



Interim Report of the Samvera Fundraising Working Group

April 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, 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 first two of these tasks are now essentially complete and the relevant reports are included in this document. Work continues on the third of the Working Group's tasks. The Group's final report is expected at the end of June 2019.

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

The FWG recommends 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 recommend that last year's two-pronged approach be continued but recognize 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 recognize 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 has produced a basic text for Partner and Supporter fundraising in 2019 that can be tailored to be the basis for the appeals sent out by DuraSpace but which can also be used for a Samvera appeal to Partners and Adopters who have not previously contributed.

The basic text is attached as Appendix 1 to this document and versions of it have been provided to DuraSpace for the 2019 campaign.

Possible Sponsorship for Samvera Connect 2019

The FWG recommends 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 has 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 would be 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 is that WUSTL should set the costs for Connect 2019 on the basis that no sponsorship will be received. Any that is brought in will 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. At the time of writing, it is about to be shared with Partners for comment and potential approval. In the meantime, discussions and planning with the team at WUSTL are proceeding on the basis that the recommendation of the report will be accepted.

Grant or other funding

The FWG is still considering how best to approach this possible form of funding.

The third aspect of the FWG's work is the least well developed, the need for the previous two recommendations being more urgent.

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 will be factored into the FWG's considerations and eventual recommendation.

The group's recommendation will form part of its final report which is anticipated to be complete before the end of June 2019. Following the review of that report by Partners a decision will be taken whether to sunset the FWG or ask it to undertake further work.

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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.

Appendix 2: Fundraising WG Report on Sponsorship for Connect 2019

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
- Rancher
- 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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