

**LIBRARIES AS 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY LEADERS:  
DEVELOPING A STATEWIDE TOOLKIT**

**PHASE I REPORT**

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**Executive Summary**

This report summarizes activities from October 1 – December 31, 2006 in conducting the study *Libraries as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders: Developing a Statewide Toolkit*. The goal of the study is to develop a process to identify and share the best practices of Illinois academic, public, and school libraries that have embraced and integrated new technologies into their library services. The Illinois Library System Directors Organization (ILSDO), through the North Suburban Library System (NSLS), received funding from the Illinois State Library to conduct this study. The study relied on a number of data collection activities including site visits, interviews, review of documentation and websites, and other strategies that came from meetings with over 160 participants.

Phase I resulted in a number of findings. First, the study generated an extensive list of innovative projects, applications, and services recently completed by the state's library community. These innovations came from all types of libraries and from all areas in the state. They document the extent, range, and innovativeness of technology-related activities in the state. They also suggest a wide range of projects with potential for being transferred to other types of libraries in the state.

A second key result of Phase I was the compilation of a set of possible components that might comprise the web-based Toolkit. The report provides a description of these components and organizes them in terms of basic service areas. Once again, the results demonstrate a robust and extensive list of ideas culled from study participants. The relative importance of these components will need to be prioritized as they all cannot be developed for inclusion in the first version of the Toolkit.

The report concludes with recommendations for completing the project by July 2007. These include a proposal for the vision and goals of the Toolkit, prioritizing the list of innovative projects to be included in the Toolkit, deciding which components should be included in the Toolkit, developing an approach for developing and managing the actual toolkit website, and obtaining substantial input and involvement from the broader Illinois library community in the development of the Toolkit.

With this project, ILSDO has the opportunity to create a truly revolutionary process that can institutionalize innovation and change, increase an information technology knowledge base for the library community throughout the state, significantly increase the quality and impact of library services to residents in the state, and develop a service that can serve as a model for other states. To be successful, however, leaders in the library community will need to step forward, participate in Phase II, contribute their knowledge and skills, and demonstrate their commitment and involvement in the project.

## **LIBRARIES AS 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY LEADERS: DEVELOPING A STATEWIDE TOOLKIT PHASE 1 REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Illinois Library System Directors Organization (ILSDO), through the North Suburban Library System (NSLS), received funding from the Illinois State Library to conduct a research study with the goal to identify and share the best practices of academic, public, and school libraries that have embraced and integrated new technologies into their library services. The study began October 1, 2006 and this interim report summarizes activities from that time through December 31, 2006.

The study was intended to identify best practices in a sample of Illinois academic, public, and school libraries which are effectively employing the latest technologies. The areas of interest for this project include:

- Utilizing available technology;
- Identifying measures most helpful in the management of technology resources and services;
- Identifying strategies to advocate for continued technology support;
- Identifying successful ongoing efforts to acquire sustainable funding for technology services;
- Noting the interaction between libraries and external partners, including regional library systems and the Illinois State Library;
- Identifying how successful libraries handle key issues; and
- Planning of next steps.

The study will identify and suggest methods to share best practices and intends to inspire other libraries to initiate similar programs and services.

### **APPROACH**

This study relied on a multi-method iterative learning approach in which a series of data collection and analysis techniques informed each future data collection activity. This approach resulted in an extensive amount of information and insights as to possible innovative projects, services, and applications as well as possible approaches to develop the toolkit.

### **Objectives**

The objectives for Phase I of the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit* project included the following:

- Meet with study principals to further refine overall study objectives and plans;
- Meet as many key stakeholders as quickly as possible at the Illinois Library Association conference October 3-6;

- Identify potential toolkit components and their strengths and weaknesses; and
- Identify a sample of Illinois library innovations and meet with their innovators.

The goals of this phase of the project were to (1) produce a draft list of possible innovative services and applications from libraries around the state, (2) identify options for developing the content of the toolkit, and (3) identify key issues that affect the development of the toolkit.

### **Project Planning**

The consultants conducted a number of telephone/email conversations with the project manager and others associated with the study in September and October. These efforts resulted in developing a schedule of meetings with key stakeholders at the Illinois Library Conference October 3-6. The objectives of these meetings were to:

- Inform key stakeholders of the goals, nature, activities, and benefits of the project;
- Introduce the study team to members of the Illinois library community;
- Obtain input on the development of various data collection instruments; and
- Begin preliminary organization of logistics and schedules for the consultants' visits to Northern Illinois in November and Southern Illinois in December.

Appendix A is the abstract of the project that the consultants distributed at these meetings. These meetings were quite useful and assisted both the study team and the Illinois library community to better organize and participate in conducting the study.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection effort relied on a combination of site visits to various system and member libraries, group and individual interviews, review of reports and other documents related to possible innovative projects and services, and review of library web-based innovative projects and services. The process for conducting the site visits and interviews relied on each of the systems to complete a work form and establish a schedule that identified potential library sites and their innovative projects and services (see Appendix B). Once they completed the work form then project staff developed a schedule for the consultants to visit the selected libraries. Based on this information the consultants developed a detailed day-to-day itinerary for each trip.

The consultants conducted site visits that included numerous interviews in the Northern part of Illinois during November 8-18 and in Southern Illinois December 10-16. Typically, the consultants would meet with a group of participants identified by the system staff, have lunch with additional librarians, visit two to three libraries with innovative services and projects, and then move on to the next site visit. The consultants kept notes of all meetings, obtained material and examples while conducting the visits/interviews, and conducted follow-up interviews via telephone and email as needed.

Appendix C is an example form used to collect specific information about individual projects when possible.<sup>1</sup>

### **Study Population & Sample**

The study population included academic, public, school, and special<sup>2</sup> librarians throughout nine of the ten<sup>3</sup> Illinois library systems. The consultants conducted individual and group interviews as well as site visits with selected<sup>4</sup> library managers throughout the state. The consultants interviewed some 160 library innovators over the course of three visits to the state: Illinois Library Association conference, October 3-10, 2006; Illinois School Media Association conference and Northern Illinois, November 8-18, 2006; and Southern Illinois, December 10-16, 2006. The consultants believe they interviewed an adequate sample of key innovators, key stakeholders, and others to move forward with the remainder of the study. See Appendix D for a list of those interviewed.

### **FINDINGS**

The consultants organized and analyzed their notes and the additional information sources collected after each of the three trips to Illinois. The amount of these notes and other information was extensive and the consultants conducted some follow-up emails with interviewees for additional information. The data result in a number of key findings.

#### **Innovative Projects/Programs/Applications**

Appendix E is a list of the innovative projects/programs/applications identified by the study team. Appendix B includes the criteria used to identify the projects selected as innovative. The site visits and interviews were essential as a means for the consultants to identify these projects as the innovators were able to more fully describe the project and answer additional questions about the projects under discussion.

In compiling Appendix E the consultants did not include innovative projects that had previously been identified and had similar applications. In addition, the list does not include all possible innovative projects being developed in the state as it was impossible for the consultants to visit *all* possible sites and identify *all* possible innovative projects. Thus, the innovative projects listed in Appendix E should be seen as a relatively comprehensive sample of such projects currently underway or recently completed throughout the state.

Indeed, the breadth, quality, and impact of those projects listed in Appendix E are most impressive. As such they constitute a core of possible projects that have the

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<sup>1</sup> Interviewees only completed a limited number of these forms, preferring to describe the innovation directly to study team members.

<sup>2</sup> The study proposal did not include special libraries due to concern that they might not be able to share their innovations due to their proprietary nature. Later, after interviews with several special librarians, the decision was made to include special libraries.

<sup>3</sup> The researchers were instructed to exclude the Chicago Public Library System.

<sup>4</sup> System library directors or designates identified library managers to interview and sites to visit.

potential for inclusion in the toolkit. A process will need to be developed to determine priorities of which of the proposed projects are most important for inclusion in the Toolkit and thus, for obtaining additional detail about the projects.

### **Toolkit Components**

The consultants asked those interviewed to identify and describe key components that they thought would be most important to include in the 21<sup>st</sup> century toolkit. There was wide agreement that the toolkit should be web-based, but there were numerous suggestions about what should or should not be included.

The following identifies potential 21<sup>st</sup> century toolkit components. The consultants organized interviewee comments into the following general categories for potential toolkit components.

#### **Innovative Projects, Applications, and Services**

- The toolkit would include a descriptive listing of a selection of the various current, innovative projects, applications, and services drawn from Appendix E, or grant funded innovations (see below) or projects added by the innovators themselves. The entry for the items would need to be carefully developed in order to assist adaptors in determining if the innovation is appropriate for their particular library system. Entries would also be indexed for easy access.

#### **Toolkit Wizard**

- **The Wizard** would explain and enable an Illinois librarian, library, system or library related organization to establish and manage a toolkit component. Ideally the process would be automated. The Wizard would have to address such areas as authentication, resource allocation, sustainability, utility, and provide advice, etc. If done well, the toolkit could be self-sustaining.

#### **Current Awareness**

- **Grant funded innovations:** Identify and describe recent (within the past year) innovative Illinois projects to speed the adoption process. This would include relevant LSTA funded grants awarded by the State Library. This component might allow searching of prior grants to see if a proposed idea had previously been funded. At present, the State Library only has a grant list with brief abstracts and contact information available. The project team could suggest to the State Library that it require as part of the next funding cycle that those awarded a grant be required to report certain project information electronically. Required information might include problem(s) solved, project name, brief description, contact information, project documents: proposal, solution prerequisites, issues adoption procedures, etc. Innovations funded by other grants awarded to Illinois libraries might also be included but would be

voluntary. If this component is included the project team would need to discuss approaches with the State Library: define reasonable elements to be reported by libraries receiving LSTA awards; and define tasks, staffing, resources needed, and timeline.

- **Innovation showcase:** Every month feature 1-3 new innovations of wide interest. The showcase would feature, where possible, a working web-based example, descriptions, and pictures/videos as appropriate.
- **Innovation news/newsletter:** This component would selectively identify the latest innovations, new products, and services added to the toolkit and news of interest to innovators.
- **Digest of IL library organization IT-related information:** This component would systematically (and perhaps automatically via some form of website harvesting) identify relevant IT-related information and post it as a toolkit component. Innovators indicated that they knew there are “good things” posted at the State Library, IL systems, and other IL library organizations’ websites and suggested that a “one stop shop” place that identifies and posts the best “stuff” would be very helpful to them.
- **Illinois library current awareness:** This would include two related items: (a) a pathfinder that lists current awareness meta-sources (list of lists, directory of blogs, etc.), and (b) a pathfinder that identifies all Illinois library related current awareness sources, e.g., a list of Illinois library related listservs.
- **Digest of new, “on the horizon” IT issues and trends:** The component would include short descriptions of new library related IT issues and trends that might bring a library board, director, or even public service staff quickly up to speed. Such a digest might answer a question like: what is an MP3 player and how do I download music to it? Or it could include current copyright and licensing issues affecting libraries.
- **Best things done this year:** A library director or IT manager would identify, using a form, the top three 21<sup>st</sup> century-related things done at the library during the past year. Library systems could edit and summarize.
- **IT glossary:** A place to post quick definitions (with examples and URLs for additional information) on IT-related words, acronyms, etc.

### **Funding & Fund Raising**

- **Funding opportunities:** Develop a searchable archived blog listing grant sources open to Illinois libraries. Might be culled from state library, system sources, and other sources.
- **Grant writing:** This would be a listing and identification of available “how to write grants” continuing education.
- **Fund raising:** This would include fundraising ideas and examples as well as strategies, approaches, and how to implement fundraising strategies.

### **Collaboration**

- **Problem/Fix-it exchange:** This service would provide space for: “I have this problem; can anyone help with a solution?” The component would allow those with a problem to post it in hopes that others who had faced similar problems would provide solutions. A searchable archive of previously solved problems would be available. A potential feature would be a search capability of other lists and blogs with similar functions within the state or nationally. Another potential function would be posting of problem request to other relevant lists/blogs with responses posted to the toolkit component.
- **Collaboration page:** Participants would identify future desirable innovations, work on joint problems, best practices, and projects they intend to develop and seek development partners via this component. This component could also provide space to discuss issues related to specific ideas or possible innovations.
- **Review of library IT services:** This component would coordinate among libraries seeking an external review of an IT-related service (e.g., its website) and obtain volunteer reviewers.
- **Statewide recurring task assistance:** This may include annual tasks (e-rate applications, per capita grant forms, annual statistics, LSTA grant writing) that might benefit from group solutions – e.g., hiring of a consultant to do the paperwork or advise on application completion. This toolkit component would assist users in speeding the process of regularly repeatable tasks.
- **Birds of a feather:** This component would provide a space for IT-related personnel to meet, exchange information, or jointly solve problems of mutual interest. Potential birds of a feather groupings identified during the interviews include: state library development staff and system consultants; IT and systems personnel; IT service marketers and advertisers; YA IT service developers; video applications; etc.

### Continuing Education

- **Consolidated IT and related continuing education calendar and registration:** This component would identify relevant continuing education opportunities, including database vendor training, across the state (or by system) open to all librarians (including trustees) and present information in calendar format and searchable by topic, date. It would allow online reservation (and e-mail notification) similar to Continuous Learning Opportunities (CLeO) <<http://www.lcls.org/ce/>> created by the Lewis & Clark Library System and adopted by other Illinois systems.<sup>5</sup>
- **Web-based opportunities for continuing education:** This component could be modeled after the Illinois Online Network <<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/>>, but for 21<sup>st</sup> century librarian continuing education. It might include the above calendar, news and announcements, online courses, webinars, resources, etc.

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<sup>5</sup> See e.g., Alliance <<http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/cleo/>>, Rolling Prairie Library System <<http://www.rpls.ws/Ce/maintenance.asp>>, Shawnee <<http://cleo.shawls.lib.il.us/ce/>>.

- **Scheduled live chat with expert(s) on IT topics:** The component would be a regularly schedule live chat session with expert(s) on current IT topics.

### Evaluation

- **Review of library IT infrastructure and services:** This component would identify libraries seeking external reviews/evaluations of their IT infrastructure and services (e.g., its website usability) and seek/obtain volunteer external reviewers. Component might also include evaluation checklists and guidelines.
- **User surveys:** Participants indicated an interest in model (web and paper) “quick and dirty” user surveys on a variety of 21<sup>st</sup> century topics including: IT class training interests (public and staff), needed website resources and services, how users use library website, and website evaluation. Surveys might be focused on different groups: seniors, teachers, teens, etc. The component would provide emphasis on survey methods related to IT topics for those with little training and some phobia.
- **Interpretation:** How to interpret and use evaluation results.

### Directories with Pictures

- **Illinois librarian directory:** This would be a searchable directory with pictures available and stored using Flickr <<http://www.flickr.com/>>.
- **Illinois library innovators:** This would be a searchable directory with pictures available, descriptions of key areas in which the innovator has expertise, and stored using Flickr <<http://www.flickr.com/>>.

### IT-related Employment

- **Employment, internships, practicum, and volunteer opportunities:** This would be a listing of such opportunities available across the state. It might also include model job descriptions, job exchange, and other employment related activities. It might also allow posting a job description once with automatic re-posting to the State Library, interested agencies, job posting sites, lists, etc.
- **Aids for the newly hired library IT managers:** Such aids might include systems, telecommunications, computing, web, and related personnel recently hired by the library (could also include outsourcing staff) at the system, library or branch level. Content suggestions include: how to get organized, how to establish peer contacts at other libraries, IT-library glossary (explaining key IT terms in library language and library terms to those new to the library world), key IT relevant statewide resources, and key IT relevant training and networking events (or a calendar).

### Repositories

- **Policy & management repository:** This component would contain policies; management documents such as strategic, five year, and technology plans; annual reports; user surveys (see above); and procedures and related documents. It could also contain trustee manuals, Illinois library law, standard, etc., and statewide association and library organization materials if of wider interest.
- **Instructional material repository:** The repository could contain relevant staff and public training materials, tutorials, handouts, and curricula. Subset might include K-12+ IT-related curriculum plans.
- **21<sup>st</sup> century information literacy standards and curriculum repository** (see discussion below).
- **Royalty-free or purchased stock photos, graphics, video, music, sound:** Such could be used in “jazzing up” reports, presentations and other documents. Users could obtain these materials for state library, individual library, or system use.

### Sources

- **Sources – collection development:** Three interests were identified: (a) A pathfinder that identifies major Internet-based reviewing sources and sources of reviews on major Internet resources; (b) A place to post reviews of Internet resources (other than reviews related to vendors) by Illinois librarians; and (c) major purchase advice: a place to seek advice on major collection purchases from others who already own the source.
- **Sources – public service:** This may be a subset of repositories; For example, (a) a pathfinder that identifies major, Internet-based finding aids, curriculum guides, libraries, and pathfinder sources; (b) Illinois library produced pathfinders, curriculum guides, and finding aids; (c) pathfinders, finding aid, or curriculum guides on Illinois topics; and (d) pathfinders on principal sources of primary source materials.

### Standards

- **Minimum successfully networked library standards:** This component might identify a minimum standard that defines a successfully networked library. This could be by state or system or library type. Minimum standards could be developed based on population served (or student FTE) and/or budget. Standard definitions would include links to Illinois examples where possible. In addition to defining a standard, the component could also offer specific aid to those who wish to meet the standard. For example, one successfully networked library minimum standard element might be that the library has a website with local control of content and updating. This toolkit component could then identify a procedure for a library to follow in order to meet this minimum standard. Included might be system, state (e.g., Plinket), or other available assistance.

- **Exceptionally networked library standards:** This component might identify a set of standards describing exceptionally networked libraries. Libraries might apply to some authority (e.g., the State Library) for certification that the library meets this standard. Or, this could be a voluntary standard. The standard might be in three areas: electronic services offered within the library, network services offered to remote users, and infrastructure that supports both internal and external services. Some of the libraries interviewed have some type of goal of being successfully networked as part of their mission. This component might enable those libraries to show their boards, local funders, and community that they are achieving the library's mission. Such a standard might provide direction and leverage for libraries who want to move their libraries in this direction.
- **Model interface development:** Suggested were three inter-related tasks: (a) identification of the best Illinois library interfaces: e.g., best kids, senior, grade 5, and freshman interfaces; (b) development of model interfaces based on Illinois best of examples; (c) development of transferable infrastructure so that any library in the state could adopt an interface and associated infrastructure. So, for example, a public library could readily adopt a kids interface with associated resources, services, policies, trained staff, etc. necessary.
- **Model library websites:** This is a variation on the above and would include a "checklist (or model) of what should be on a library website." This would offer models of resources and services that could be included on library websites by type of library (could include sub-categories by population served or budget). The component would give examples where possible.
- **21<sup>st</sup> century information literacy:** There was widespread academic, public, and school library interest in testable grade level standards with associated curriculum and curriculum mapping keyed to and developed in conjunction with external (school, departmental, state) institution objectives and curricula. For example it could include model K-8 21<sup>st</sup> century information literacy standards and curricula developed by school media specialists working with K-8 school curriculum experts (and others) that might be used by all school and public libraries and schools for incorporation into K-8 curriculum and testing. Or it might be Freshman 21<sup>st</sup> century information literacy standards and curricula developed by academic librarians in conjunction with key academic departments, high school, and public librarians (and others) that might be used by all when preparing students. The toolkit might identify the standards and curriculum (e.g., a repository for 21<sup>st</sup> century information literacy standards and curriculum) or might play a role in the process of developing them.

## Resource Access

- **Project development and testing space:** This toolkit component would supply short term resources (e.g., server, storage, remotely deliverable IT, space, bandwidth) to enable library innovators to develop a demonstration prototype before presentation to administration or local funders or for other purposes. An example that was cited during the interviews: the librarian wants to develop wiki or blog applications and needs to convince library administration or funders that such is an important application to improve services; or the librarian is working with teenagers on various digital imaging projects and occasionally needs access to a lot of bandwidth to showcase teen work to the community.

### **Contractor/Vendor Information**

- **Product directory:** The directory would be searchable by vendor, product, and topic (e.g., ILS, pc reservation) and would contain company name, contact information, product description, and pricing. Directory entries would be maintained by vendors. Advertising might be permitted to sustain this component.
- **Product reviews & alternatives:** The reviews would be searchable by product and product category (e.g., ILS, PC reservation) and would include product reviews, product comparisons and alternatives, and new products on the horizon (“a new upgrade is about to be introduced, a better alternative is about to come out, wait 6 months on this one...”). Access might be limited to Illinois librarians or a subset of Illinois librarians.
- **Available group purchase discounts:** This component would identify IT-related group purchase discounts available to Illinois libraries. The component could also facilitate the process of negotiating a group discount.
- **Vendor guidance:** Illinois librarians would be offered formal and informal advice on how to “deal with” and negotiate with specific vendors.

### **Innovation/Adopter Incentives**

- **League of Illinois innovators and adopters:** This component would recognize and reward both innovators and adopters as part of the effort to speed up 21<sup>st</sup> century innovation and adoption. One approach suggested was the creation of a League of Illinois Innovators and Adopters. Membership/registration would be limited to those whose innovation/best practice has been adopted by another library and those who had adopted an innovation over the past year. The toolkit component would list innovators and adopters. League members would receive annual awards at statewide conferences. League members might serve as advisors to further toolkit development.

Each of the above potential components may include: blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, listservs, documents, chat, demonstrations, links to external resources, etc.

These possible components for the Toolkit represent the ideas and suggestions from the study interviewees as presented to the study team who then analyzed those comments. For many of these proposed components, however, additional thought would be required to specify details of the component, design requirements, etc. Additional individuals not interviewed by the study team or those interviewed with supplemental thoughts may still wish to add or better describe aspects of the components listed here. But, it is clear that this list needs to be prioritized as the Toolkit developers are unlikely to be able to incorporate all these good ideas into the first version of the Toolkit.

### **Additional Findings**

As a result of the consultants meeting with a range of library information technology innovators and other individuals during Phase I, a number of additional findings resulted. These are described below.

- **Innovations occur throughout the entire state:** In every system and in all types of libraries, the consultants identified numerous innovative projects, applications, programs, and services. Appendix D provides the list of innovations identified.
- **Innovators are often unaware they are innovators:** There is significant “Midwest humility” among those interviewed that at times resulted in genuine inability to perceive one’s project or service as an innovative accomplishment. This suggests that the Toolkit will need staff external to a particular library to identify innovations rather than expect innovators to nominate themselves.
- **One library’s innovation may not be another library’s innovation:** An innovation for one library setting may or may not be an innovation in another library setting. A working definition of an innovative project, application, or service is something new that improves the overall quality and impact of library services that has yet to be successfully implemented in a particular library or library system.
- **Innovators may be incapable of explaining innovation to adopters:** In a number of cases the innovator was not the best person to describe the actual innovation, how it was developed, managed, and implemented. This suggests the need for a well-structured form requesting specific information to describe the innovation. The forms in Appendix B are a first step at developing such a form. This also may suggest the need for staff to edit text and/or follow up personally with the innovator for additional information so the information about the innovation can be more useful for the adopter.
- **Not all libraries can or have the capability to implement innovations, but factors that encourage adapting an innovation include:**
  - Motivation to adopt an innovation must be present; adopters may not know why an innovation should be adopted unless it and potential benefits are clearly explained;
  - Availability of written documentation (as well as online resources) describing the innovation is needed;

- Availability of an innovator who the person adopting the new innovation can contact is essential. The *willingness* and *helpfulness* of the innovator to help others is important, but it has to be understood that there is a limit to the amount of effort the innovator can dedicate to assisting the adopter;
  - The contact person for the innovation must have good communication and other skills to successfully assist an adopter at another library;
  - The innovation should not be too complicated and the instructions or assistance available should be relatively easy and clear;
  - Administrative support and encouragement for both innovators and adaptors is essential; and
  - The innovation should be free or relatively inexpensive (as determined by the adopting library).
- **Specific attention needs to be paid to how best to use experts:** While all the innovators interviewed indicated an interest to assist others with implementing an innovation, there clearly is a limit to how much effort can be offered. One potential approach is to feature essential (“every library should have this”) innovations with significantly more attention given to the creation of a multimedia instructional package, incentives, and coordinated use of expertise along with evaluation. The goal being that every Illinois library that wants to adopt one of these featured innovations can do so easily. Other strategies are also possible.
  - **Rewards.** Adaptors of innovations should be rewarded for implementing innovations as part of the Toolkit. Innovators who assist adopters also should be rewarded. These rewards can be recognition, awards and visibility or more tangible rewards.
  - **Phased development of the Toolkit.** There was general agreement that the development of the Toolkit should be phased – that is, have a vision for its long range development but implement this vision in manageable phases that build on itself. This approach also allows the developers and users to learn as they develop the Toolkit and insure that it meets the needs of the library community in Illinois.
  - **Evaluation.** A number of statistics and measures should be developed and implemented to assess the degree to which the Toolkit accomplishes goals and objectives and to demonstrate the cost, impact, quality, and use of the Toolkit. Some of these measures can be automated, e.g., log file analysis describing use of the Toolkit. Other measures will need to be created and staff will need to collect data to produce these statistics.

This is a beginning list of issues that should be considered as the developers design the Toolkit, to insure its success, and to encourage users to participate in the use of the Toolkit.

## NEXT STEPS

There are a range of factors to consider in developing the next steps for the completion of the Toolkit. Based on the findings presented earlier the consultants would offer a number of recommendations as outlined below.

### **Vision, Goals, and Objectives**

A possible vision for the Toolkit is:

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit will be a dynamic web-based means by which librarians in the state of Illinois have access to and share a range of technology-oriented innovations and other services that can significantly improve library services, programs, and access to resources. The Toolkit will provide easy and straightforward assistance to help librarians implement these innovations and exploit new technologies at their individual libraries.

Possible goals for the Toolkit include:

- The toolkit will speed the adoption of 21<sup>st</sup> century library innovations and best practices.
- Librarians in Illinois will have access to a range of easy to use technology innovations via a web-based toolkit.
- The Toolkit will be easy to use, well-organized, and provide current information.
- Librarians in Illinois will be knowledgeable about the availability and use of the Toolkit.
- The Toolkit will be managed and organized successfully by high quality and dedicated staff.
- A regular and ongoing process of evaluation will identify means by which the Toolkit can be continuously improved to meet the changing needs of Illinois librarians.

The results of Phase 1 of the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit* project suggest the following objectives for Phase 2 (January-July):

- Identify the component(s) for the first version of the toolkit – remembering that how this decision is made and who is involved in the decision making may be as important as which Toolkit component(s) is chosen.
- Design an easy-to-use, and to the extent possible, self-developed, managed, and updated website.
- Establish a management and organization structure that has overall responsibility for the development and sustainability of the Toolkit.
- Develop a plan for content development for each Toolkit component. This should include component description, purpose, tasks, time table, staff needed, and staff roles, etc.
- Review, evaluate, and test the prototype Toolkit components in an iterative and ongoing process.

- Develop a publicity and marketing plan for the Toolkit including an “event” at its initial unveiling.

A wide degree of participation among the Illinois library community should be obtained as input in (1) developing the components of the Toolkit and (2) reviewing the list of innovative projects, applications, and services as listed in Appendix E,. Ultimately, the success of the Toolkit will be the degree to which Illinois librarians use the Toolkit to share information on innovations and how best to adopt those innovations.

### **Recommended Criteria for Selecting Toolkit Components**

The consultants, based on their interviews, recommend the following criteria as a beginning point when choosing which potential component(s) to include in the initial version of the Toolkit. Other criteria may be appropriate to include as well.

- **Sustainability:** Is the Toolkit component sustainable after the project ends? A component should be included only if there is a minimum (say one year) commitment by Illinois librarians, libraries, system, or library organizations to provide tangible and needed support. Needed support for each potential component will need to be identified and sought in Phase II.
- **Cost:** Determining the cost of both individual Toolkit components as well as the overall toolkit will have a significant impact on what, specifically, can be considered as part of the Toolkit. Currently, the budget for developing the Toolkit is \$10,000 with some in-kind staffing from NSLS.
- **Utility/widespread interest:** Would there be widespread interest in the component throughout the state and across library type? Will the component speed the innovation and adoption process among Illinois libraries? One way to test interest would be to assess priorities among those library manager/innovators already interviewed.
- **Feasibility:** Can the component be developed with the time, talent, budge, and resources at hand?
- **Ease of implementation:** The ease and time needed to implement a specific component should be carefully considered. Are there individuals available who can easily implement the component?
- **Non-duplication/competition:** A potential Toolkit component should not be adopted if it duplicates an existing statewide service or competes with one. Should a potential component partially duplicate/compete with another statewide service an agreement should be arranged before undertaking the component.  
For example, CARLI might offer a service to academic libraries (within the Toolkit scope) that public, school, and special libraries might also benefit from accessing. If an agreement could be reached with CARLI re non-duplication/competition, then further exploration of the potential Toolkit component could proceed.
- **Key stakeholder acceptance:** Key stakeholders include the project manager (NSLS), ILSDO members, state library staff, key statewide professional

associations and related project leaders, and key innovator libraries/librarians. Key stakeholders will need to publicize the Toolkit, refer librarians to use the Toolkit, and incorporate the development of the Toolkit in ongoing strategic plans.

- **Potential impact to improve library services.** Which of the various components has the greatest potential for improving the quality and impact of library services that will be delivered to residents in the state? Ultimately, a goal of the Toolkit is to facilitate libraries in enhancing or creating services that benefit users.

These criteria can be used to focus discussions and decision making as to what specific components should be included in the Toolkit.

### **Stakeholders in Deciding on Toolkit Components**

A Phase 2 process will be to decide who to involve in the selection of Toolkit component(s) for the first version of the Toolkit to be produced in mid 2007. Potential stakeholders include:

- NSLS,
- ILSDO members,
- The Illinois State Library,
- Key statewide association officials and related project leaders (e.g., CARLI, ILA, ISLMA) and
- Key innovator libraries/librarians (as listed in Appendix D).

The consultants suggest the widest involvement practical as a way to build awareness, acceptance, and buy in for the Toolkit. One approach might be to survey the 160+ innovators (or a sample of them) who the consultants interviewed as to their Toolkit component priorities. Appendix D lists these individuals. Another approach is to establish a Toolkit Working Group to assist in this decision making process. Nonetheless, the list of innovative projects (Appendix E) and possible components for the Toolkit (above) should be widely circulated among the Illinois library community for discussion and feedback.

### **Measurement**

One objective of the study is: identifying measures most helpful in the management of technology resources and services. As the consultants interviewed various participants during Phase I, it became clear that there are two aspects to this objective. The first concerns learning what measures currently are in place that librarians use in the management of technology resources and services.

The findings from the site visits and interviews suggest that there are very few measures in place that are consistently used to evaluate the management of technology resources and services. Many libraries are unable to analyze their annual expenditures to

determine the total amount spent on information technology. Part of the reason for this situation is that there is no clear definition of what is or is not “information technology.” Others identified possible measures that counted types of hardware or equipment present in the library. Still others noted their administration of user surveys that asked users to assess the quality, frequency, or impact of their use of information technology. A number of individuals mentioned measures related to database purchase and use.

In general, however, there is minimal regular programmatic evaluation of the management of technology resources and services based on the information obtained by the consultants. The limited use of evaluation of management of technology resources and services may be as much a function of limited time and staff to dedicate to such activities. The consultants, however, will propose a number of measures and evaluation techniques that would be helpful in the management of technology resources and services in Phase II of the project.

A second aspect of this objective is developing a regular program of evaluation for the Toolkit that includes a number of measures that can provide information to the developers for monitoring and improving the Toolkit as it is developed – as well as summative information such as an annual report of activities, use, impact, etc. Once the goals of the Toolkit are determined the consultants will propose such an evaluation approach and include in that proposal specific measures for gauging the use, types of use, impact, etc. of the Toolkit. The consultants expect that the evaluation approach will include log file analysis techniques as well as surveys and other approaches. These will be developed in Phase II.

### **Role of the Consultants in Phase II**

Phase I of the project required direct and extensive involvement with Illinois librarians on the part of the consultants. Phase II should see the consultants serving more in an advisory role as project participants discuss the nature of the Toolkit, how to develop it, manage it, and sustain it. The experience of the consultants in projects similar to this is that there is an inverse relationship between the level of decision making and direct involvement the consultants make in determining the content of the Toolkit and its development and its actual use – in other words, the more decision making and direct involvement in the Toolkit design by the consultants rather than Illinois librarians, the less use and impact of the Toolkit.

Project managers may wish to consider the development of a working group that is comprised of a cross section of key opinion leaders from the various systems and representing a wide cross-section of librarians in the state. The Toolkit Working Group could make recommendations to project managers and the consultants as to the content and organization of the Toolkit, how it would be managed, and how it would be sustained – among other decisions. Involvement in the project by a group of key opinion leaders during Phase II will contribute significantly to the Toolkit’s acceptance and use.

The role of the consultants in Phase II would be to continue to conduct research to assist a working group (or others) to make decisions about the nature of the Toolkit, its organization, management, and sustainability. The process is best described as the consultants proposing options and the project team making decisions as to how *best* to develop and operate the Toolkit. While the consultants can conduct additional research and facilitate a process for decision making related to the Toolkit, they should not be the ones that make final decisions about the components of the Toolkit, its management, and how best to sustain the effort.

### **Proposed Schedule**

The consultants successfully completed Phase I, fact finding, ahead of the original schedule by finishing the site visits in December rather than by the end of February 2007. Thus, the consultants believe that the original schedule can be revised as follows:

January 2007

*Activities:*

- Consultants and NSLS project managers discuss Phase I report and revise the report and/or this schedule and activities as needed.
- NSLS project managers make final version of Phase I report available to the Illinois library community or selected key stakeholders.
- The NSLS project manager with the advice of the study team creates a “Toolkit Working Group” to assist in the final development of the Toolkit.

February 2007

*Activities:*

- Consultants and Toolkit Working Group assist NSLS to obtain structured input on (1) determining which proposed components will make up the Toolkit, and (2) determining which innovative projects (Appendix E) are most important to be included in the Toolkit.
- Consultants provide NSLS with recommendations for innovative projects and possible components to be included in the Toolkit.
- The NSLS project director interviews and hires web developer, web content manager, and usability expert (one to three individuals).

March - April 2007

*Activities:*

- NSLS web developer begins process of developing the Toolkit website based on requirements determined by NSLS project manager, study team, and Toolkit Working Group.
- Consultants develop measures and evaluation approaches to assess the management of technology services and resource for both the Illinois library community as well as the Toolkit.

- Consultants conduct follow-up phone interviews with key stakeholders and the Toolkit Working Group regarding Toolkit development as appropriate.

May - June 2007

*Activities:*

- Consultants, the NSLS project director, and the Toolkit Working Group continue developing content for the Toolkit.
- Beta version of a web-based Toolkit is publicly available.
- NSLS project manager with involvement from consultants provide a statewide e-learning event to disseminate study findings and strategies to becoming technology leaders. NSLS handles logistics for conducting the event.
- Consultants produce a draft and, after comments, a final report. The report summarizes Phase II activities and includes suggestions for measures and evaluation approaches for the management of information technology services and resources.

June - July 2007

*Activities:*

- NSLS project director in cooperation with system liaisons and the Toolkit Working Group will refine toolkit and work with the web developer, web content manager, and usability expert to improve the Toolkit website.
- User and use statistics of the website will be maintained by host organization.

August – September

*Activity*

- NSLS project director, Toolkit Working Group, system liaisons, and others publicize the availability of the web-based Toolkit (latest) version.

October 2007

*Activity*

- NSLS project director and study team conduct a program describing and demonstrating the Toolkit at the Illinois Library Association. The program is also used to obtain input for the future development of the Toolkit.

The NSLS project manager and the study team may wish to revise and detail this proposed schedule after review and discussion of the Phase I report.

## **COMPLETING THE TOOLKIT**

ILSDO has the opportunity to create a truly revolutionary process that can institutionalize innovation and change, increase an information technology knowledge

base for the library community throughout the state, significantly increase the quality and impact of library services to residents in the state, and develop a service that can serve as a model for other states. These are no small accomplishments. To reach these goals, however, a number of leaders in the library community will need to step forward, participate in Phase II, contribute their knowledge and skills, and demonstrate their commitment and involvement in the project to others.

Phase I of the project has demonstrated the broad range of innovative projects, services, and applications that can be adopted for use in other library settings. Indeed, oftentimes members in a group discussion were so impressed and enthusiastic about an innovator's description of a project, application, or service that they stayed after the meeting to discuss how that innovation might be adapted in *their* library. It is this level of interest and enthusiasm that the completion of the Toolkit can provide statewide. Clearly, there are numerous librarians around the state who indicated significant interest in the project and their desire to experiment with implementing new innovations to improve the overall quality of library services.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

- A. Study Abstract
- B. Identification of and Instructions for Potential Site Visits
- C. Description of Innovative Project Form
- D. List of those Interviewed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit Project
- E. Selected Potential Innovative Projects/Programs/Applications Identified To Date

## Appendix A: Study Abstract

### Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders' Toolkit

Charles R. McClure <imscrm@attglobal.net>

Joe Ryan <jzryan@earthlink.net>

Illinois libraries need ready access to the latest information technology innovations and associated best practices in order to continue to be 21<sup>st</sup> century technology leaders for those they serve including their tech. savvy users. The *Toolkit* will identify, at a single website location, Illinois library-based information technology innovations and best practices for library web-based services, within-library electronic services or associated infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> The *Toolkit* website hopes to provide additional access to practical aids and information that speed the adoption process depending on innovating library partners willingness to share. For example, the Toolkit might include: planning, implementation and policy documents, costs, sources of funding, product evaluations, professional development activities, useful measures and evaluation techniques, etc.

The goal is to increase the speed with which Illinois academic, public and school library managers move from awareness of these 21<sup>st</sup> century tools and techniques to adoption and actual use. These innovations and best practices may improve library web-based services, within-library electronic services or associated infrastructure. The success of the *Toolkit* will depend on the active involvement of a number of Illinois library partners. The study team will work with multi-type library system liaisons to identify libraries making innovative use of new technologies and developing best practices. The team anticipates scheduling two days site visits at each system for system in the November 2006 to February 2007 time frame. Library managers from school, public, and academic libraries in each system will be invited by their regional library system to participate in the study.

To date, the partners in the *Toolkit* project include: the Illinois Library System Director's Organization (ILSDO),<sup>2</sup> comprised of nine multi-type regional library systems,<sup>3</sup> who is developing the *Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders* program. The *Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders' Toolkit* project is coordinated by North Suburban Library System, contact Assistant Director Jan Hayes <jhayes@nsls.info> Assistant Director. The *Toolkit* project has recently funded by an Illinois State Library award using federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. *Toolkit* project consultants are: Charles R. McClure <imscrm@attglobal.net> Information Management Consultant Services, Inc. and Joe Ryan <jzryan@earthlink.net> Ryan Information Management. The consultants recently completed a related project, *Becoming Successfully Networked Public Libraries* which is a part of the just released *2006 Public libraries and the Internet*<sup>4</sup> study funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the American Library Association. The project began in October, 2006 and will be completed by July 2007. If you have a library information technology innovation or associated best practice to share, contact Joe Ryan <jzryan@earthlink.net> with the details.

<sup>1</sup>Infrastructure includes: connections, new technology, intranets, security, funding, staffing, staff training, public training, policies, evaluation and measures, etc.

<sup>2</sup> ILSDO is at <<http://www.ilsdo.org/>>, North Suburban Library system is at <<http://www.nsls.info/>>, the State Library's <<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/>> LSTA funded *Developing a statewide technology toolkit* initiative is at <[http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what\\_we\\_do/lsta2007.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/what_we_do/lsta2007.html)>.

<sup>3</sup> Alliance, DuPage, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln Trail, Metropolitan, North Suburban, Prairie Area, Rolling Prairie, and Shawnee multi-type library systems in Illinois.

<sup>4</sup>*2006 Public libraries and the Internet* <[http://www.ii.fsu.edu/plinternet\\_reports.cfm](http://www.ii.fsu.edu/plinternet_reports.cfm)>.

## Appendix B: Identification of and Instructions for Potential Site Visits

### Identifying 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders Toolkit Project

#### INTRODUCTION

At our meetings last week at ILA with the Research Team; Chuck McClure and Joe Ryan, and System staff, we discussed the scope of the ILSDO grant, Libraries As 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders. We talked about the roles of the System in this grant, identified System Liaisons, and briefly touched on activities included in the visits that each system will host. Here's a summary of the System Roles and a template to use for selecting members to meet with Chuck and Joe. If you have questions, please contact Jan Hayes, 847-353-7130, jhayes@nsls.info or Amanda McKay, 217-352-0047, ext. 209, amckay@lincolntrail.info.

#### System Roles

1. **System Contacts:** Each System will designate a Logistics Liaison *and* a Content Person on staff. One staff member may serve both roles.

**Logistics Liaison** – To handle logistics of Chuck and Joe's visit.  
Organize meetings, lunch, and site visits.  
Help with travel, hotel accommodations, if needed.

**Content Person** – To identify toolkit projects  
Selection Criteria for projects in the toolkit:

- Mix of library types
- Transferability
- Degree to which people are willing to invest time to ensure transferability
- Simple better than complicated
- "Delights" the System Director
- Availability of information and willingness to share it
- Willingness of library to support and encourage staff in tech development.

Include factors that support technology to make it happen.  
Consider: Funding, marketing, training, management style, support continuous learning.

2. **System Visits:** Chuck and Joe will be visiting each system for approximately 1 to 1 ½ days in November or December. Each System needs to identify and invite members to meet with Chuck and Joe for the following activities.
- Have 7 to 9 people on site for the focus groups
  - 2-3 "movers and shakers" for lunch
  - 2-3 site visits

3. **“De-tox” memo:** At end of visit, the System Director sends a one page “de-tox” memo to Chuck and Joe. De-tox includes issues they might have missed and feedback from participants.

**Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders' Toolkit - Template**

**Focus Group**

Invite 7 to 9 members to meet with Chuck and Joe. Timeframe: approximately 2 hours

**Criteria:**

- Mix of all 4 types of libraries.
- Technology Innovators – identify people who see a potential and apply it. Include staff of different levels; those who dream and shape the innovative project and work with the public as well as the IT staff that build it.
- People who have a track record of innovation and development with technology projects.
- People who have the ability to communicate about their technology projects in a way that makes other people want to adapt them.
- Leaders who actively support staff in creating innovative technology projects by providing stable funding, training, and other resources.
- Content person may participate.

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Library</b>	<b>Type of Library</b>	<b>Selection Criteria</b>

## Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Leaders' Toolkit - Template 2

**Lunch** – System Director and 3 to 4 “movers and shakers” meet with Chuck and Joe over lunch.

- Include opinion leaders who see “good” in this project and will spread the word.
- Purpose is to create buy in, awareness of project, PR.

Member Name	Library	Type of Library

**Site Visits** – identify 2 to 3 libraries of different types for Chuck and Joe to visit.

- Opportunity for Chuck and Joe to see a successfully networked library in action.
- Meet staff that have passion for their project and talk about impacts and benefits.
- Listen to people involved or who use the product.

Library Name	Type of Library	Contact Person	Contact Information

**Appendix C: Description of Innovative Project Form  
Improving Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Innovation**

Please take a moment and summarize for us your views on the discussion today. As mentioned, the Toolkit will be a web based portal, one feature of which will be to identify Illinois library innovations and best practices of potential interest to other libraries

- 1. Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Title: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Organization: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ 6: Briefly describe your role in the innovation process: \_\_\_\_\_

- 7-9. What three things, in priority order, would be most useful to you on a web based Toolkit:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you have any ideas for how such a Toolkit should be structured and sustained?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Can you suggest specific innovations or best practices that should be included in the Toolkit?

Innovation	Contact
------------	---------

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have any suggestions about what information to make available about each innovation/best practice identifies and how it should be structured?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. What actions or activities can you suggest to make the Toolkit useful and used by those seeking to improve their libraries electronic resources, services and infrastructure?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14.-16. What three actions, in priority order, are needed to improve the ability of your library to innovate or share innovations with other Illinois libraries?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

For further information, contact: Jan Hayes <jhayes@nsls.info>. Give the completed form to the person who contacted you or mail the form to Joe Ryan, Ryan Information Management, 1049 Ackerman Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210 or fax the form to: (847) 353-7183.

## Appendix C (Continued)

### Illinois Libraries 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology Innovation Description

The Illinois multi-type regional library systems are working to identify innovations or best practices in Illinois academic, public and school library/media center Internet based services (on a library website), within library (only) electronic services or in the infrastructure that supports the Internet or internal electronic services (e.g., training, policy, evaluation). The information about these innovations and best practices will be made available on a web-based toolkit in order speed their adoption by other Illinois libraries. Please complete the following information if you are an innovator, originator of a best practice or know of one.

1. Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Title: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Briefly describe the innovation or best practice: \_\_\_\_\_

7.-10. Rank the innovation on the following criteria:

	Hard		Neutral		Easy
7. Easily transferred	1	2	3	4	5
	Expensive		Reasonable		
Cheap/Free					
8. Expense	1	2	3	4	5
9. Written, web based, documentation, procedures	None		Some		
Available					
Are clear and available	1	2	3	4	5
10. Local contact willing to aid others:	__ Yes	__ No			
11. Who will wish to adopt the innovation?					

12. Why will they wish to adopt?

13. Barriers to adoption with potential solutions?

Barrier	Potential solution

14. (If not infrastructure innovation) describe additional activities (e.g., training, policies, etc.) and hidden costs to consider when adopting this innovation.

15. Do you know of other innovations that should be considered?

Innovation (url)	Contact (Name, e-mail, location)

For further information, contact: Jan Hayes <jhayes@nsls.info>. Give the completed form to the person who contacted you or mail the form to Joe Ryan, Ryan Information Management, 1049 Ackerman Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210 or fax the form to: (847) 353-7183.

**Appendix D: List of those Interviewed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Toolkit Project**

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Ian Baaske <> North Suburban Library System <<http://www.nsls.info/>> 200 West  
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Geogia Bouda <georgiab@bloomingtonlibrary.org> Bloomington Public Library 205  
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7391

Bruce Brigell <bbrigill@skokielibrary.info> Skokie Public Library  
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