Report of the
Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Feasibility of Founding a LAUC-
Sponsored, Open Access, Peer-Reviewed E-Journal

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1. Introduction:

The Ad Hoc Committee was asked to investigate whether or not it would be desirable and feasible for LAUC to publish an open access, peer-reviewed journal, and if so, to present a plan for the startup and subsequent maintenance of the publication.

The committee believes that LAUC should support alternatives to existing models of scholarly publishing. One way providing this support would be to launch a peer-reviewed, open access journal through the CDL e-Scholarship Repository. The journal would be devoted to library and information science issues of particular concern to academic librarians. Such a publication would embody the values reflected in the open access initiative, including the free availability of information and the ability of authors to retain their copyright.

As UC librarians work to encourage faculty to develop and support publishing alternatives in their fields, a LAUC-sponsored journal would have particular utility. It would provide evidence that UC librarians are willing to put their rhetoric in practice, and would afford UC librarians useful experience on which they would be able to draw in order to answer faculty questions about the process.

Commitment to provide permanent online access would be essential to launching this journal. A 2003 survey of publishers of scholarly electronic journals revealed that fewer than half had any plans to provide long-term access to their titles, much less the type of permanent access undertaken by the e-Scholarship Repository.[1] Recent studies show that a high percentage of URLs cited in the notes and bibliographies of scholarly publications go dead within a few years. This lack of longevity is of concern both to authors and researchers. The e-Scholarship Repository platform guarantees perpetual access and preservation of scholarly content.

The Committee believes that a journal would be consistent with LAUC's mission. The following discussion addresses the question of how such a journal might be structured and why, what it would cost to set up a journal, and possible sources of funding.

2. Journal Mission Statement:

The journal seeks to publish articles on matters of interest to the communities of Academic and Special Librarians. Submissions should either contain substantive research or be substantive practice-/experience-oriented articles. In either case, submissions should explain the context and implications of that research for the library and information science communities, and/or the social, technical, and intellectual contexts in which they are situated. The journal will consider articles on all aspects of academic or special libraries and librarianship, and welcomes articles that utilize the perspectives and methodologies of other disciplines

The journal will be published on a regular schedule of two issues per year. Each issue will consist of a set of peer-reviewed essays on a common theme. The submissions will be organized and selected by a Guest Editor whose proposal will have been reviewed and accepted by the Journal's Editor-in-Chief in consultation with the Editorial Board.

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[1] John Cox and Laura Cox, "Scholarly Publish Practice: The ALPSP report on Academic Journal Publishers' Policies and Practices in Online Publishing, June 2003. Executive Summary at http://www.alpsp.org/news/sppsummary0603.pdf (visited, May 13, 2005).

3. Mission Statement Rationale:

There are a number of obstacles that face any start-up journal. The committee felt strongly that we needed to design a journal and a process that stood the best chance of establishing itself as a venue for the publication of first-quality research. Every process decision that we made is intended to strengthen the authority and credibility of the journal.

The Committee decided that the journal should cover the topics represented by LAUC; therefore we recommend that it address any and all topics relevant to Academic and Special Libraries. However, we were also concerned that the journal not just be a hodge-podge, but have an identity that would both encourage readers to look for it and that would distinguish it from other journals. We concluded that building the journal around thematic issues assembled by guest editors would address both concerns.

We determined that convincing the best authors to publish here rather than somewhere else was, perhaps, the greatest barrier to the potential success of this venture. As one librarian explained to us, she would seek to publish where her work would receive the most attention and be taken most seriously, and that place was unlikely to be a start-up journal. We concluded that, at least at the outset, thematic issues organized by guest editors were desirable in this context as well. LAUC's journal would provide a researcher with the opportunity to publish a set of articles (perhaps originating in a conference panel) on a theme of particular interest to her or him. The risk to authors inherent in publishing in a start-up title would be significantly moderated. The decision facing an individual author would be primarily whether or not he or she wishes to be part of a thematic publication with a known set of other authors, and only secondarily whether or not to publish in a new journal. This editorial structure, in combination with the appeal of open access publishing seems to offer the best chance of making the journal a success.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of including additional, non-refereed elements in the journal, *e.g.* book and technology reviews, webliographies, and columns. There was considerable interest in these elements; however we agreed that, at least at the outset, the journal needed to focus on fulfilling its core function. In the future, it is reasonable to suppose that the Editorial Board may decide to add additional features, each the responsibility of an editor.

4. Market Assessment:

There are two contexts in which to assess the need for/viability of this journal. The first is topical: How many first-quality titles offer the topical coverage we are proposing? The second is structural: Is there a market for a top-notch open access title with the assurance of stability in a web-environment such as is offered by the CDL's e-Scholarship Repository platform?

A review of existing library journals does not provide a compelling justification for LAUC to establish a new title. There are an adequate number of quality journals in which librarians can publish. If our charge had been to consider simply whether or not to found another library science journal, the committee would have recommended against so doing.

However, the case for this journal is stronger when considered in the context of developing models of scholarly publication. That the journal can be mounted on the e-

scholarship platform allows LAUC to assure long-term, free access in a stable environment that few electronic-only library journals can match. A review of the journals listed in the "Directory of Open Access Journals" provides both considerable support for the viability of Open Access journals in library science and also suggests that we can successfully distinguish our journal from extant open access titles.

The Directory of Open Access Journals (hereafter DOAJ) includes a respectable 35 library and information science titles. (See: Tables 1 and 2) Of these, 27 are in English, 5 are multi-lingual and 1 each are written in Spanish, French and Italian. The English language titles are mostly on specialized subjects: only 6 are general library science titles. Five of the six English language general titles are refereed, although their quality is mixed. Interestingly, only one of these 6 titles is published in the United States; the others are from England (2), Australia (2) and Canada (1). Some of them have an international focus while others concentrate on library issues in their own country.

Although all titles provide back issues, none of them expresses an explicit commitment to archiving and permanent access, although it is probable that at least one of them (*Ariadne*) has such a commitment.

Taken together, this data suggest that:
- Librarians are willing to and do publish in open access journals.
- Such journals are sustainable.
- The majority of these titles are highly specialized.
- There is clearly space for a United States-based library studies journal with broad topical coverage.
- CDL's e-Scholarship Repository platform would establish us as a leader in the areas of stability and permanence (areas of increasing concern to scholars publishing in a digital environment).

The pool of authors on which the journal would draw is the same as that which currently supplies existing high-quality library journals. However, as a stable, open-access publication, LAUC's journal should be an especially attractive alternative. Librarians are cognizant of the need to nurture alternatives to traditional scholarly publishing. The profession has articulated this necessity in "The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper."

Altering the structure of the scholarly publishing model will be neither simple nor immediate. The stakes are high for all the well-entrenched participants in the system- faculty, librarians, and publishers-and the inertia of the traditional publishing paradigm is immense. In the near-term, large journal publishers have both the power and the incentive to maintain the status quo: the prestigious journals they control appear integral to the very structure of academic professional advancement. However, digital publishing and networking technologies, harnessed by an increasingly dissatisfied library market-as well as by authors themselves-are now driving fundamental changes to this publishing model at an accelerating pace. And new communications paradigms, especially when constructed by the scholars themselves, can eliminate seemingly insurmountable publisher advantages in relatively short order. (http://www.arl.org/sparc/IR/ir.html)

LAUC's journal would offer library scholars the opportunity to participate directly in a process whose concept and goals they support.

5. Journal Plan of Organization (ongoing):

The journal staff will be comprised of an Editor-in-Chief, an Editorial Board and a technical assistant. The journal will also engage Guest Editors (volunteer) and a Copy Editor (paid).

- ***The Editor-in-Chief*** will always be a LAUC member. Editors will be appointed to 3-year renewable terms by the LAUC Executive Board. The Executive Board will select an Editor based on its assessment of candidates' qualifications described in letters of application. The Editor-in-Chief will bear primary responsibility for all aspects of the planning and production of issues of the journal. It will be her or his job to:
    - Identify Guest Editors for thematic issues.
    - Accept or reject (in consultation with the editorial board) proposals for theme issues.
    - Oversee the peer review process.
    - Work with the Guest Editors to make the final decision to accept or reject specific articles.
    - Hire out and oversee the copy-editing of accepted articles.
    - Work with the technical assistant to see to the publication of each issue on the e-Scholarship Repository site.
    - Set up and maintain the publication schedule.
    - Submit an annual report on the journal to the LAUC Executive Board and its Institutional Partners (if any).
    - Contact A&I services to request inclusion.
    - Obtain ISSN for the journal.

- ***The Editorial Board*** will consist of 6 to 8 individuals, approximately half of whom will be LAUC members. Institutional Partners (if there are any) will also have a seat on the board, although the final determination of Editorial Board membership rests with the LAUC Executive Board. Members of the Editorial Board will serve staggered 3-year renewable terms.
    Members of the Editorial Board will:
    - Publicize the journal and encourage their contacts to submit proposals for theme issues.
    - Work with the Editor in the selection of Guest Editors and theme issues.
    - Form panel of peer reviewers.
    - Participate in the peer-review process.
    - Consult with the Editor-in-Chief on any other issues that may arise.

- ***The Technical Assistant*** will:
    - Facilitate electronic communication among editors, authors and copy editors.
    - Get e-Scholarship Repository training.

- Oversee the mechanics of publishing completed issues on the e-Scholarship Repository site.

- ***The Copy-editor***: At this time, it seems inadvisable to hire a full or part-time copy editor. This work should be farmed out on a free-lance basis.

- ***The Guest Editors***: Each issue will be planned by a Guest Editor who will be responsible for proposing a theme and lining up appropriate authors for that issue. In addition the Guest Editor will provide editorial feedback to authors and write an introductory essay and possibly concluding comments to tie the issue together.

6. Journal Start-up Procedure:

If LAUC approves the establishment of a journal it should immediately appoint an Editor-in-Chief and the LAUC portion of the Editorial Board (3-4 members). Their tasks will be to:

- Decide on a name for the journal.

- Review the proposals of the Ad hoc committee and make such changes in the process as they deem necessary.

- Work with a graphic designer to create a suitable look for the journal.

- Write up submission guidelines, documents delineating the rights and responsibilities of guest editors and authors, and other necessary forms and documents.

- Once the necessary organizational work is complete, they should expand the membership of the Editorial Board to include representatives of any institutional partners and well-known librarians and professors of library science representing diverse aspects of the field.

- The full board and Editor-in-Chief should then privately seek guest editors and (with their assistance) contributors for the first 2-3 issues. If at all possible, these guest editors should be well-known experts in their fields.

- At that point they should publicize the journal in all appropriate venues.

- Commence production of the first issue of the journal.

7. Costs:

        The Committee spoke with a number of editors of scholarly journals about the costs associated with their publications. We then considered how those demands would be reflected in a LAUC journal with the following result. (See Budget Analysis section for the derivation of the estimates used here.)

- *20%-30% Release time for the Editor-in-Chief*: Every editor with whom we spoke emphasized how much time it takes to edit a journal. Editors must read all submitted articles, locate reviewers, communicate with authors and copy-editors, and (especially important at start-up) solicit strong submissions and generally promote the journal. Some of these tasks are normally attended to by publishers. As its own publisher, LAUC must insure that the Editor has the time he or she needs to make the journal a success.
  Estimate: $10,574-$30,744 depending on Editor's rank and step and percentage of release time.

- *Graduate Assistant:* Everyone we spoke to made use of at least one graduate assistant to assist with the paper flow. We believe that the volume of submissions (at least at the outset), the use of guest editors, and the use of the e-Scholarship Repository's management software will enable the journal to dispense with this expense.
  Estimate: $0

- *Technical Assistant.* However, it is desirable that the Editor have a technical assistant, at least initially, whose task would be to ensure that software applications function smoothly. This task could be accomplished by a LAUC member; alternatively the Editor could hire a student assistant.
  Estimate: $0 (if LAUC member)-$2,400 (if student assistant)**.**

- *Copy-editing*. Everyone we spoke with agreed that it is essential to copy-edit all articles prior to publication. Copy-editing requires an expertise that we cannot assume will be available among LAUC members. In the case of conventionally published journals, the publisher is responsible for copy-editing. In our case, LAUC will need to hire a copy-editor. At present, the committee recommends hiring free-lance copy editors; if the journal becomes established, it may be advisable to considering hiring a copy editor on a full- or part-time basis.
  Estimate: $2000/issue or $4000/year.

- *Design.* The journal should have a professional layout. The committee recommends a one-time expenditure to hire a graphic designer to work with the Editor and Editorial Board to design the journal.
  Estimate: $500-$1,000.

- *Meetings*. The Editorial Board should plan on two in-person meetings as part of the start-up process as well as an annual meeting thereafter.

Estimates: one-time start up meetings $3000 ($1,500/meeting); and annual cost $3,000/meeting.

- *Office supplies and expenses*.
  Estimate: $500 per issue

Estimated TOTAL One-time costs for start-up: $3,500-$4,000.
Estimated Journal ANNUAL Budget excluding salary replacement: $10,000.

8. Financing Alternatives:

The Committee considered a variety of short- and long-term funding options, including several types of grants and other temporary funding alternatives. We concluded that as the primary justification for this journal is to demonstrate the viability of alternative publishing models within the University of California system, internal funding was a key component of that demonstration. Stable funding is also essential to attracting the high quality submissions we seek. We therefore propose that if LAUC decides to go forward with the journal, it should request a commitment from UCOP to support the journal for 3-5 years after which it would be subject to review and renewal for another fixed, multi-year term.

The Committee believes that LAUC should not pursue the project without this level of support. However, once the journal is established, and real costs are known through experience, it may be appropriate to seek institutional partners or grant funding for limited periods.

9. Budget Analysis

- *Salary Replacement Costs for Editor-in-Chief*. 20%-30% of the librarian's salary: $10,500-$31,000, depending on the librarian's rank and step.

- *Technical Assistant*. Student wage of $8.00/hour. Avg 10 hrs/wk over 30weeks. $2400/year

- *Copyeditor.* Assuming an average of 20 pages per article, 6 articles per issue and two issues per year for a total of 240 copyedited pages, a copyediting rate of 2-5 pages per hour priced at $25-$50/hour. (These rates are probably low for academic copyediting.) Estimated range from a low of $1,200/year (5 pages/hour at $25/hour) to a high of $6000 (2 pages/hour at $50 per hour). (Rates and editing speed based on the "Editorial Freelancers Association" rate scales. (http://www.the-efa.org/index.html)

- *Design*. Assuming a range of $25-$50/hour for a designer and an estimated of 20 hours of work to create a satisfactory design, the cost of hiring a designer could range from $500-$1,000.

- *Meetings.* Assuming $150/day lodging, $300 airfare, $50 per Diem. For 3 board members to travel to two start-up meeting: $1500/meeting or $3,000 start-up.

Full board would be 6 members at $3000/meeting (1 meeting/year). Costs would be reduced if editorial board met in conjunction with some other meeting.

- *Office Supplies and Expenses.* $500/issue.

10. Issue Production Timeline:
- *Select Guest Editor.*

- *Send Out Call*. Solicit selected people who have presented at conferences on topics of interest.

- *Guest Editor Solicits Articles: 6-9 months.* In addition to research articles, practical articles on the theme will be considered by the Guest Editor. Practical articles will not be subject to peer review but would be evaluated by the Guest Editor an Editor-in-Chief, only. Such articles may be accepted within a shorter timeline.

- *Articles Go To Referees: 1-2 months.* Select referees; send out call; focus on LAUC members, providing opportunities for involvement

- *Accepted Articles Are Edited As Necessary: 1 month.*

- *Send To Copy Editor.*

- *Issue is Published on e-Scholarship Repository: 2 weeks.*

The process should begin again within a couple of months of the selection of the first Guest Editor, overlapping with the ongoing process in order to provide continuity.

11: Tables:

Table 1:
Subject Focus Of English Language Library Science Titles In The DOAJ
(Based on a review of titles and their websites, 4/11/05)

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF TITLES
General Library and Information Studies	6
Information Science and Technology	5
Medical Library and Information Science	4
Electronic Publishing and/or the Digital Environment	4
Journalism/Communication and Library Science	2
Chinese Librarianship	1
Physics Librarianship	1
Information Technology and Disabilities	1
History and Computing	1
Science and Technology Library and Information Science	1

Table 2:
General, English Language Library Studies Journals Listed In The DOAJ
(Based on a review of titles and their websites, 4/11/05)

TITLE	PUBLISHER/COUNTRY of ORIGIN	PEER REVIEW?	ARCHIVE	NOTES
Ariadne	UKOLN University of Bath/England	No?	Probably. Part of project in Britain including digital preservation issues	British focus
Australian Academic and Research Libraries	University of Canberra, Faculty of Communication/Australia	Yes		Australian emphasis
Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship	International Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publication/Canada	Yes		International, but from Canada.
Information Research	Professor Tom Wilson/England	Yes	All back issues currently on line. No indication of permanent archive.	International, Private venture Coverage includes some papers from conferences, other individual submissions. Subject area is much broader than libraries.
Library Philosophy and Practice	University of Nebraska, Lincoln Libraries/United States	Yes	Back issues available, no archiving statement.	
Libres: Library and Information Science Research Electronic Journal	Curtin University of Technology, School of Media and Information/Australia	Yes	Most back issues available. Uses FTP	Article format varies.