Washington University in St. Louis

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

September 29, 2016

Dear Hydra Steering Group,

I write on behalf of the Washington University in St. Louis Libraries, to accept your nomination to become a Hydra Partner, and state our commitment to all that entails. We took note of the Hydra project soon after its launch, as we began to look for alternatives to unsupported digital library platforms, and were interested in Hydra initially because we, like some other organizations, had implemented a Fedora repository but lacked resources to develop or customize an interface. We were especially interested in the idea of an architecture that provided for continuity of digital asset management while allowing for flexibility of interfaces for user access to diverse digital assets.

In late 2014 we were ready to the Hydra architecture. In the spring of 2015 we began an engagement with Data Curation Experts to develop a solution for the Washington University Libraries, and become provisional partners that fall. By the spring of 2016 two Hydra repositories had been implemented: one developed by DCE primarily for texts, transcripts and associated media (http://repository.wustl.edu) and another Avalon repository for time-based media (http://streamingvideo.wustl.edu). By May we had collections in both repositories and concluded our launch efforts with a Hydra "Stop and Learn" event held May 13th, for both university personnel and colleagues from cultural organizations in the area. Since then we have been actively adding collections to these repositories, engaging in discussions with other partners on different Hydra development concerns, and joining in interest groups.

The Hydra framework and community represents an opportunity for us not only to address important needs in our digital infrastructure, but to do so in a new way. We engaged with the Hydra community not only to meet a technical need but to begin to change our approach to meeting these needs. In the Hydra model, skills and knowledge can be cultivated within a partner organization while at the same time affording opportunities for collaboration outside it. We are excited to be a part of this community, and are actively pursuing new development opportunities, in the near term for improved search functionality and integrating GIS data and functionality, and in the longer term for merging our independent repositories.

Sincerely,

Chris Freeland
Associate University Librarian
Washington University Libraries