



LIBRARIES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Bloomington

September 6, 2012

Dear Hydra Steering Committee Members:

At the invitation of Tom Cramer of Stanford University, I am writing to express Indiana University's interest in becoming a Partner on the Hydra Project.

The Indiana University Libraries have a long history of leadership in digital library software development, going back to the mid-1990s. IU has been involved with Fedora for more than ten years and was a member of the original Fedora Deployment Group led by the University of Virginia with support from the Mellon Foundation in 2001. More recently in 2008, with support from grants from the National Science Foundation and Institute of Museum and Library Services, IU developed and released the open source Variations digital music library system, which is now in use at more than a dozen institutions to provide online access to sound recordings and scores along with tools to enhance their use in teaching and learning.

As we have worked on these and other efforts, it has become clear that no one institution can hope to develop solutions to all of its digital content management needs. We believe that the Hydra Project offers a promising technical and community framework in which to try to accomplish cross-institutional digital library technology development at a level that other organizations and consortia have so far been unable to facilitate.

Together with Northwestern University, IU is now leading the development of the Avalon Media System, formerly known as *Variations on Video*. This system, developed with support from IMLS, is intended to enable libraries and archives to easily curate, distribute and provide online access to their video and audio collections, in support of teaching, learning and research. The system is being developed as a Hydra Head using the Hydra technical framework and Ruby on Rails. As part of our development, we plan to contribute to extending the Hydra framework to support enhanced access controls and additional functionality from which other projects may also benefit.

In addition to our work on Avalon, we plan to explore the use of the Hydra framework and Hydra heads to support other digital library needs at Indiana, including institutional repositories, online exhibits, born-digital archiving, and digitized image and manuscript collections.

I look forward to our involvement in Hydra and to our collaborations with existing and future Hydra partners.

Sincerely,

Jon W. Dunn

Director and Interim Assistant Dean for Library Technologies and Digital Libraries