



Summary of the First Meeting of the dLOC Advisory Board
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad
Wednesday, 31 May 2006

Participants:

- Eduardo Gamarra
- Adolfo Gonzalez
- Aldo Lauria Santiago
- Humberto Garcia Muniz
- Holger Henke
- Chantalle F. Verna
- Jan DeCosmo
- Lloyd Gardner

The meeting, which was chaired by Dr. Eduardo Gamarra, started at 1:25 p.m. and ended at approximately 3:10 p.m., and basically followed the agenda (Appendix 1).

Agenda Item 1: Welcome & Introduction

Dr. Gamarra welcomed the participants to the meeting, and asked each person to introduce himself/herself. Following the introductions, Dr. Gamarra presented an overview of the dLOC project, and the status to date.

Agenda Item 2: Overview of dLOC Project

Dr. Gamarra provided an overview of the project, and named the persons with given areas of responsibility. He also noted that the Steering Committee also included ex-officio members. He gave an update on the pending changes in personnel, with Catherine Marsicek leaving to take up a new post at the University of New Mexico, and the Project Coordinator to be selected soon. Ms Marsicek will maintain her involvement in the project, though not in her current role as a Co-Director.

Lloyd informed the meeting of other project activities, including the training taking place at the ACURIL meeting in Aruba, the meeting of the Steering Committee at the beginning of May, and the preparation of the Draft Bylaws. He also shared his interpretation of the distinction between the responsibilities of the project team under the U.S. Department of Education Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA) grant, and the parallel

activities to establish the dLOC as a permanent structure. He suggested that it was on this latter process of transitioning from a project to a permanent arrangement that the advisory board should focus its energies.

Members requested clarification on the composition and appointment of the Executive Committee, the allocation of funding under the project, and the mechanics of digitizing the collections of the partner institutions. Dr. Gamarra responded to the various questions, referring consistently to the project document.

Agenda Item 3: Formal Appointment of Members

Dr. Gamarra formally appointed the members of the dLOC Advisory Board. He informed the members that the current term of the appointment ran from May 2006 to December 2007, though members could be re-appointed for a second 2-year term.

Agenda Item 4: Advisory Board Responsibilities

Lloyd reminded the participants of proposed role for the board, as contained in the initial call for members of the board, the responsibilities being to:

- Guide development of the dLOC project;
- Provide advice to the Executive Committee;
- Identify priority collections for digitization;
- Identify funding opportunities; and
- Promote the project.

The subsequent discussion involved a number of questions, identified a number of concerns, and produced a number of recommendations for the way forward, including:

1. The Advisory Board should review the draft bylaws and all other guidance documents and plans developed by the project for the dLOC.
2. Internet-based systems need to be established to support the work of the Advisory Board. Working documents, such as the bylaws could be password-protected. At this point, Dr. Gamarra informed the meeting that IFU had established a website for the project, and would be placing content on that website over the next few weeks. As such, the bylaws and other documents could be placed on the site. He also indicated that the project team already possessed the email addresses for the members of the Advisory Board. FIU would therefore establish, and manage, a listserv for the Advisory Board.
3. The question of how to prioritise collections to be targeted was discussed at length. Factors such as potential loss of the collection and the volume, age, and significance of the materials were considered to be important. Lloyd suggested that persons recommending collections should provide background information on the collection as part of the rationale for targeting the particular collection. The archive of Guyana was said to be of particular importance.

4. Dr. Aldo Santiago questioned whether a survey had been undertaken of the archives and collections in the Caribbean. None of the participants was aware of any such survey.
5. Information on the process of digitizing collections under the current project was requested, and clarification was provided by Dr. Gamarra. The possible processes and challenges involved in digitization and metadata production at the local level were discussed. The members were asked to identify applicable processes, challenges, relevant issues, and opportunities for partnerships, and to send that information to the Convenor of the Advisory Board for compilation and sharing with the Executive Committee.
6. The meeting agreed that it is important to identify mechanisms and new resources to ensure the sustainability of the new organization (dLOC). It was felt that national and international funding sources should be identified that could provide support to the dLOC. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was identified as one such potential source of support.
7. Dr. Holger Henke suggested that a number of guiding principles should be considered for guiding the development of the dLOC as a permanent organization, including:
 - The process of selection of collectives and establishment of the dLOC should be transparent;
 - There should be balance in the types of collections and institutions targeted;
 - The host institution must have ownership of the digital collection, as this will serve as a motive for Caribbean institutions to participate in the process¹; and
 - The project will need to demonstrate some early success in order to win support for the establishment of the dLOC as an organization.
8. A number of the participants mentioned past projects focused on digitizing specific collections, or parts thereof. They were asked to compile and share information on past and ongoing digitalization projects, related training opportunities, and institutions that have expressed an interest in such initiatives. That information will be sent to Lloyd for compilation and sharing with the dLOC Executive Committee.
9. Participants in the meeting discussed the need for a chair of the Advisory Board. Members were advised that the dLOC project paper identified the Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) as the Co-Chairs of the Advisory Board. As such, the meeting agreed that person coordinating the activities of the Advisory Board would be referred to as a Coordinator, to ensure that there is no confusion with the role of the Co-PIs. Dr. Aldo Santiago was nominated as someone with the relevant experience and institutional support. He declined the role, and Lloyd volunteered. The meeting agreed that Lloyd would function as the Coordinator of the Advisory Board.

¹ The meeting was reminded that any participating institution could choose to house the digital library rather than sending it to FIU. A partner could also choose to have a third institution of its choice maintain the digital collection. Dr. Gamarra shared the experience of FIU with institutions in Haiti and Cuba, indicating that the original material remained incountry. It appears that most institutions will demand continued ownership of the original materials, but management of the digital collection is a matter to be negotiated.

10. Some members reminded the meeting that eventually the information contained on microfiche would also have to be digitized.

Agenda Item 5: CSA Organizational Participation

The meeting was informed that it was the intention of the project to establish some form of collaborative arrangement with the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA), especially since CSA's archive of papers presented at its conferences was one of the collections in which dLOC was interested.

Lloyd also informed the meeting of the intention of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) to digitize the CSA papers in its collection, and that he was actually contacting the relevant authors at this CSA conference.

Other institutions that were identified as potential collaborators include:

- Caribbean Regional Library; and
- Association of Caribbean Historians.

Dr. Santiago remarked that once the project and Advisory Board starts promoting the dLOC, some institutions may wish to start participating immediately, especially if they have a similar project. He questioned whether the dLOC project is currently able to respond to any such opportunity/request for participation.

Agenda Item 6: Advisory Board Operational Process & Follow-up

The members suggested that it would be useful to have an agreed list of tasks and a schedule, including quarterly discussions of the Advisory Board (possibly using the mechanism of an internet chat room). The following are the agreed tasks and responsibilities over the coming three months:

- (a) FIU will establish the listserv for the Advisory Board during the coming week.
- (b) Dr. Gamarra will provide the Advisory Board with the report of the training and other project outputs from the ACURIL meeting. He will also share some of the appendices from the project proposal and the project workplan.
- (c) Dr. Gamarra will circulate the information concerning the call for the Project Coordinator.
- (d) Dr. Santiago offered to locate a model similar to the dLOC project, in an effort to determine other standards being used for digitization of the various media types dLOC is likely to encounter in collections. He will share any relevant information obtained with the Advisory Board and Executive Committee.

- (e) Members of the Advisory Board will submit comments to Lloyd on the five areas of responsibility identified for the Advisory Board. The comments will be submitted by the end of July.
- (f) Members of the Advisory Board will send Lloyd their written opinions on potential challenges, relevant issues, and opportunities for partnerships for the development of the dLOC.
- (g) Members of the Advisory Board will compile information on past and ongoing digitalization projects, related training opportunities, and institutions that have expressed an interest in such initiatives. That information will be sent to Lloyd for compilation and sharing with the dLOC Executive Committee.
- (h) The Advisory Board will hold its second meeting at the end of August, using teleconference or internet-based technology.

Agenda Item 7: Summary

Dr. Gamarra distributed the FIU Non-Employee Form, after which he adjourned the meeting.

Appendix 1: Agenda

1. Welcome & Introduction (Gamarra)
2. Overview of dLOC project (Gamarra/Gardner)
3. Formal appointment of members (Gamarra)
4. Advisory Board responsibilities (Gardner)
5. CSA organizational participation (Gardner)
6. Advisory Board operational process & follow-up (Gardner)
7. Summary (Gamarra)