

Introduction:

This document presents the results of the voting from the Mission Exercise at the 2012 BHL Staff and Technical Meeting. During this session, we brainstormed words and phrases to describe the three key elements of a mission statement: 1) business; 2) values; 3) audience. After the brainstorming sessions, staff were asked to vote on their top 2-3 favorite words or phrases in each of the three categories.

Our Current Mission Statement: “The Biodiversity Heritage Library is a consortium of natural history and botanical libraries that cooperate to digitize and make accessible the legacy literature of biodiversity held in their collections and to make that literature available for open access and responsible use as a part of a global ‘biodiversity commons.’”

Collections Committee Mission Statement: “The Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) is an international collaboration of libraries, museums, and research institutions working together to make biodiversity literature available for the widest possible audience through an open access environment and sustainable management of its resources. Much of this literature is rare or has limited global distribution. More than any other digital library, this collection and its associated services are centered on the history and future of biodiversity literature.”

Business:

Business describes what an organization does. We currently say that we “digitize and make accessible the legacy literature of biodiversity.”

Top Voting Results:

1. Enhance/Spark Discovery - 6 votes
2. Empower - 7 votes
3. Digitize - 7 votes

Full Voting Results:

● Enhance/Spark discovery - 6 votes	● Increase efficiency - 1 vote
● Empower - 7 votes	● Collaborate - 1 vote
● Digitize - 7 votes	● Disseminate information - 1 vote
● Provide free access - 5 votes	● Engage - 1 vote

• Lead - 2 votes	• Global outreach - 1 vote
• Share - 3 votes	• Integrate biodiversity collections - 2 votes
• Curate digitized content - 2 votes	• Improve research - 1 vote
• Facilitate (people's life's work) - 3 votes	• Archive the past - 1 vote
• Inspire (research) - 3 votes	• Repatriate - 2 votes
• Preserve - 3 votes	• Provide obscure/arcane literature and gap-fill - 2 votes
• Respond - 1 vote	• Open access - 1 vote
• Support biodiversity conservation - 1 vote	• Sustainable - 1 vote
• Build - 1 vote	• Unite - 1 vote
• Deliver - 2 votes	• Link - 1 vote
• Create tools - 1 vote	• Provide better accessibility - 1 vote

Values:

Values describe what is important to an organization.

Top Voting Results:

1. Free/open (access) - 16 votes
2. Sustainability - 6 votes
3. Sharing - 6 votes

Full Voting Results:

• Free/open (access) - 16 votes	• Service - 2 votes
• Sustainability - 6 votes	• Numerous languages - 1 vote
• Sharing - 6 votes	• World-wide distribution - 4 votes
• Excellence - 3 votes	• Research - 1 vote
• Open data - 3 votes	• Biodiversity - 2 votes

• Collaboration - 4 votes	• Diverse audiences - 1 vote
• Depth (of literature) - 2 votes	• Inspire - 1 vote
• Breadth (of literature) - 2 votes	• Education - 1 vote
• Expertise - 2 votes	• Repatriate - 1 vote
• Authoritative - 3 votes	• Preserve - 1 vote
• Interoperability - 2 votes	• Innovation - 2 votes
• Comprehensive - 2 votes	• Conservation - 1 vote
• Quality - 1 vote	

Audience:

Audience describes who we serve as an organization. We currently do not make a statement about audience in our official mission statement. The collections committee suggested “widest possible audience.”

Top Voting Results:

The top theme from the voting for Audiences centered around the concept of “everyone.” There were a total of 11 votes for this concept, described using a variety of particular words and phrases. The specific phrases, and the vote results, are presented below:

• Humanity - 5 votes	• Anyone interested in the history of life on earth - 1 vote
• General Public - 2 votes	• Widest possible range of patrons, researchers, cultures, and societies - 1 vote
• Everyone - 3 votes	• 12 Votes Total

Full Voting Results:

• Humanity - 5 votes	• Global audience - 1 vote
• Researchers - 11 votes	• Societies - 1 vote

• Scholars - 4 votes	• Widest possible range of patrons, researchers, cultures, and societies - 1 vote
• Life-long learners - 2 votes	• Citizen scientists - 2 votes
• General public - 2 votes	• Scientists - 1 vote
• Everyone - 3 votes	• Bibliographers - 1 vote
• Students - 3 votes	• Systematists - 1 vote
• Librarians - 3 votes	• Artists - 2 votes
• Bioinformatics community - 1 vote	• Third-world researchers - 1 vote
• Conservationists - 2 votes	• Biologists - 1 vote
• Taxonomists - 2 votes	• Anyone interested in the history of life on earth - 1 vote
• Education Community/Educators/Teachers - 3 votes	• Policy makers - 1 vote
• Underserved populations - 1 vote	• all “-ists” - 1 vote

Putting Voting Results into a Template:

To help direct our conversation, it may be useful to see all of the voting elements combined into a single mission statement. A few options for these combinations are presented below to help initiate conversations.

Top Business Votes	Top Values Votes	Top Audience Votes
Enhance/Spark Discovery Empower Digitize	Free/open (access) Sustainability Sharing	Humanity/Everyone Researchers Scholars

The Biodiversity Heritage Library sparks discovery and empowers humanity by providing free, open access to digitized biodiversity literature.

Sparking discovery and empowering humanity.

Sparking discovery through digitized literature in a sustainable, open access environment.

Empowering humanity through free, open access to digitized biodiversity literature.

Sharing biodiversity literature with humanity.

Other suggestions?