Final Report of the Samvera Fundraising Working Group

October 2019

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Executive summary

The Fundraising Working Group was chartered at the behest of Partners. It was to investigate the idea of seeking sponsorship for Samvera's annual Connect conference, to manage Samvera's 2019 fundraising appeal to Partners, and to investigate how Samvera might create a much greater annual income in order to support the hiring of staff.

The Working Group Charter

The Samvera Fundraising Working Group (FWG) began its work in December 2019 with a mandate to consider three specific matters:

1. the desirability of seeking sponsorship for elements of the annual Samvera Connect conference. Such sponsorship income might, for instance, be used to release some of the income from attendance fees for a wider purpose. If sponsorship is seen as desirable, the FWG is asked to propose a practical approach.
2. how funds might be raised from sources beyond the current donors. Those Samvera Partners and Supporters who are able to offer monetary contributions provide some $2,000 to $15,000 each annually and the total of these falls well short of the figure needed to support one employee, let alone two. It seems likely that we need to look beyond our immediate Community for income. The FWG is asked to provide a recommended approach to this additional fundraising.
3. how to manage the annual funding appeal to Samvera's Partners and Supporters in such a way that is complementary to the additional fundraising described in #2 above.

(Samvera Fundraising Working Group Charter, December 2018)

It was acknowledged from the outset that the work of the group overlapped with that of two other groups and that there would be need for liaison. Contact with the Samvera Marketing

Working Group has been maintained via three members in common, and contact with the Samvera Contribution Model Working Group (Phase 2) has been maintained via email and a joint on-line session.

This report addresses the three items above in the order of their respective deliverables.

Recommendations for fundraising amongst Samvera Partners and Supporters

In April 2019 the FWG recommended that fundraising in 2019 should follow the same basic pattern as in previous years.

Members of the FWG considered the approach to Partner and Supporter fundraising used in previous years. Primarily, this has been carried out with the assistance of DuraSpace, Samvera's fiscal sponsor, leveraging the experience of that organization's own fundraising exercise; an appeal is sent to prospective donors each spring.   In 2018 Samvera sent an additional appeal of its own to Partners in the fall. DuraSpace have developed a two part approach to our fundraising. Donors who generally give to Samvera and to one or more DuraSpace projects (primarily Fedora) receive a combined appeal in order that they can be offered a combined invoice, should this be preferable for their institutions. Donors who are likely to give only to Samvera receive a focused appeal on our behalf. In the past, the Samvera Steering Group has worked with DuraSpace to provide appropriate text for these appeals but for 2019 the FWG was tasked with providing this information.

The FWG recommended that last year's two-pronged approach be continued but recognized that 2019 may be a transitional year should the current Contribution Model Working Group recommend, and have accepted, a different approach in the future. Even within the existing approach we recognized the need to significantly increase Samvera's annual income if we are to fund one or two permanent staff posts as recommended by the Governance Working Group in 2018 and subsequently agreed by the Partners.

Accordingly, the FWG produced a basic text for Partner and Supporter fundraising in 2019 that was tailored to be the basis for the appeals sent out by DuraSpace but which was also used for a Samvera appeal to Partners and Adopters who had not previously contributed.

The basic text is attached as Appendix 1 to this document.

As of early September 2019 the fundraising appeal had brought in $137,000. In addition, Samvera had benefited from a one-off donation of $20,000 from EBSCO.

Possible Sponsorship for Samvera Connect 2019

In April 2019, the FWG recommended that Samvera should hold a one-time trial of sponsorship for Connect 2019 and review its effectiveness before committing to seeking sponsorship in future years.

The second deliverable expected from the FWG was a report into the desirability of seeking sponsorship for Samvera's annual face-to-face conference, Samvera Connect.

Although the possibility of seeking sponsorship for Connect had been raised before, it was felt that the Community should not rush into such an approach without first considering the pros and cons. Thus, the first work on this deliverable centered around the potential advantages and disadvantages of Connect sponsorship. After due consideration, which included research into the practises of other related conferences, it was decided that a trial should be recommended for Connect 2019 at Washington University in St Louis (WUSTL).

An initial approach to our hosts at WUSTL elicited the information that they would be willing to assist in a trial providing that their team was not required to seek the sponsorship. Thus, for the trial, this work was undertaken by members of the FWG. The group then proceeded to assemble a list of potential sponsors and a matrix of potential sponsorship benefits.

The FWG's proposal was that WUSTL should set the costs for Connect 2019 on the basis that no sponsorship would be received. Any that was brought in would be used to offset the costs of the sponsorship program itself (for instance, 'free' conference places as part of the package) and to enhance the delegate experience (for instance providing better refreshments at the poster session than would otherwise have been the case - "sponsored by ANO"). Sponsor income beyond this would ultimately be paid to Samvera central funds as part of the anticipated conference surplus.

The full report of the Working Group is attached as Appendix 2. As at early September 2019, four sponsors had been confirmed bringing in a gross amount of $8,750.

Grant or other funding

The FWG sought advice on obtaining grant or other funding and recommends making an approach to the Sloan foundation to seek their support in the process. This approach may not be to seek money directly, but may be to help identify potential funders.

The third element of the FWG's remit addresses the possibility that Samvera might seek grant funding, most probably from a philanthropic organization. The group has held a number of discussions about this including one with Danielle Robinson (from Code for Science and Society) who has broad experience of working with such agencies. Ms Robinson offered a range of advice which was factored into the FWG's considerations.

Having considered all the advice given, the FWG proposes taking up an offer from Tom Cramer at Stanford University to facilitate an introduction to the Sloan Foundation. If this leads to a meeting, the purpose may be to help identify potential funders rather than it being a direct request for grant assistance. It was suggested that the FWG should produce a short briefing paper about the Samvera Community which would provide background and context for the possible meeting. This document is attached at Appendix 3.

Further work?

Clearly, there is further work to be done now that the FWG has provided the basic deliverables outlined in its charter. The use of sponsorship at Connect 2019 needs to be reviewed following the event and a recommendation made for future years. In addition, if the FWG's recommendation to approach the Sloan Foundation is accepted, that process needs to be followed through.   At the time of writing, the Samvera Contribution Model Working Group (Phase 2) has not yet reported and it may be that their recommendations will have

implications for the FWG or its successor. Following the review of this report, Partners are asked to decide whether the FWG should continue its work or be sunsetted.

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Jon Dunn (Chair)
Hannah Frost
Richard Green
Jessica Hilt
Brian Hole
Ryan Steans (to August 2019)

Appendix 1: Basic Partner and Supporter fundraising text for 2019

The Samvera Community is launching its annual fundraising campaign for 2019. In support of your participation in Samvera, we ask that you consider making a financial contribution in order to help strengthen existing community investments. The goal is to raise $200,000 in 2019 to fund our annual commitments and to begin implementation of the recommendations of last year's unanimously-approved Samvera governance proposal to hire staffing for centralized community and technical management and coordination roles.

To produce a reliable, managed, predictable, and sustainable repository platform, we now need to pool resources to help organize and orchestrate our collective work. Last year's fundraising campaign was our most successful ever, raising $94,000 to support community work. This year, our ambitious goal is to more than double last year's success by bringing in $200,000 for 2019, enough to hire and fund at least one of the two identified community roles for one year.

Over the past year, we have seen great progress in the Samvera Community, including:

- Three newly-elected members of the Samvera Steering Group, as part of a three-year shift to a fully-elected model
- Launch of a new Hyrax Working Group to carry out ongoing maintenance of the widely-used Hyrax repository application
- Dramatic improvements to the accessibility of Hyrax through work by the Hyrax Working Group to implement recommendations from a community-funded third-party accessibility evaluation
- Establishment of the Component Maintenance Working Group and Roadmap Council to help coordinate development of the Samvera framework and major Samvera solution bundles, including Hyrax and Avalon Media System
- At least a dozen meetings, trainings, and other Partner events in North America and Europe, including over 150 attendees at Samvera Connect in Salt Lake City in October 2018
- New Working and Interest Groups, including Contribution Model, Component Maintenance, Permissioning Analysis and Design, Batch Import-Export, Metadata Ordering, Machine-Readable Metadata Modeling Specification, Hyku, Hyrax maintenance, Hyrax Roadmap, and Marketing.
- Multiple service providers joining the community—some achieving, or pursuing, Partnership—to further develop Hyku, the multi-tenant repository solution based on Hyrax, launching pilots with a diverse mix of adopters
- Deployment of new repositories, including The Research Data Repository at Duke, the ATLA Digital Library with Notch8, the USDA Economics, Statistics, and Market Information System at Cornell, Oregon State University's ScholarsArchive@OSU, and UCLA Library Digital Collections.

More details may be found in the 2018 Samvera Annual Report.

These milestones signify Samvera's continued success as a thriving, grassroots, community-driven effort. In-kind contributions and sweat equity of willing Partners and other community members have been the hallmarks of the "Samvera Way," and our ability to collaborate on shared goals and code will continue to be our main engine for progress.

Staff hired by Samvera will be accountable to the community as a whole. Between them, the two proposed staff positions would work to manage the roadmapping, development, and release of new Samvera code, and would work to maintain, strengthen and further advance the Samvera Community.

If 30 institutions give $7,000 each, we can meet our target for the year. Thank you for considering this contribution and helping to take Samvera to the next level. We also welcome larger one-time seed contributions or multi-year commitments to help jump-start a funding reserve to allow filling of centralized staff roles sooner rather than later.

Report from the Samvera Fundraising Working Group:

Sponsorship for Connect 2019

The Samvera Fundraising Working Group is actively discussing a three-path approach to seeking funds. The three major tracks are: (1) seeking support from Partner Institutions via annual requests for financial support, (2) exploring potential grant funding from foundations and agencies, and (3) securing external sponsorships for Samvera Connect, the annual working meeting and conference of the Samvera Community. In support of track (3), this document outlines our proposal to seek sponsors for Samvera Connect 2019, before committing to future years, and summarizes the information we have generated in the course of exploring this topic.

Recommendation

We recommend seeking sponsors for Samvera Connect 2019. This initial effort can be described as a trial run: leveraging the experience of members of the working group, we will reach out to companies of potential/likely interest to Samvera Community members and ask for financial support, offered at a number of contribution levels with associated benefits (see levels chart below).

From Samvera's point of view, the primary goals of the sponsorship program would be two-fold: to use sponsorship money to enhance the delegate experience at Connect (for instance, a sponsored poster reception with better refreshments than would otherwise have been provided) and to increase the likely financial surplus from the conference which is ultimately transferred to Samvera's central funds. A secondary, but useful, outcome would be to provide the opportunity for delegates and sponsors to have discussions and potentially make useful contacts..

The purpose of this trial would be to get a sense for:
- the viability of this fundraising approach,
- the nature of the work necessary to secure and "onboard" Samvera Connect sponsors,
- the nature of the Samvera pitch to potential sponsors, and
- the impact on the conference itself.

The Fundraising Working Group contains members who have previously managed sponsors and sponsorships at events from Open Repositories to state-level conferences. While every event is different, the Working Group could draw on its own experience with an understanding of how that experience could benefit Connect.

Current Status

Funding for Samvera Connect currently comes wholly from individual registration fees (though we recognize with gratitude the significant "in-kind" contribution of physical

resources and staff time made by each host institution). While Samvera has close relationships with vendors such as DCE, these vendors have attended Samvera Connect as Partners and/or members of the Samvera Community rather than as sponsors.

Samvera has previously received inquiries regarding Connect sponsorship, but the Community had no mechanism for including them nor had the desirability of such sponsorship been discussed.

As Samvera seeks a path to sustainability, sponsorships could lead, not only to an improved delegate experience at the annual meeting, but also additional funding for the Community's other ongoing activities.

Pros and Cons of Starting a Sponsorship Program

The Fundraising Working Group considered the advantages and disadvantages of introducing sponsors into what has been a tightly-knit community, as well as how to mitigate potential issues related to approaches from organizations currently outside it.

Challenges of including sponsors:
1. Distraction from focus on the Samvera framework and accomplishments of our Community and work at institutions
2. Providing sponsors with space and dedicated time for messaging is a new complication in planning/ management for Local Hosts
3. Sponsor outreach during and after Connect could negatively impact attendees
4. Developing policies for how Samvera manages sponsors/ benefits for sponsors
5. Managing requirements of sponsors - unknowns that may be asked for and managed
6. Sponsorship approaches from organizations whose values may be at odds with those of our Community
7. Seeking and managing sponsorship will be a time consuming exercise

Advantages of including sponsors:
1. Enhanced conference experience for delegates
2. An extra annual contribution to central Samvera funds
3. Valuable new connections/ new ideas for attendees
4. Draw interest in Samvera Community/ Framework from vendors who can get involved

Considering Outside Models

The Working Group was able to refer to the rich experience of its own members, several of whom have experience leading sponsorship campaigns for other community conferences, including Open Repositories, but was able to also consult with Louisa Kwasigroch at Digital Library Federation. From Louisa, the group learned more about how DLF structures sponsorship models, how DLF works with sponsors to customize sponsorships to best suit DLF and the vendor, and that DLF is always reconsidering sponsorship models to follow trends and the community.

Sponsorship Levels and Whom to Court

The Fundraising Working Group determined the best path for the first year of Samvera Connect sponsorship would be to begin developing

- A list of potential sponsors
- A matrix of sponsorship levels and benefits for sponsors at each level

Potential Sponsors

Based upon prior experience, the WG determined the best option for recruiting sponsors was to create a list of companies and organizations which institutions running Samvera use in their implementation of the Samvera stack. This might include code-management tools such as Circle CI or hosting services such as Amazon Web Services. We would also wish to approach organizations currently running Samvera as Software as a Service.

With these criteria to guide them, the WG reached out to the wider community to collect a list of potential sponsors and received ample responses.

At this time, Samvera has a list of organizations and companies for possible contact, and is developing a list of personnel whom to contact at each location.

All Partner institutions

Other Institutions:

- British Library

Community vendors

- Ubiquity Press
- DCE
- Notch8
- CoSector, London

Hosting provider:

- AWS

Concerned Citizens:

- Microsoft Research
- Artefactual
- EBSCO
- ORCID

Support Services:

- Ansible
- Chef
- Puppet
- Docker

- Nagios
- Akamai
- AppDynamics
- Munin
- Kakadu
- Honeybadger
- Circle CI
- RubyMine
- Travis CI
- Atom
- Vagrant
- Kalidescope
- Sentry
- Racher
- Site24x7
- Papertrailapp
- Digital Ocean
- Terraform
- cloud9
- RedHat

Sponsorship Levels

Many conferences provide a matrix of levels of potential sponsorship, with increasing benefits based upon each increasing level of sponsorship. The Working Group is considering a matrix and offerings based upon the DLF levels of sponsorship, but modified to better match the attendance and possible impact at Samvera Connect.

This approach needs to be ratified by Partners and the detail may be subject to amendment depending on the host institution's ability to deliver any particular item.

Contribution Amount	$1,250	$2,500	$3,750	$5,000
benefit	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Conference Registrations (under $300?)	0	1	2	3
Acknowledgement at opening and closing	*	*	*	*
Recognition in on-site signage	*	*	*	*
Recognition in conference printed materials	*	*	*	*
Name on Connect website	*	*	*	*
Logo on Connect website	small	medium	large	x-large
Vendor Table	*	*	*	*
Sponsor Reception				*
Sponsor Coffee Break (logo at coffee table)			*	
Materials in bag		*	*	*
Logo on conference bag				*
registration list				

Items in yellow could be the work of Marketing Working Group, all others - would be down to Local Arrangements and Connect Committees.

Looking Ahead

The strategy to be employed by the Fundraising WG will be presented to Partners for consideration and comment. Based upon the recommended trial in 2019, we would determine what changes should be made, and/ or whether to continue seeking sponsorship in future years.
With the approval of the preliminary list and sponsorship level matrix by Partners, and confirmation of local arrangements at Washington University in St. Louis, the Fundraising Working Group would proceed to contact potential sponsors for 2019.

At this time, the Fundraising WG and Steering cannot offer WUSTL any indication of how much additional revenue to expect.   Host institutions for Connect undertake their role knowing that they should not expect financial support from Samvera should a conference make an overall loss. That being the case, we recommend that conference finances should be planned on the basis that there will be no sponsorship and that any sponsorship funds which do materialize should be used to enhance the conference for delegates and, beyond that, to bolster Samvera's central funds.

Any sponsorship money that is forthcoming will be paid across to the host institution each year. Any proportion of those funds not actually devoted to funding the sponsorship scheme (eg "free" registrations) or enhancing the conference will ultimately be paid into Samvera's central accounts as part of the conference surplus.

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Appendix 3: The Samvera Community: an overview

The Samvera Community: An Overview

Samvera is a grass-roots, open source community creating best in class digital asset management solutions for Libraries, Archives, Museums and others.

Samvera is based on the premise that no single system can provide the full range of repository-based solutions for a given institution's needs and that no single institution can resource the development of a full range of solutions on its own. Working together, the Samvera Community creates sustainable solutions using a common infrastructure within which there is the flexibility to tailor solutions to local demands and workflows.

Samvera software is free and open source, available under an Apache 2 license, and is based around four major components:
- the Fedora repository software providing a robust, durable repository layer for persisting and managing digital objects.
- Solr indexes, providing fast access to information about an institution's repository content.
- Blacklight, a Ruby on Rails plugin that sits above Solr and provides faceted searching, browsing and tailored views on objects.
- Samvera gems: Ruby on Rails components that integrate the building blocks to form a complete, flexible and extensible digital repository solution.

These components may be used by institutions to develop their own completely customized local solutions but are also used in three major community-supported applications, or "solution bundles":
- Avalon – a time-based media solution
- Hyrax – a Ruby gem that includes much of Samvera's functionality. It is the basis on which users can build their own, customized version of Samvera.
- Hyku – a feature-rich, robust, flexible, multi-tenant digital repository that is easy to install, configure, and maintain. Hyku can be installed locally or run in the cloud and is based on Hyrax. A number of service providers are – or will soon be – offering cloud-based, hosted versions.

A short history

Samvera began in 2008 as the *Hydra Project*, emerging out of discussions between the University of Virginia, University of Hull (UK), Stanford University, and Fedora Commons (later absorbed into Duraspace) regarding how they might jointly produce modular, open source software catering to a number of repository needs but using a single Fedora store. This idea of 'one body' (Fedora) with 'many heads' gave rise to the project name 'Hydra'.

It was decided very early in the planning process that the Project should utilize existing, 'best of breed' open-source software alongside its own work. Accordingly, Blacklight and Solr were adopted alongside Fedora.

The group identified a core of common needs and set themselves the target of producing within three years 'a re-usable framework for multipurpose, multi-function, multi-institutional

repository-powered solutions'. Hull was the first of the universities to go live with a Hydra repository in fall 2012.

There was an early recognition that any output from the Project would only work sustainably if it could be built on and further developed by others as well. From the beginning a key aim was thus to enable others to join the open source Hydra Project as and when they wished, and to establish a framework for sustaining the community as much as any technical outputs that may emerge. A formal governance structure was adopted by the initial partners in 2012 and as of August 2019, Samvera has 36 Partners in the USA and Europe (See Appendix).

By 2015 the Partners in the Hydra Project decided that it was established enough that the Hydra name and logo should be trademarked. It transpired that 'Hydra' could not be used and so the Community renamed itself 'Samvera' (an Icelandic term meaning 'togetherness'). Rather than seeing the rebranding work as a setback, the Community treated it as an opportunity to re-evaluate its aims and its working practises; part of this analysis resulted in the formation of a Governance Working Group to make recommendations for the future. These were accepted and underpin today's Community structure.

Samvera Community structure

At the heart of the modern Samvera Community are its Partners, currently comprising institutions, companies, and other groups that have formally committed to contributing to the Samvera Community. The community is defined by a Memorandum of Understanding, which all Partners agree to, and its legal and financial affairs are handled through a fiscal sponsor, DuraSpace - now part of LYRASIS.

Samvera Partners participate in groups that coordinate effort across multiple institutions and development efforts. These include the Steering Group, the Roadmap Council and the Core Components Maintenance Group, as well as project-specific teams that focus on particular efforts such as the Avalon Media System, Hyrax, and Hyku solution bundles. Partners have the opportunity to meet in person twice each year to discuss progress and plans. Much of Samvera's development is then underpinned by the work of a number of Working Groups and Interest Groups. Other adopters of Samvera's software can (and do) contribute to the membership of these groups; the exception is the Steering Group whose elected members come solely from Partner institutions.

All the various groups outlined above hold regular meetings on-line and notes of these calls are made available to all. In addition to these business meetings, the Community holds a number of more general on-line and face-to-face meetings each year, including an annual conference (Samvera Connect), which brings together 150-200 attendees for a variety of collaborative and community-building activities.

Samvera code development

Samvera's code development is overseen and coordinated by a number of the groups mentioned above.

The Community puts considerable effort into ensuring that its code is robust, reliable and sustainable. Samvera's developers use continuous integration tools to ensure that new code does not 'break' anything else in the system. No code is accepted into the Samvera

core that does not have adequate, in-built testing. All Samvera code is distributed under an open source license (Apache 2.0) and, to ensure the legality of that, Contributor License Agreements (CLA's) based on the Apache Foundation CLA's, are required from contributors, individual and institutional, before their code can be added to the Community's code base.

Many of Samvera's adopters adapt the core code to address local use cases and needs. Institutions that do this are encouraged to contribute the code back if it has more general applicability.

Samvera as an organization

Samvera is a widely distributed, international organization. As such, there needs to be a level of stewardship and administration; this, then, is essentially the role of the Steering Group. The Group consists of nine members, elected from and by the Samvera Partners.

The organization maintains a website at https://samvera.org and a wiki at https://samvera.org/wiki. In addition there are a number of mailing lists, each serving a specific focus within the Community, and a widely used Slack Channel.
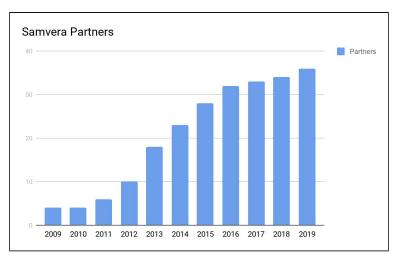
Samvera strives to project a professional image and is mindful of its responsibilities to Community members as well as to its adopters and potential adopters. The Community operates a publicly posted Code of Conduct and an Anti-harassment Policy.

Moving forward

To date, nearly all effort to design, build, and maintain Samvera's software and to manage and coordinate the Samvera Partners and broader community has come from individual and institutional volunteers. As the size of the community and number of Partners have grown, and as the software has matured and evolved, the work needed to support and coordinate the technology stack and the community has increased. To help address this need, Samvera Steering began a relatively low-key, voluntary annual fundraising campaign in 2015, which has grown from $22,000 to $130,000 annually, primarily from Partners (see Appendix). The 2017 governance review recommended that the community work toward hiring two full-time roles: a community lead and a technical lead, a structure not dissimilar to other open source and open standards communities within the academic library space such as Fedora Repository or the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF). In 2019, a group was charged to develop a contribution model for Samvera, including setting expectations or requirements for financial contributions from Partners in order to achieve these hiring goals.
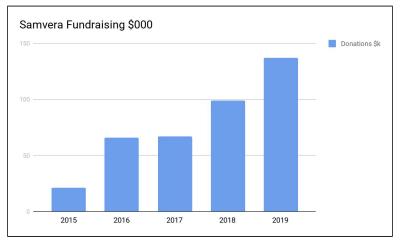
While the community continues to increase its fundraising, one-time seed funding would help Samvera make multi-year commitments to funding technical and community lead positions to support our move to a higher level of service delivery.

Appendix: Samvera Partners and Fundraising

Samvera Partners

Note: Samvera lost three Partners in 2018 and one in 2019 mainly as institutions took alternative software directions.

Boston Public Library	Indiana University	The Digital Repository of Ireland, Ireland	University of Notre Dame
Columbia University	Lafayette College	Tufts University	University of Oregon
Cornell University	London School of Economics and Political Science, UK	Ubiquity Press	University of Utah
CoSector, University of London, UK	Northwestern University	University of California, San Diego	University of Virginia
Data Curation Experts	Notch8	University of California, Santa Barbara	University of York, UK
Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)	Oregon State University	University of Cincinnati	Virginia Tech
Duke University	Penn State University	University of Houston Libraries	Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL)
DuraSpace	Princeton University Library	University of Hull, UK	WGBH Boston
Emory University	Stanford University	University of Michigan	Yale University

Samvera Fundraising $000

Note: These figures exclude donations that were not part of Samvera's fundraising drive.