Draft Contribution Model WG recommendations

The Working Group is seeking comment from Partners on the draft report below via a Google form at https://goo.gl/forms/y4IdfA7NE22WIxNn2 prior to its being discussed at the Partner Meeting in Salt Lake City on 8th October 2018. The form asks for contact information so that the WG can get back to you with a response, if appropriate, but you can opt for anonymity in any wider discussion of your comments should you wish. If your institution will not be represented at the meeting it is particularly important, please, that you share your comments, questions or suggestions via the Google form prior to October 8th so that they may be considered during the discussion.

If you will be at the Partner Meeting yourself, please take the time to familiarize yourself with the content of this report prior to the discussion, whether or not you submit comments beforehand.

The Samvera Contribution Model Working Group was commissioned at the Partner Meeting in March 2018 in response to a recommendation by the Samvera Governance Working Group.

For a number of years Partners have struggled to understand just what is expected of them as Partners and, conversely, the Community has been a little fuzzy as to what to offer Partners in return. For many years, Samvera has benefited from huge investments of in-kind resources from its Partners and adopters as well as from monetary donations. The decision to move towards one or two permanent staff has resulted in a need for a reliable and more substantial funding stream. This additional money will help fund Samvera staff, accountable to the community as a whole, to coordinate the roadmapping, development and release of new Samvera code. This will allow us to better leverage the investments we are already making, while also producing a more predictable and managed development process we can rely on.

Going forward, the scale of current monetary contributions from the Community needs to be compared with Samvera's needs. In the course of some initial research, the Steering Group was advised by DuraSpace that for each of the potential roles of Community Manager and Technical Manager the annual cost was likely to be in the region of $165,000 if employed by a Partner institution on behalf of Samvera or $210,000 if employed on our behalf by DuraSpace. This Working Group has taken further advice and we find that these numbers are justifiable. We are informed that, whilst employment costs vary considerably from place to place in the US, a total of $165k for salary, benefits and a travel budget is a perfectly reasonable working estimate. In addition to funding any salaries, Samvera has operational costs around finances, legal matters, marketing and funding Community initiatives that may well account for another $20-25k. Thus even to employ one fte member of staff would

require an annual cash income of, say, $190,000; two would require some $355k. For context, in 2017 Samvera's income from fundraising and donations was some $77k. We would note that fundraising, above and beyond Partner contributions, was specifically excluded from this Working Group's brief.

Against the background of a need for greater clarity of expectations the WG brief was to broadly define what resources a Partner should put into Samvera and what they should get in return. Additionally, there may be a group of non-Partners (termed "supporters" in this document) who might be prepared to give money to us because they have a vested interest in seeing our software continue to function and evolve – what should they get in return?

Not all Partners are in a position to contribute large sums of money; as we have noted above, many of them give considerable resources to the community as "in-kind" contributions and the WG has taken on the challenge to somehow quantify those contributions. In broad terms, the WG attempted to work towards a guideline that each Partner would be expected to contribute at least $n,000 per year in-kind (or a mix of in-kind and monetary contributions) and to recommend how that in-kind contribution be quantified. Recognizing that not all Samvera Partners have the same resourcing behind them, the WG has further attempted to recommend different minimum levels of contribution for different types of institution. Two guiding principles have been observed: that Partners would never be required to contribute money as a condition of Partnership, and that it should not be possible to gain significant influence within the Samvera Community simply by contributing money.

Background research

The WG spent time researching the contribution models of a number of organizations. Whilst these were helpful, none of them was seen as an exact fit for the Samvera Community. Rather, the WG has drawn together elements from a number of them to inform its recommendations. Models examined included:

- Apache contribution model
- DuraSpace contribution model
- Apereo Foundation membership model
- Digital Public Library of America (a little different goal, but membership funded) https://dp.la
- Digital Preservation Network (https://dpn.org)
- The IIIF Consortium

Partner survey - in-kind contributions

A Partner survey was developed to better understand the types of contribution currently being made by Partners and, to some extent, what benefit they felt accrued from these contributions. Such contributions included:

Code-related
- Developer time devoted to community (rather than local) needs (if this is to be assigned a monetary value it should be noted that the value to Samvera may depend on the experience of the developer)
- Travel expenses to code-fests
- Time (proportion of?) developing code for local use but which is then gifted to the community
- Time testing new community releases

Meetings and calls
- Partner (and, for some, Steering) calls
- Involvement in Working and Interest Groups
- Attendance at stand-alone Partner (and, for some, Steering) meetings (so not alongside Connect)
  - Travel expenses for above
- Attendance at "other" conferences specifically to deliver a Samvera component
  - Travel expenses for above

Admin-related
- Time dedicated to admin work for the community (this applies mainly to Steering members)
- "Donations" of time/advice by, for example, university counsel which otherwise would need to be paid for

Meeting-related
- Time organising events (Connect, regional meetings, Partner meetings etc)
- "Donations" of meeting space which otherwise would need to be hired
- "Donations" of local services for meetings (such possibilities as "free" catering; local "free" printing of posters etc)

Training-related
- Time to deliver (so not be a pupil in) training events
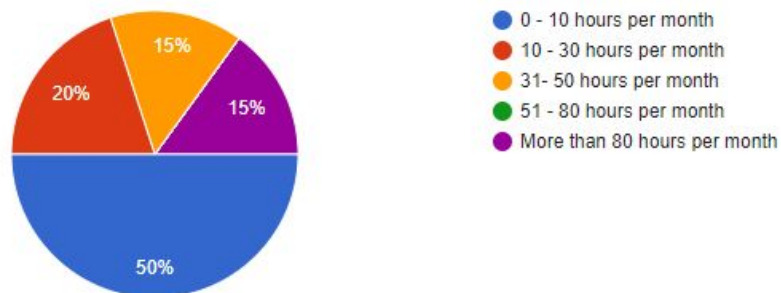 - Travel expenses for above (if not paid by training organisation)

20 responses were received to the survey from the 34 current Partners.

Code related

Of the 20 respondents, 10 institutions had developers contributing time to community (rather than local) needs and, perhaps unsurprisingly, felt that this was time well spent.

Developer time devoted to community (rather than local) needs - in hours per month

20 responses

●	0 - 10 hours per month
●	10 - 30 hours per month
●	31- 50 hours per month
●	51 - 80 hours per month
●	More than 80 hours per month

15%
20%
15%
50%

Asked to categorize the experience of the developers doing Samvera-related work (for local and/or community purposes), fewer than half the respondents had "beginners" involved; some 72% had "mid-level" developers involved; and some 83% had "senior" developers involved. In both the latter categories, the number of developers was usually one or two. The weight of opinion was firmly that sending developers to Samvera "code-fests" was a good return on investment: some 90% of respondents to this question scored it in the 3-5 range.

Return on Investment of Travel-Costs sending Developers to Samvera Code-Fests

19 responses

0 (0%)
2 (10.5%)
4 (21.1%)
6 (31.6%)
7 (36.8%)
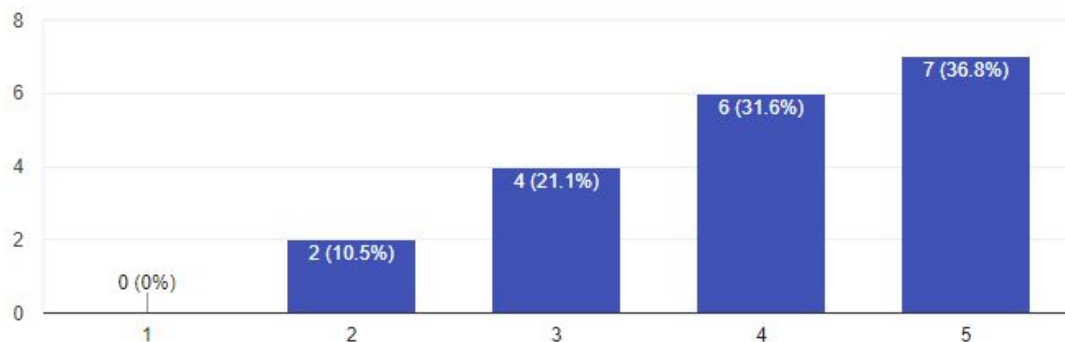
16 of the 20 respondents put some time into developing code for local use but which they then contributed back to the community. Unsurprisingly, the weight of opinion was that this offered a reasonable return on investment, with more than 80% scoring it in the 3-5 range.

Amount of time spent developing code for local use which is submitted back to the Samvera Community (estimate hours per month)
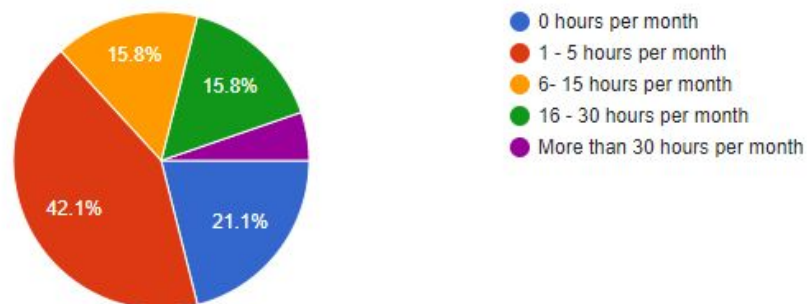
20 responses

- Not Applicable
- 1 - 5 hours per month
- 6-10 hours per month
- 11 - 30 hours per month
- Greater than 30 hours per month
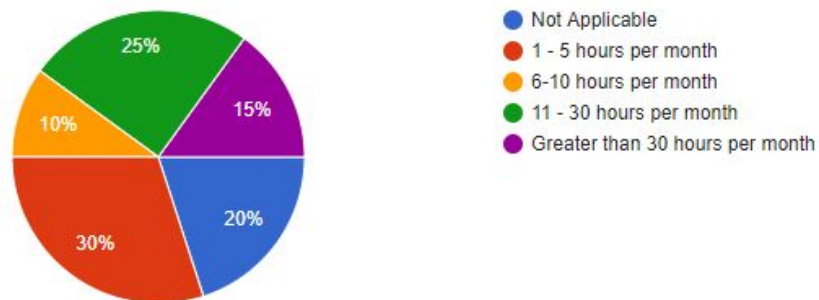
Of the 20 respondents to the survey, 15 said that they spent some time each month testing new Samvera software releases and, again, that they found a worthwhile return on investment.

Time testing new community releases (estimate hours per month)

19 responses

- 0 hours per month
- 1 - 5 hours per month
- 6- 15 hours per month
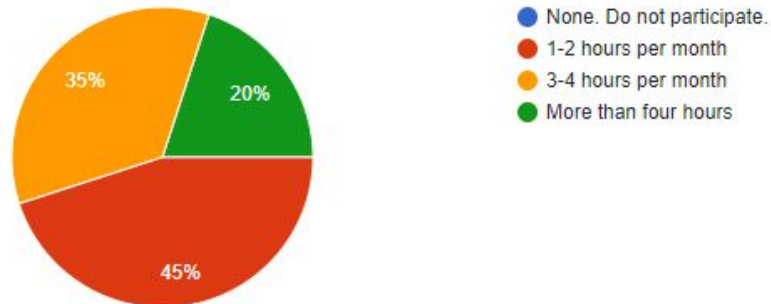- 16 - 30 hours per month
- More than 30 hours per month

Meetings and calls

All 20 respondents to the survey put time each month into Partner Meetings (defined in the rubric as "Community meetings") and calls.

Estimate of time all staff, cumulatively, spend on Partner Meetings and Calls per month
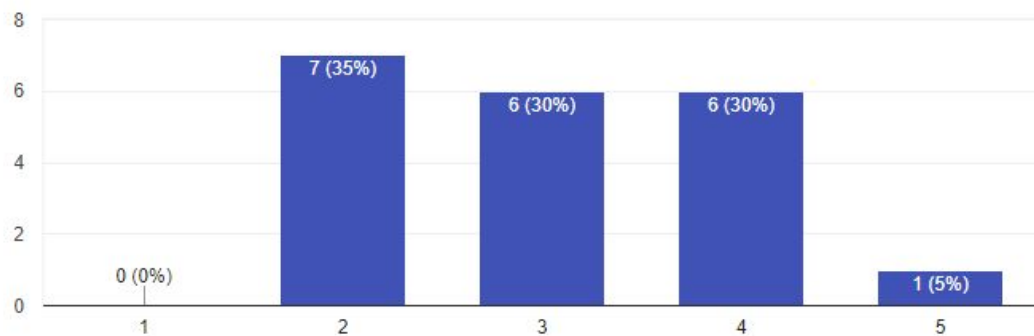
20 responses

Legend:
- None. Do not participate.
- 1-2 hours per month
- 3-4 hours per month
- More than four hours

Pie chart values: 35%, 20%, 45%

However, the value of Partner calls *per se* was not regarded terribly highly:

Value of Partner Calls

20 responses

Bar chart values: 1: 0 (0%), 2: 7 (35%), 3: 6 (30%), 4: 6 (30%), 5: 1 (5%)
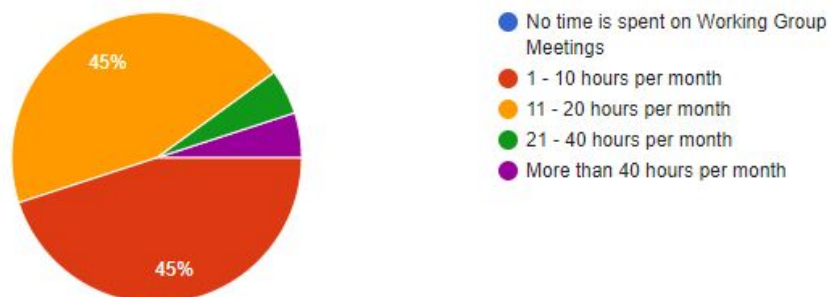
Likewise, all 20 respondents put staff time into Working and Interest Groups but, by contrast, these were regarded as rather more valuable.

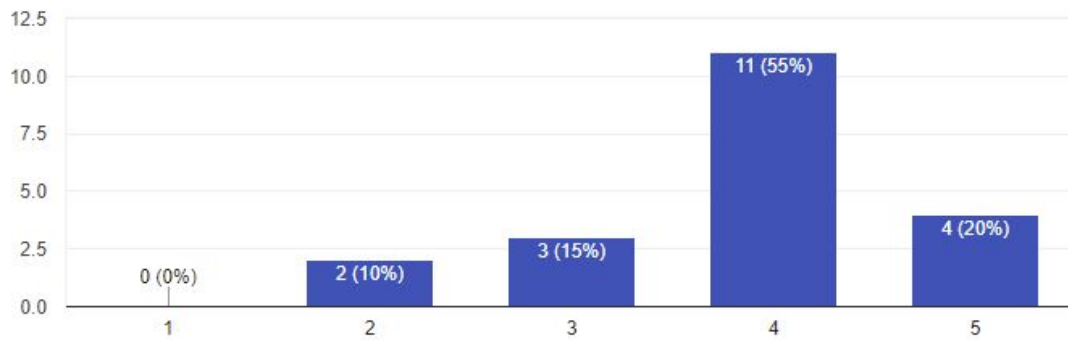## Estimate of cumulative time staff spend on Working and Interest Group Meetings - per month

20 responses

Legend:
- No time is spent on Working Group Meetings
- 1 - 10 hours per month
- 11 - 20 hours per month
- 21 - 40 hours per month
- More than 40 hours per month

Pie chart values: 45%, 45%

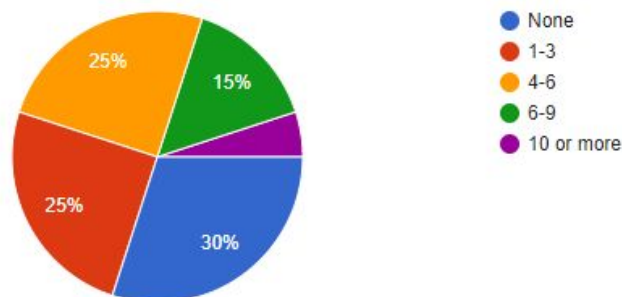## Value of Samvera Working and Interest Group Meetings

20 responses

19 of the 20 responding institutions had sent staff to a Partner Meeting and some 90% scored the return on investment in the 3-5 range.

14 of the 20 responding institutions had staff give presentations of "Samvera-driven content on behalf of Samvera" and felt the process worthwhile and the money well-spent:
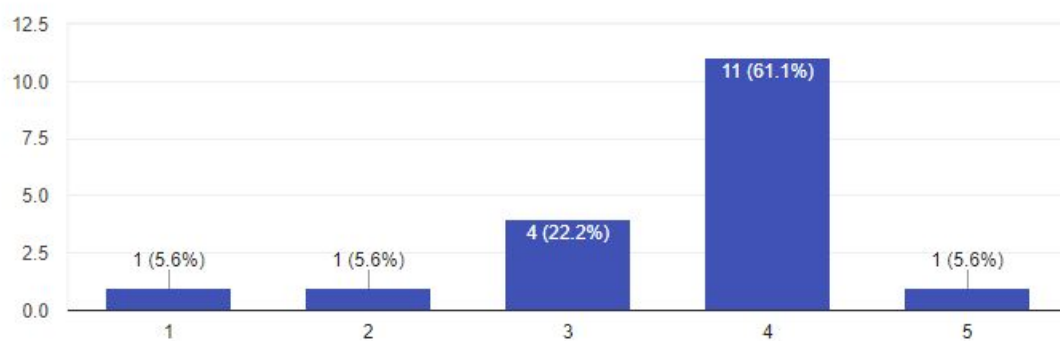
Number of Presentations at Conferences (per year) presenting Samvera-driven content on behalf of Samvera

20 responses

Legend:
- None
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 6-9
- 10 or more

Pie chart values: 30% None, 25% (1-3), 25% (4-6), 15% (6-9), remaining (10 or more)

Return on Investment for travel expenses for presenting Samvera-driven content on behalf of Samvera
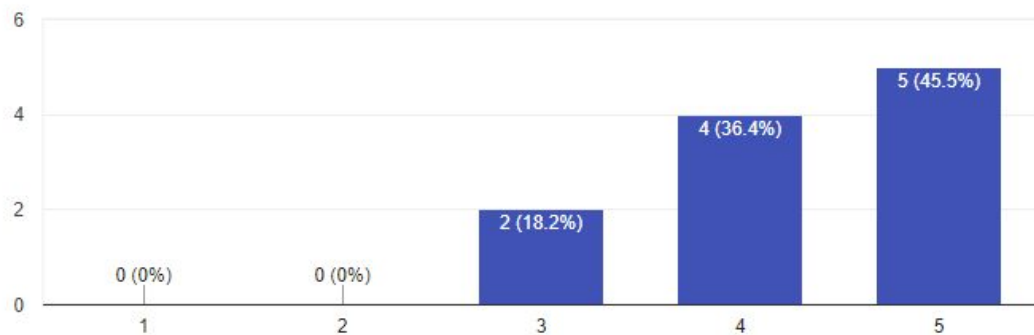
18 responses

Admin related

Approximately half the survey respondents had "donated" space for a Samvera event and, again, half had "donated" local services such as catering or printing. These were generally seen as worthwhile investments:
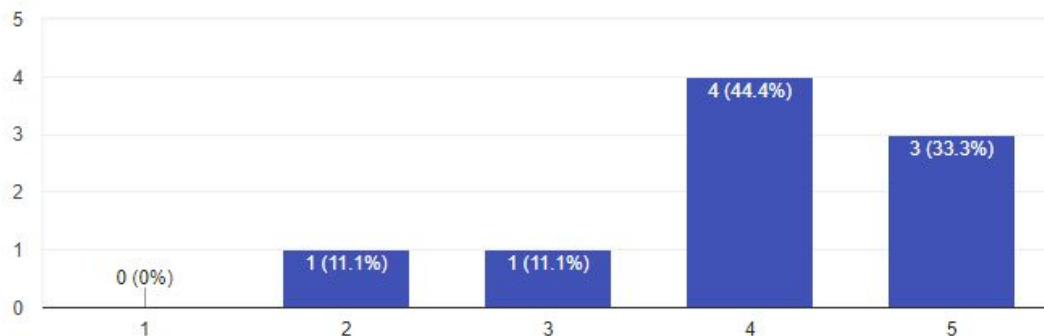
"Donations" of meeting space with otherwise would need to be rented or hired

11 responses

"Donations" of local services for meetings - example: "free" catering; "free" printing of posters, etc...

9 responses

Training related

Eight respondents had participated in delivering Samvera training and, of these, seven scored the experience as valuable (score range 3-5) and six of them ranked the money they spent on travel for these events as worthwhile (again, score 3-5)..

Steering

Five of the responding institutions had a representative on Samvera's Steering Group. Three said that they spent 6-10 hours per month on Steering matters, the other two 0-5 hours. All found a valuable return on investment (score 4-5). We should note that Steering benefits from a substantial number of hours gifted to the Community outside the Partnership framework and thus not included in these figures.

Value of time

Taking figures from the survey giving the number of hours spent on Samvera-related tasks, the WG has done some crude calculations based on an "average person" in the Community costing $45 per hour (this corresponds to an annual salary, including benefits, of some $72,000). On that basis, the respondents were giving "in-kind" between $2000 and $85,000 each in staff time. For the range of hours suggested in each response, the lower figure was used, thus for "6-10 hours" we used "6". If the respondent was contributing hours at the higher end of the range, the value of their in-kind contribution would be higher.

Whilst we accept that a home institution is funding an individual's time when they are away at a Samvera event, the associated travel and accommodation costs are an additional expense that should be counted in a Partner's contribution. (We would discount attendance at Samvera Connect, which would fit into an institution's "normal" regime of funding conference attendances, and events where people are being trained - as opposed to delivering training.) We know that these travel expenses can be significant and that for some institutions they will represent five-figure sums.

Monetary contributions

In 2017, 21 Organizations contributed to Samvera's funds a total of $77,000 - some of this in response to fundraising, the rest as donations. Two of these organizations were Supporters rather than Partners (see below). The contributions ranged from $1,000 to $5,000. It is perhaps worth noting that the vast majority of these contributors were also DuraSpace members contributing funds to Fedora. At the time of writing (09/25/18), 2018's ongoing fund-raising effort had brought in $91,000..
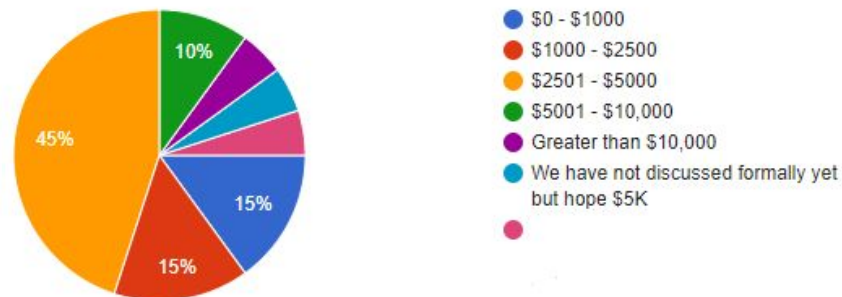
The two institutions that would be classed as "Supporters", which is to say they donated funds to the Community but were not Partners, received no commitment from Samvera about what they might expect to receive in return for their gift, merely the knowledge that it would in some sense further the work of the organization.

Survey responses

Looking to the survey, 19 of the respondents worked in a unit with an operating budget and some 63% of these exceeded $5,000,000 US. The remaining respondent is a service provider. 45% (9) of the respondents indicated that they might be able to offer $2,500-$5,000 in the first year of a contribution agreement (with another possible), 15% suggested more, 40% suggested less. (The text for the last legend item(s) in the diagrams below has been removed to protect anonymity.)

In addition to providing in-kind support, what do you believe may be a possible monetary contribution level you could consider for the FIRST year Samvera would request support?

20 responses

- $0 - $1000
- $1000 - $2500
- $2501 - $5000
- $5001 - $10,000
- Greater than $10,000
- We have not discussed formally yet but hope $5K
-

Asked about future years (specifically a third year), the pattern is broadly similar although 30% now think they may be able to offer more than $5,000:

In addition to providing in-kind support, what do you believe may be a possible monetary contribution level you could consider for the the THIRD year Samvera would request support?

20 responses

- $0 - $1000
- $1000 - $2500
- $2501 - $5000
- $5001 - $10,000
- Greater than $10,000
-
-
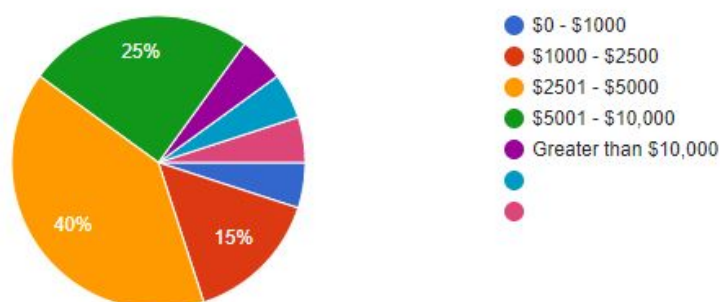
Clearly with 34 partners, even if each contributed on average $5,000, we would be some way short of our declared need. This is a challenge that the Community will have to address if our staffing aspirations are to be realized, even in part.

Range of institutional type and budget

The WG recognizes that all Partners do not have access to the same level of resourcing and that, therefore, any recommended level of contribution needs to reflect the Partner's local circumstances. The WG has worked to understand whether this level should be based on the budget of the institution as a whole, or of the smaller unit (often the libraries) that is actually involved with the Samvera Community and we are satisfied that it should be the latter.

The WG will recommend that Partner contributions be tiered according to the size and/or type of the Partner institution and, in the case of any institutions outside North America or Western Europe, with regard to the local economy. This reflects, to some degree, the approach of the Apereo Foundation.

Recommendations

Whilst seeking to provide for a steady and largely predictable level of resourcing for Samvera, the WG sees this as a two-way process, not one-way. In return for Partner contributions, the Community should undertake to provide a number of specific services in return. It is the WG's recommendation that these should include:

- The right to vote in formal Samvera decision making (one vote per Partner institution)
- The right to put up candidates for election to the Samvera Steering Group
- The right to attend Partner meetings and Partner calls
- The right to advance information about any security vulnerabilities discovered in Samvera software (via the Partners' closed mailing list)
- Centrally coordinated legal and financial services relating to
    - Rights management
    - Financial stewardship
    - Legal issues (including trademark)
    - Marketing (including website and wiki)
- An annual Samvera Connect conference
- An annual Samvera Virtual Connect

- Access to the services of any Samvera appointed employees to help further local Samvera initiatives
- Public acknowledgement of Partnership in/on appropriate publicity materials (including the website and wiki)

Possible Models for Staffing

As the contribution model is largely intended to fund the creation of two full time positions, Steering may wish to consider a number of approaches including but not limited to:

Two FTE's: Per the recommendations from the Samvera Governance Working Group, two FTE's would be hired by Samvera via DuraSpace or at a Partner Institution.

Shared Responsibilities (One FTE): One person funded by Samvera who will be responsible for both Community and Technical Management of Samvera.

FTE Contribution (Shared): An institution could take on an FTE, dividing time between Samvera work and work assigned by the home institution. The support by the institution would be between 25 and 75%, with the percentage of time funded by, and dedicated to, Samvera negotiated ahead of time (likely 50%).

FTE Contribution: An institution might take on an FTE to its staff but gift all the person's time to Samvera for managerial work.

Secondment: An institution might release an FTE for one or two years. During this time an arrangement would be in place for Samvera either to pay or to reimburse the institution for the person's salary. The FTE would have a guarantee from the institution that they could return to their post at the end of the agreed time period.

Partner contribution banding

The WG recommends that the level at which Partners should contribute be divided into three bands reflecting the level of resource available to them.

- A lower band applicable to non-profit organizations, service providers and, for instance, small liberal arts colleges with operational budgets for the Partner unit less than $5,000,000.
- A middle band (into which most of our existing Partners would probably fit) of institutions with operating budgets for the Partner unit between $5,000,000 and $10,000,000.
- An upper band consisting of institutions with operating budgets for the Partner unit in excess of $10,000,000.

The WG recommends that should Samvera have a Partnership application from an organization outside North America or Western Europe, consideration be given to whether the banded levels of contribution are appropriate with regard to the economy of the applicant's home country.

Annual Contributions

It is important to note that the contributions discussed below form the baseline of what we would hope for from a Partner and we anticipate that many will give considerably more to the Community - as they do at present.

A Partner's contribution will be assessed on the basis of the notional value of their in-kind contributions and additionally, where there has been a direct financial contribution, the monetary value of their donation. A monetary donation alone will not qualify the donor for Partnership, the organization must show some involvement in the Community in other ways.

The WG believe that Partners should be encouraged to keep a tally of what they give to Samvera in-kind and the notional value of that contribution. For assessing the value of staff hours specifically devoted to the Community we would recommend that a figure of $45 per hour be used (as noted above, the figure is based on a mid-range US developer salary and benefits). For material contributions, the actual value of the contribution should be used. Thus, for instance, if an institution provides a meeting space for a day, perhaps with refreshments, the Partner should record what it would have cost Samvera to hire that same facility if it had not been donated.

At the present time, the WG recommend that each institution keep its own records and be asked each calendar year to report the figures in confidence. This will allow the numbers to be reviewed and adjusted if the Community feel that is warranted.

The members of the WG feel that the actual levels of contribution should be decided by a Partner Meeting with a majority of the Partners represented. We would suggest that a starting figure for discussions should be $15,000 pa for the mid-tier made up of in-kind contributions and optionally a monetary contribution. A wholly monetary contribution is not a basis for Partnership.

Supporters

Supporters are organizations which are not Partners but are, nevertheless, willing to support the Community by way of financial donation. The WG recommends that Samvera develop a list of benefits that such Supporters might expect. These could range from having their logos displayed, maybe on the website, at conferences etc, to (in the case of large

donations) having an advisory role with the Samvera Roadmap Council. This last falls short of "significant influence" (which is not for sale) because they would have no say in the Council's actual recommendations.

The benefits to Supporters might usefully be the subject of later, more detailed work if the basic idea is acceptable to Partners, either by this or a subsequent, Working Group.