

Facilitated discussion regarding the Future of Core Heads of Technical Services

July 8, 2022

Breakout rooms for facilitated discussion of questions noted below. Participants are welcome/encouraged to add notes directly to this shared document. Breakout rooms will last for 30 minutes, followed by 20 minutes of reporting out to the larger group.

Facilitators

Morag Boyd, The Ohio State University

Jason Kovari, Cornell University

Ellen Mueller, University of Michigan

Questions for discussion

1. What is the value of Big Heads to you / your institution?
2. What would make Big Heads valuable to you / your institution?
3. Should Big Heads have an impact beyond this group? If so, what should the scope of that impact be?
4. How should Big Heads engage with other Core groups?
5. What should be our relationship with the vendor community?

Notes - Group 1

What is the value of Big Heads to you / your institution?

Maybe the way in which we communicate with each other, and the community could be different. It doesn't feel right to be an exclusive group on a stage having that conversation separately from the larger community. Perhaps we could be a thought leader.

Boston Public Melissa Andrews -trying to embrace our role as a research library, DEI, staffing turnover, new people, unique role as a public library.

New York public Steven Pisani– shared catalog with Columbia, very good for us to know what is going on in other research institutions. Public circulating branch collections, it's a different place.

Morag, Ohio State, staffing and recruitment, how do we recruit for diversity,

Distinguishing features of large research libraries is large collections in foreign languages.

Rachel Frick– aren't a lot of spaces for folks at this senior admin level to collaborate, interact, share information with each other is important; supportive group since you are all facing similar challenges; disparity between salaries for these positions between institutions is stark

Beth Camden, being able to talk to peer institutions in terms of challenges and sizes

Influence over the marketplace, the vendor community, Linked Data, frustration with efforts around this. Tools for creation, annotation, and discovery. Guides investment, resourcing, etc.

What would make Big Heads valuable to you / your institution?

See above. Collaboration, shared problems.

Should Big Heads have an impact beyond this group? If so, what should the scope of that impact be?

How can we turn this into an action-oriented group, position statements, action plans, invitations for comment, etc. Steven – may be way to do this for DEI, Library of Congress, put pressure on the agencies to enable community wide change that our patrons expect.

Culture of cataloging, thought leaders, many to one, one to many connecting to larger national and international efforts

How should Big Heads engage with other Core groups?

Core itself is still finding its way, exploring its own identity and purpose, lots of opportunities there for intersections with other core groups, help from Core section leadership at facilitating exactly these kinds of discussions.

What should be our relationship with the vendor community?

Notes - Group 2

Marty Kurth, Erin Grant, Lars Meyer, Ellen Mueller, Alexis Manheim

What is the value of Big Heads to you / your institution?

Hear what others are doing?

Group with similar backgrounds.

What would make Big Heads valuable to you / your institution?

But also want to hear what others are struggling with. Can we work together on a problem?

Concrete outcomes, such as a group of institutions working together. A collective statement.

Coordinated work in the past has been intermittent

Should Big Heads have an impact beyond this group? If so, what should the scope of that impact be?

How should Big Heads engage with other Core groups?

Many libraries are part of many groups. Competing for time. Lack of bandwidth.

Ivy Plus Tech Services has perhaps taken attention away from this group.

What should be our relationship with the vendor community?

Keeping separation allows us to be critical when needed.

Other ideas

More successful in person than virtual. Big Heads meeting itself is the performative part, valuable freestyle engagement. Lunch is a place to get information, speak from a personal standpoint rather than an organizational position.

Question: to what extent are members representing themselves, their institutions, or both, keeping in mind that membership is based on the ARL Investment index.

Notes - Group 3

Denise Pan, Jason O Roy, Claire DeMarco, Jason Kovari, Sophie Dong

Background

- Denise has been on Big Heads for 5-6 years; Claire for 18 months; Jason K. for couple years[?]; Jason Roy for less than a year; Sophie - not part of Big Heads
- Broader shift across community where people leading technical services for our institutions are not people who came through the ranks. How can we ensure that people feel included
- Big Heads has changed in the last 5-6 years. There is a small number of individuals who are also the institutional representative on CCDO as well as Big Heads.
- Relationship with OCLC is a question
- Historical Charge and Membership: <https://www.ala.org/alcts/mgrps/ig/ats-dgbh>
 - Membership is limited to the technical services directors of:
 - 3 U.S. national libraries (LC, NLM, NAL)
 - Library and Archives Canada
 - 2 large public libraries (NYPL, Boston Public)
 - The 3 largest Canadian libraries (Toronto, Alberta, British Columbia)
 - 1 large U.S. non-ARL institution (Stanford)
 - U.S. ARL institutions whose average Investment Index figure is 0.5 or above (actual numbers may fluctuate)
 - Membership is reviewed every three years.

What is the value of Big Heads to you / your institution?

- For non-members: Leaders of metadata profession; look for what projects and trends are being discussed
- Struggled with this – to balance participation with different communities and to see the value with those. For BH: tie to technical services and whatever that means at different institutions. A place to go and find colleagues with a connection to supervising this type of work
- Some of the topics identified by the group – and hearing different perspectives of how different institutions have approached different challenges is helpful. Community

sharing. Breadth and depth of collections give us different challenges than other types of institutions

- Still struggling with what Big Heads is – say this in terms of the value and resources that can be brought. Want to make sure rightfitting those.
- Role of big heads as sharing and communications
- Are we looking to pilot, rapid prototype and fail fast? Or is this about strategy and leveraging combined resources?
- Figuring out who to send so that the right people are in the room

What would make Big Heads valuable to you / your institution?

- OCLC connection.
- Project – and are there smaller committees that can form.
- Can we have more than one representative when working in a virtual environment since we are not limited by logistics in virtual space.
- Enhance value of community if we do some work to define what it means to be a member of BH. That it doesnt need to be a single person but multiple people.
- Connection to other people. Slack space would be helpful
- Can imagine value (to extent we're able to share) information about vendors.
- Understanding challenges in negotiations.
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Should Big Heads have an impact beyond this group? If so, what should the scope of that impact be?

- UWash is far from other institutions of its size – partners with Big 10 even though not a Big 10 institution; in this space, challenging of exploring impact without governance, structure.
 - Formal BTAA relationships demand money... but this does not
 - Figure out what does what best and when to go where for scale
 - Something here we want to keep and develop
- Sharing insights from non-BH orgs to hear those challenges and learn. Opportunities there but logistical limitations in other venues
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How should Big Heads engage with other Core groups?

What should be our relationship with the vendor community?