



Arca Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 18, 2021
9:00 AM to 10:30 AM - Pacific
Virtual meeting

In Attendance:

Gregg Currie, Selkirk College, *Rural Colleges*
Kathy Gaynor, Thompson Rivers University, *Small Universities*
April Haddad, JIBC, *Urban Colleges*
Paige Hohmann, BCRDH, *Member-at-Large non-BC ELN*
Kim Isaac, University of the Fraser Valley, *Chair*
Karen Meijer-Kline, KPU, *Member-at-Large*
Todd Mundle, KPU, *Teaching Universities*

Administrative Centre:

Anita Cocchia, BC ELN Executive Director
Elizabeth Traylor, BC ELN Professional Experience Student (Recorder)
Brandon Weigel, Arca Manager

Regrets:

Richard Hayman, Mount Royal University, *Member-at-Large non-BC ELN*
Hillary Webb, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, *Member-at-Large*

1. Adoption of Agenda

Agenda adopted as tabled.

2. Arca Structure in Islandora 8

B. Weigel presented a concept for migration to Islandora 8. He outlined a new structure that improves scalability and reduces interdependence of Arca sites, while retaining the parent-and-child concept.

Arca's rapid expansion coupled with its current infrastructure have introduced technical challenges. Because member sites share resources, issues arising on one site (high usage, Solr errors, etc.) can impact all sites, causing service interruptions. While measures have been taken to mitigate this, the structural relationship between Arca sites remains the primary source of our technical problems. The impending migration to Islandora 8 presents an opportunity to correct these issues.

The proposed Islandora 8 structure:

- Every Arca site will be deployed individually using ISLE, in its own SFU Cloud virtual server. Each site will have its own implementation of Drupal, Fedora, MySQL, Solr, etc.
- arcabc.ca will continue as an aggregator site that searches all Arca repositories together, but will work differently:
 - Ingesting objects to a child site will update two Solr indexes: one on its own local machine and a remote one used by the “parent” site (arcabc.ca). Every site writes to both its own core and the shared one, which allows for this aggregation.
 - Because of these double indexes, the Parent site can search and display all objects from all sites, while never touching or controlling those sites.
- While every Arca site will have its own copy of the code, a master copy will exist remotely which can be applied to all sites.

In this structure, Arca sites will operate independently of each other, while retaining all the benefits of the collaborative approach. Individual infrastructure costs and usage statistics also become easier to track, as the sites operate in their own servers. Expansion will be more straightforward, as new sites will be easier to deploy. And most importantly, performance will be significantly improved, as each site handles its own traffic independently, and problems arising on one site will not affect the others.

Estimated ongoing additional costs of about \$300 to \$500/year for each individual virtual machine will require a slight increase in annual fees. The amount scales with resource needs (i.e. storage), though details and exact cost are yet to be determined. The migration itself will also require a separate, one-time cost.

In response to questions, B. Weigel made the following clarifications:

- Arca administrators will not see a change in responsibilities, but could have more freedom. It would become possible to provide shell access to more technically-proficient administrators, which would allow them to perform large batch ingests that are currently handled by the Admin Centre.
- More analysis is needed on the impact of the server costs on overall membership costs, but they should not exceed the \$300 to \$500 estimate. Cost of storage will remain the same.
- Arca’s core concepts of community and sharing will not change. While sites will be technically isolated, they will continue to have a shared aggregated search, theme, standards, and codebase, just as they do now. Economies of scale come from support, not just servers.

A. Cocchia noted that small organizations could avoid costs by grouping together with other organizations to share an Arca site, as is currently done in the BCRDH and BCHDP repositories. There may be more adoption of this approach in the future.

The Committee expressed excitement about the prospect of improved stability and performance in Arca. Further updates may come at the next Committee meeting, depending on vendors' responses concerning migration costs.

Next steps: Admin Centre will continue exploration, get quotes from the various Islandora support companies to ensure best possible pricing, and watch for Islandora 8 developments.

3. Expenditure Plan 2021-2022

A. Cocchia presented the Expenditure plan for 2021/22.

2020/21 Projected Expenditure Summary

In response to the pandemic, BC ELN increased its support contribution for all service areas. For Arca, this increase moved from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This will continue in 2021/22, allowing the annual Service Support increase to remain low.

The Service Support expenditure was reduced from an estimated \$98,000 to \$95,000, with the total to be finalized at fiscal year's end. This change was made in response to B. Weigel allocating a higher proportion of time to BC ELN duties outside of Arca during 2020, including being part of the BC ELN Common Suite negotiation team.

Governance and administration costs reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,000, primarily due to halt in travel for meetings due to COVID-19.

Vendor Support is now expressed separately from Software and Technology Infrastructure, to allow for greater transparency when tracking expenses. The amount for Software and Technology Infrastructure has not significantly changed, but Vendor Support expenditure increased significantly as Arca required more time from discoverygarden than expected. This was due to stability issues that arose in late summer and early fall, and included creating a new server for Solr. This change greatly improved stability, but stability did come at a cost. Issues like this should not occur after migration to Islandora 8.

2021/22 Draft Expenditure Plan

Arca is in a healthy financial position with an expected carryforward from 2020/21 of approximately \$19,000. Other revenue updates include:

- A proposed 2% increase to the base Service Support fee, bringing individual site cost to \$5,202.

- Member Service Support total of \$139,358 includes \$1,000 from the Langara College Library Tech program, which is joining Arca with an Education sandbox.

The expenditure plan budgets for the upcoming Islandora 8 migration as well as a return to normal service and vendor support levels.

- Service Support cost increased from 2020/21 as work progresses on Arca initiatives. The expected expenditure is now back at \$98,000.
- Software and Technology Infrastructure costs have increased to reflect additional servers and expanded storage.
- Vendor Support cost is reduced to \$15,000, as Arca should not need to engage discoverygarden as much as in 2020/21. The work done to deal with Summer and early Fall outages was successful. The goal is to return to our regular support package.

Dollars in the targeted carryforward are earmarked for the migration to Islandora 8. The Admin Centre is currently seeking quotes for the cost of migration, which will include data transfer, theming, and accessibility work. The current plan is to start migration in 2022-23, although if costs are low enough it could start within the coming year. More information is to follow once vendors have responded to inquiries.

Responding to questions, A. Cocchia and B. Weigel explained that more information is needed before a firm timeline or cost can be presented. Some in-development Islandora 8 features will be needed before Arca can migrate, and quotes need to be evaluated.

MOTION: To endorse the 2021/22 Expenditure Plan as presented.

MOVED: T. Mundle

SECOND: K. Gaynor

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Chair Succession

K. Isaac announced that she will retire at the end of June, before her term as Chair ends in September. According to precedent and Committee consensus, K. Isaac named A. Haddad interim chair to carry out the remainder of the term. Vote for a new chair will occur in September.

5. Partnership Update

A. Cocchia presented a partnership update on behalf of S. Nishimura, who is on study leave until April.

In 2020, BC ELN renewed its partnership with the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC) for five years. IKBLC will provide approximately \$15,000 per year to BC ELN to continue outreach and support to BCHDP grant recipients and to maintain the BCHDP Arca site.

So far in 2021, BCHDP is working with four new organisations:

- Nikkei National Museum
- Société historique francophone de la Colombie-Britannique
- Society for the Museum of Original Costume
- City of Port Coquitlam

A second partnership with IKBLC is in development to pilot a support service for small GLAM sector organisations working to bring their content online. This partnership grew out of S. Nishimura's study leave work in identifying places where provincial partnerships and initiatives could fill support gaps. Identified gaps that this partnership seeks to fill include:

- Support for assessing copyright for collections
- Connecting small GLAM organizations with digitization service providers
- Support for managing digitisation projects and hiring digitization staff
- Assistance completing grant applications

IKBLC will provide \$10,000 per year for a three-year pilot. A first step will be working with IKBLC to implement an early notice process so prospective grant applicants who need support can be identified early in the grant cycle. Much of this work can be done by students.

The third partnership is between Arca and Indigitization, a BC-based collaborative initiative that facilitates capacity building in Indigenous information management. Like the BCHDP, Indigitization needs supported hosting for the Indigenous content that is created through their work with communities. They approached BC ELN in Spring 2021 with a request to partner. A Letter of Understanding for a three-year pilot period is being developed.

Under the terms of the proposal, Indigitization will pay BC ELN \$10,000 per year to set up and maintain an Indigitization Arca site, support ingest of content, and provide support and training to Indigitization staff. Some work will focus on setting up appropriate access controls and using tools like Traditional Knowledge Labels and Cultural Institution Notices.

S. Nishimura will provide more detail on this exiting work upon her return from study leave.

The Committee expressed excitement at the prospect of this work developing further and the difference that Arca is making in terms of partnerships and access.

6. Admin Centre Update

B. Weigel presented an update from the Admin Centre, highlighting additional developments that support Indigenous content. A new module developed for Arca, Islandora CI Notices, can add the “Attribution Incomplete” notice from localcontexts.org to objects. This will support the needs of Arca’s new partner, Indigitization, as well as other members with applicable content.

Additionally, COPPUL has expressed interest in creating a new Arca site in which to aggregate Indigenous-related digitized materials held by their member institutions.

The Arca newsletter and Actions and Achievements report are coming soon and will explain activities, savings, benefits, etc. in greater depth.

7. New Business

No new business. K. Isaac expressed thanks and well wishes to all Committee members, as this will be her last meeting before retirement.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place in August or September. The Admin Centre will send a Doodle poll to select a date.