the 2013 IMLS Grant for the Center for the Future of Libraries.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Miguel Figueroa, Center for the Future of Libraries

CONTACT PERSON:

Miguel Figueroa
800-545-2433 ext. 5851 or 312-280-5851
mfigueroa@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:

No motion proposed – informational only

DATE: October 10, 2014

BACKGROUND:

The attached report includes information on progress on the 2013 IMLS Grant for the Center for the Future of Libraries, including the creation of the Center's web site, development of the Center's blog and discussion groups, partnership with the American Alliance of Museums' Center for the Future of Museums, and programming. Additionally the report shares information on activities outside the grant project, including presentations and programs and recently submitted grant proposals.

Attachments:

Center for the Future of Libraries (CFL) Update

IMLS Grant – “Center for the Future of Libraries”

In September 2013, the American Library Association was awarded a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant for the project, “Center for the Future of Libraries.”

Progress on this grant has included the hiring of a founding director, the creation of a CFL web site and blog, the development of a program at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference and a session at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting, and the establishment of a working relationship with the American Alliance of Museum’s Center for the Future of Museums.

Key accomplishments and progress include:

Center for the Future of Libraries Website

The CFL web site is available from <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future>.

The starting point for the site is a Trend Library (<http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends>) which will advance one of the Center’s primary goals of identifying emerging trends relevant to libraries and librarianship. The trend library will include entries on specific trends with information on how they are developing, why they matter for libraries, and links to the reports, articles, and resources that can further explain their significance.

The intent of the trend library is to provide libraries and librarians with ready access to useful and usable information on long-term, large-scale trends. The trend library might be used for strategic planning, personal development and learning, or to inform new programs and services.

Coverage of each trend can be enhanced with information about ALA initiatives that respond to trends (e.g. a link to Choose Privacy Week has been included on the [Privacy Shifting](#) trend page) and information from libraries about how they are responding to trends with new programs, services, or partnerships.

Coverage of individual trends will be expanded as new information is made available. New entries will be added to help develop a robust resource for trends relevant to all types of libraries.

Through October 2014 and beyond, the Center plans to share the trend library with ALA members and the larger profession and encourage librarians to share their thoughts on improving coverage and provide examples of programs and activities from their libraries that align with the trends, allowing the Center to highlight existing initiatives that look ahead to the future of libraries.

Futures Discussion Group and Blog

The Library of the Future Blog is available as part of the Center’s web site at <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/blog>. The blog will include information on the Center’s work and development and reflections on trends and innovative practices relevant to libraries. Over the next several months, the CFL director will invite member leaders and outside thought leaders to share their views of the future of libraries through featured posts on the blog.

The Center has not yet formed a futures discussion group, but plans to create and manage an ALAConnect group to lead and further future-focused discussions within the profession.

Although the Center has not formed a formal discussion group, it has had great success engaging librarians and library professionals via social media. The Center's social media efforts are integrated into the American Library Association's general social media channels (twitter, Facebook, and Google+), but marked with the hashtag #libraryofthefuture. Postings have averaged two to three per week since June. Content is cultivated from a variety of sources outside the library world, including Big Think, The Economist, Edutopia, Intelligent Life, Fast Company, Forbes, MindShift, National Alliance to End Homelessness, Wall Street Journal, Wired, and more. Posts labeled with #libraryofthefuture have had favorable response with likes, shares, and retweets.

Partnership with the American Alliance of Museums' Center for the Future of Museums

CFL has formally engaged Elizabeth Merritt, founding director of the Center for the Future of Museums at the American Alliance of Museums, as a consultant in support of the CFL's formation. The consultation project will include a presentation to ALA members (at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting), a day with ALA staff, and consultation with the CFL director.

The CFL director met with Elizabeth Merritt for a very productive meeting in August to help review the founding of the Center for the Future of Museums and its initial work strategies. Both parties look forward to a very productive working relationship.

Programming

The Center participated in a program at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference in Las Vegas with a session titled "Library of the Future" featuring three library leaders discussing their visions of the future. The program developed out of the Summit on the Future of Libraries held in May 2014.

As mentioned above, the Center will present a session at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting with a presentation by Elizabeth Merritt, founding director of the Center for the Future of Museums at the American Alliance of Museums. The session will include an open discussion period where members can learn more about the development of CFL and share their thoughts and insights for direction of the Center.

Unmet goals for the grant project, which will be pursued through the remaining grant period include:

Sustainable Support Plan

The CFL director has begun work with the ALA Development Office to reach out to library vendors and foundations to develop opportunities for sustained funding for the Center.

The Development Office coordinated a meeting with ALA's Library Champions to discuss the Center for the Future of Libraries. The event was well attended by representatives from the vendor community. The discussion, led by Keith Michael Fiels and ALA member leaders Barbara Stripling, Courtney Young, and Maureen Sullivan, produced valuable insights for the work the Center could perform as well as opportunities for partnerships and collaboration.

Grant opportunities are also being pursued, including a possible project for submission to IMLS and a project already submitted to the ASAE Foundation's Innovation Grants program.

Thought Leaders Meeting

The process of formalizing a thought leaders group to guide the work of the Center is still underway. It is expected that that group will come together over the next few months with meetings convened beginning in 2015 and continuing throughout the year.

Additional Activities

Programs and Presentations

The CFL director presented at a Library Futures Forum hosted by ProQuest on Wednesday May 21, 2014 in Bethesda, Maryland.

The Center has also confirmed participation in several upcoming conferences, including the iDEAL Summit at the University of North Carolina Greensboro Department of Library and Information Studies (November 7, 2014), a presentation at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (November 12-13, 2014), the 2015 Texas Library Association Annual Conference (April 14 – 17, 2014), and the 2015 Tennessee Library Association Annual Conference (April 22-24, 2015).

ASAE Foundation Innovation Grant

The CFL director submitted a grant application to the ASAE Foundation's Innovation Grants Program, which provides awards of up to \$10,000 to support innovation exploration and development for associations. AAM's Center for the Future of Museums received an ASAE Innovation Grant in 2013 to explore digital badging. CFL's grant application proposed opportunities to utilize crowdsourcing to advance innovation in libraries. The project would advance the long-term goal for the Center to be a space for innovation within the profession. Notifications will be made in late December.