

## **A ConnectNY White Paper**



### **The Power of Cooperation: Consortial Collection Development and ConnectNY**

Prepared by:

Beth Bohstedt, Hamilton College  
Julia Courtney, St. Lawrence University  
Laura Mosher, United States Military Academy at West Point  
Raik Zaghloul, Union College

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## **Abstract**

This paper outlines the Connect NY Collection Development Working Group's findings on the topic of collaborative collection development across library consortia, and how these findings can be used to advance ConnectNY's efforts in this area. It includes a literature review, an overview of the history and current state of collection sharing and management among ConnectNY libraries, practices and processes of other consortia engaging in collaborative collection development, and recommendations for establishment of strategies to increase consortial collaboration in collection development across print and electronic resources. ConnectNY already has made significant progress in resource sharing, print retention, and e-book purchases, and is beginning to explore further collaboration in e-resources. This paper recommends that ConnectNY becomes more intentional about its efforts in sharing and purchasing e-resources. It is also recommended that ConnectNY begin a collaborative collection development effort across interested member institutions.

“There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals” (Koyenikan, 2016, p. 120). In the summer of 2015, the leadership and members of CNY (ConnectNY), Inc. formulated their *Strategic Plan 2015-2020* (2015) to map a future for their library consortium that addresses ConnectNY shared values of collaboration, trust, encouragement, empowerment of members and stakeholders, pragmatism, respect, collegiality, and participatory leadership. Strategic Statement 3 of that document affirms that “ConnectNY enhances and expands access to all types of collections: print, digital, and special” (ConnectNY, 2015). That strategic statement led ConnectNY to create Goal 3-1: “Develop a thorough understanding of the breadth, depth, and scope of the collections across ConnectNY and employ strategies to increase access to these collections” (ConnectNY, 2015). Objectives identified under Goal 3-1 concern floating collections across the consortium, and the production of two white papers: one involving consortial collection development and another focusing on special collections and archives.

Working groups were established in October 2015 to address these objectives. The Collection Development Working Group, comprised of the authors of this paper, is one of these entities; the goal of this group, as stated in the Strategic Plan, is to “produce a white paper for consortial collection development and awareness practices for print and e-book formats” (ConnectNY, 2015).

This paper outlines the Collection Development Working Group’s findings on the topic of collaborative collection development across library consortia, and how these findings can be used to advance ConnectNY’s efforts in this area. It includes a literature review; an overview of the history and current state of collection sharing and management among ConnectNY libraries; practices and processes of other consortia engaging in collaborative collection development; and recommendations for establishment of strategies to increase consortial collaboration in collection development across print and electronic resources.

### **Literature Review**

Although libraries have been sharing their materials since the beginning of their existence, what we think of as Interlibrary Loan began in the mid to late 1800s. In its early stages through the late twentieth century, librarians filled out a standardized form and mailed it to a library that owned a copy of the item they were seeking. Since the mid-1980’s, online catalogs enabled this process to be done with far less effort, and today the majority of libraries in the United States, and many across the world, use OCLC’s database to find and request materials from other libraries (Burgett, Haar, & Phillips 2004).

Even before library catalogs were going online, libraries began to think of collaborating not only through resource sharing, but collection development. In 1977 the Illinois Cooperative Collection development subcommittee produced a report that advised libraries to “develop long range acquisition policies to

strengthen the existing collections and to avoid unnecessary duplication” (McClarren, 1978, p. 96).

Several other states and regions were also investigating the idea of growing collections collaboratively. In 1981 Paul Mosher gave the keynote address at the first Collection Management and Development Institute, challenging libraries “to move toward a new vision of collection management, which encompassed a broad range of policy, planning, analysis, and cooperative activities” (Demas & Miller, 2012, p. 171).

Mosher (1985) was also one of the contributors to the Spring/Summer 1985 issue of *Resource Sharing and Information Networks*, which was entirely devoted to “Coordinating Cooperative Collection Development.” Mosher (1985) urged libraries to throw out the idea of self-sufficiency and insisted that the only way libraries could provide research materials for their patrons was by collaboration. Other articles in the aforementioned journal issue focused on some of the initiatives that were underway at that time, including the previously mentioned Illinois program (Krueger, 1985; Wallhaus, 1985; Weech, 1985), as well as projects in New York, Indiana, Colorado, California, and Massachusetts (Bozone & Maltese, 1985; Buzzard, 1985; Farrell, 1985; Neumann, 1985; Stephens, 1985; Weech, 1985).

An attempt to follow up on the success of these early ventures produced little results. In fact, apart from a few white papers and conference presentations, late twentieth century writings on cooperative collection development were meager. Then, in 2004, Burgett, Haar and Phillips published *Collaborative Collection Development (CCD): A Practical Guide for Your Library*, outlining the history of CCD, discussing challenges, outlining fundamentals, considering the economics, and offering practical suggestions in promotion and assessment. The authors state that to be effective, cooperating libraries must cooperate in three areas: bibliographic access, interlibrary loan and collection development.

Several collaborations have been especially successful in this cooperation. A few of them, including the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium and the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana, are outlined in depth in the next section. Others include the Orbis Cascade Alliance, which identified shared staff as a key area for collaboration, and technical services as a promising area of initial investigation (Fountain, 2016). OhioLINK (2016) also sees collaboration in technical services as a key to success. The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) participates in several initiatives surrounding digital scholarship, including a collection of 30,000 documents from the Civil War era (Burger, 2014) and “Deeply Rooted,” a new partnership with the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), a collection of primary source research materials related to agrarian life in the southeastern United States (Burger & Shedd, 2016).

In 2005, the VALE New Jersey academic library consortium formed the Cooperative Collection Management (CCM) Committee to explore new methods of collection assessment, serials management, e-book collections development, and the pursuit of a shared virtual catalog (Mallery & Theus, 2012). Library consortia, mostly regionally-based, play an invaluable role in negotiating favorable terms for their members for licensed electronic content (Walker, 2015). National organizations such as ALA and OCLC have committees and resources on cooperative collection development, although almost all of their resources and reports are several years old (“CODES/STARS Cooperative Collection Development Committee,” n.d.; “Collaborative Collection Management,” 2015). Through its Coordinated Collection Development Aid (CCDA), New York’s Empire State Library Network provides funds to institutions that meet certain conditions; this is administered by the Empire State Library Network Councils. The purpose of the program is to enhance academic library collections, thereby strengthening regional collections that are available via resource sharing. Some of the councils, such as the Capital District Library Council, provide additional coordination and support in coordinating collections and monitoring subject area responsibilities (“CDLC Coordinated Collection Development,” 2016).

In spite of these efforts, much of the literature about collaboration and collections continues to center on sharing our resources, and not on actively growing collections in a collaborative manner. Demas and Miller (2012) argue that this is because sharing in the development of collections is much more complex than simply lending and borrowing; they assert that the challenges are more about management, not collection development, and that shared ownership requires a large amount of trust among the collaborators. Libraries must make irreversible decisions about discarding materials accumulated over the past century (or centuries, depending on the library), using limited resources and systems that are complicated and imperfect. “At stake are the relationships that have been cultivated with faculty and scholars, the credibility of cultural heritage institutions as stewards of the printed record, and the long term survival of scholarship in its original form” (Demas & Miller, p. 175). This implies the need for transparency and engagement with the scholarly community, within each individual institution, and among the consortial institutions. This idea of trust was especially highlighted in Deborah Jakubs’ (2015) recent article in *Library Management*, as evidenced by her title, “Trust Me: The Keys to Success in Cooperative Collections Ventures.” She analyzed three collaborative programs, reviewed methods used and lessons learned, and offered suggestions for large-scale and small-scale partnerships.

Several authors underscore the challenges and imperatives libraries must consider in developing shared collections. Terence Huwe (2015) looked at three examples that fall outside the usual definition of library collections: Google Books, HathiTrust, and a searchable database of wages and health-care documents of the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. He iterates that libraries undertaking cooperative collection development can learn at least

three lessons from these efforts: first, our need to understand that our users are stakeholders and require a place at the table; second, content curation is now a collaborative venture; and third, collaboration increases the value of our efforts. Huwe (2015) feels that collaborative collection development should start within our own working groups and organizational cultures. Walker (2015) noted this also; in comparing cooperative collection development in Germany and the United States, he found that regional collaborations among small groups of libraries have a greater history of success.

It is imperative to look at cooperative collection development within the larger framework of the changes in scholarly communications. Several authors underscored the necessity of writing formal collection management plans for the individual institutions as well as the consortia. Such a plan should include the roles that local collections, remotely hosted digital files, and document delivery services will play in providing information. Policies should not only describe the strategies and criteria for the collaboration, but also lay out the risks and benefits (Demas & Miller, 2012; Fyffe, 2002; Jakubs, 2015).

This quote from Demas and Miller (2012) nicely sums up the overview of current literature:

The very meaning of collection is undergoing fundamental changes, prompting questions about how core elements of collection management must be re-envisioned in a collaborative context. How does an individual institution responsibly manage its collection to participate as a node in a regional or national collection? How will consortiums shape coherent collections from the contributions of diverse member libraries? How will libraries maintain the public's trust, while simultaneously acknowledging that libraries cannot, in fact, keep everything? Libraries must negotiate these and other questions in an environment that will require unprecedented levels of coordination among organizations (p. 169).

## **History and Current State of ConnectNY Collection Sharing and Development**

### **Print Resources: History**

ConnectNY began with five private academic libraries in 2003 and has grown steadily to now include 18 diverse member libraries across New York State. In June 2007 the ConnectNY Collection Development Committee was reactivated after being on hiatus for two years. The Committee's new charge from the CNY directors was to explore cooperation in developing collections of all types through

coordinated acquisitions, applications for grants, and other joint ventures that enhance resources available to the Consortium.

In June 2008 the CNY Directors determined more concrete information about their joint holdings was needed:

- to establish a benchmark date for the size, age, scope of the ConnectNY collection;
- to identify uniqueness and duplication in the holdings of ConnectNY libraries;
- to determine the strengths of the current ConnectNY collection and to use this data to allow members with similar subject strengths to collaborate via coordinated collection development projects; and,
- to determine weak areas of the current ConnectNY collection, in order to broaden and deepen the overall collection for the benefit of ConnectNY user.

In performing such an analysis of the overall ConnectNY holdings, any group analysis tool employed may be useful to working groups in addition to the Collection Development Committee; for example, the Executive Committee may be interested in using it when recruiting new institutions for membership in ConnectNY.

Through their research and by conferring with one another, the Collection Development Committee was led to the clear conclusion that it would be a very useful move to contract a 2-year group subscription to WorldCat Collection Analysis (WCA). This subscription led to the collection of data covering the ConnectNY collections, and provided insight that helped the committee understand the collections in greater depth. From WCA findings and discussions it was concluded that:

...it might be best for ConnectNY institutions to handle cooperative development in small groups of libraries with similar strengths and purchasing patterns, as opposed to fill gaps within the union collection as a whole. Attempts to create overarching, across-the-board cooperative ventures for broad subject areas proved to be unwieldy and unmanageable due to varying institutional needs, especially in the subject areas where there are standard texts that all libraries might want to own and there is too much material being published in any one area to logically divide collecting responsibilities (Gille & Smith, 2009, p. 2-3).

At the 2009 Annual Summit Meeting of the ConnectNY Collection Development Committee, reports were made on two attempts by ConnectNY Libraries to work on coordinated collection development. One, a proposal only, was for Bard, St. Lawrence and Union to work on collaboration in their Film Studies collection development because they had similar annual purchasing ranges and each had

overlap with any one of the others of about 250 items. They proposed using YBP (though Union didn't use YBP) because YBP's GobiTween software package (contained features that made using a joint account for certain actions attractive. Nothing came of this proposal.

The other coordinated program was instituted at least for a few months with a fair degree of success. That one featured an effort between Vassar and Colgate to coordinate their collection development in Asian Studies, Middle East Studies, Women's Studies and Medieval Studies. They set up a separate account with YBP, shared jointly, for titles published by Routledge, Ashgate, Brill and their sub imprints. Starting in February 2009 and running through the end of May they viewed 215 records and collectively purchased 65 titles, or 30% of the viewed titles.

The results of this exercise were informative, and in line with observations in the literature related to CCD. Using YBP as a vendor simplified their process and they felt that they gained the ability to purchase more unique titles and make them available to the consortium than they might otherwise have done. Because they chose not to place orders directly with YBP, they kept track of purchases outside the software, which was a bit more work, but they felt it was worth it. In concluding their report on this effort, Vassar and Colgate indicated that based on their experience, such an approach could be effective if widened to other consortial members, but were not sanguine about the likelihood of libraries that were not using YBP to opt to do so. It was noted that many ConnectNY libraries might wait to see if other members would be first to purchase pricey titles on their own, and that could lead to a general lack of scholarly titles overall. After 2009, the Collection Development Committee once again languished, and has remained inactive. At least one ConnectNY member dropped its WCA subscription since this project; although the data is useful, the cost of the subscription is prohibitive if there is no initiative for which it will be used.

### **Print Resources: Current State**

The 18 libraries in ConnectNY have a wide variety of collections. There were a total of over 7 million titles that were included in a more recent collections analysis conducted by SCS. The collections analyzed for individual libraries ranged in size from Medaille's 18,660 titles to Colgate's 394,082. Thirty-seven percent of the titles analyzed were unique to an individual library. As would be expected, in general, the libraries with the most titles also hold a greater percentage of unique titles with only 45 titles held by all 18 libraries.

Current access to these collections by ConnectNY libraries is accomplished through a shared catalog. In March 2016, the shared catalog included 8,693,964 bibliographic records, with 4,051,790 of these being unique titles. When patrons cannot find a particular book in their own institution's catalog, they can search the shared catalog, and if the item is found, request the book directly, without

needing to go through ILL. The requests, unmediated by the patron's library, are processed by the lending library, and then delivered through the Empire Library Delivery courier service. In 2015 about 30,000 books were shared among ConnectNY libraries in this fashion.

### **Other Collaborations**

In addition to explorations in resource sharing and collaboration in the area of print, ConnectNY members, individually or in groups, are currently engaged in several collaborative efforts for sharing and purchasing print and electronic resources, including e-books, research databases, and digital libraries.

WALDO (Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization) is a membership organization supporting the procurement and administration of electronic information services for libraries since 1982. WALDO serves libraries in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Vermont. Participating libraries include 600+ academic libraries, 325+ public libraries, and 150+ hospital libraries. Several members of ConnectNY take advantage of WALDO e-resources pricing, either through individual agreements or through their regional library council.

LYRASIS, a non-profit membership organization established in 2009, "partners with member libraries, archives, museums and other cultural heritage organizations to create, access and manage information with an emphasis on digital content, while building and sustaining collaboration, enhancing operations and technology, and increasing buying power. [LYRASIS collaborates] with members to enrich, expand, acquire, digitize, host, support, manage and share their important, and often unique, collections" (<https://www.lyrasis.org/about/Pages/default.aspx>). Several members of ConnectNY are also members of LYRASIS.

"The Center for Research Libraries (CRL) is an international consortium of university, college, and independent research libraries. Founded in 1949, CRL supports original research and inspired teaching in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences by preserving and making available to scholars a wealth of rare and uncommon primary source materials from all world regions. CRL is based in Chicago, Illinois, and is governed by a Board of Directors drawn from the library, research and higher education communities" (<http://www.crl.edu/about>). CRL includes more than 200 college, university, and independent research libraries in the U.S., Canada, India, Germany and Hong Kong. CRL supports the sharing of digitized collections and physical materials, along with electronic resource sharing. Several members of ConnectNY are members of CRL and have access to the holdings of CRL through the ConnectNY shared catalog. Patrons from the CRL member libraries have the ability to place requests for CRL materials through the shared catalog.

“The Oberlin Group is an organization comprised of selective, top-ranked liberal arts colleges in the United States...whose primary purpose is to provide a forum for member directors and staff to discuss issues of common concern, to share accomplishments and information on best practices in library operations and services, and to help members anticipate and adapt to the challenges of college library administration and liberal arts education. The Oberlin Group focuses on library and scholarly publishing issues and related services that support the liberal arts missions. Cooperative interlibrary lending agreements, consortia contracts with vendors, and support for open access initiatives are areas of recent activities. There are currently 80 members of the Oberlin Group”, including seven ConnectNY libraries (<http://www.oberlingroup.org/about-oberlin-group>)

New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium is a group of academic institutions within NY State that “facilitates collaboration among its member institutions in fulfilling their educational missions and serving the public good. Through the sharing of expertise and resources, the Consortium enhances options for students, faculty, and staff, while reducing colleges’ individual and collective operating and capital costs” (<http://newyork6.org/>) . All members of NY Six (Colgate University, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Skidmore College, St. Lawrence University, and Union College) are members of ConnectNY.

## **E-books**

Bart Harloe, Patricia Hults, and Adam Traub (2015) contributed an article to a recent issue of the *Journal of Library Administration*, in which they describe ConnectNY’s ebooks programs and conclude “user driven programs at the consortial level have the potential to produce a very good return on investment” (p. 259). ConnectNY has undertaken several e-book projects, some of which have been discontinued, and others that are ongoing. Discontinued projects include the Coutts MyLibrary Pilot, which led to the purchase of 643 titles, triggered by 2 or 3 uses, and the EBL multiplier model that included short-term loans and purchases. Active ConnectNY e-book projects are an EBL Limited Loan model, which includes short-term loans and triggers to purchase; and JSTOR, with purchases triggered after specified views and downloads. More information can be found under the E-books section on ConnectNY’s staff page at <http://connectny.org/for-staff/>. The Ebook Working Group is currently evaluating these projects and will offer analysis and recommendations in a separate report.

## **Analysis of Successful Consortial Collection Development**

### **Print and E-book Collaborative Ventures**

The first portion of this section focuses on the areas of print and e-book collaborative efforts outside ConnectNY, and draws most deeply on the

experiences and current state of two consortia: Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium (PALCI) and Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI). The detailed information included herein is the result of telephone conversations with representatives of both of these consortia (Jill Morris, personal communication, December 21, 2015; Kirsten Leonard, personal communication, December 9, 2015). The balance of the information profiled was publicly available on the respective websites for the Boston Library Consortium (BLC), Central Iowa Collaborative Collections Initiative (CI-CCI) and Colorado Alliance (CA) and is not necessarily presented at the same depth as for PALCI and PALNI. The following table provides an at-a-glance summary of the consortia reviewed:

**Table 1.** State of the Art CCD in Five Library Consortia: A Comparison

	<b>PALNI</b>	<b>PALCI</b>	<b>BLC</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>CI-CCI</b>
<b># of Members</b>	23 Academic	68 Academic	17	16	6
<b>Shared Discovery method</b>	Yes - Shared WorldCat	No – not all libraries on same ILS; 55 members use “EZ- Borrow” – patrons can log in and request items	No	Yes – 44 participants in and out of the Alliance use “Prospector”	No
<b>Print Initiatives</b>	Unsure	Distributed print archive; small scale, and likely will not expand program	No	Shared print archive, created through an MOU	Primary focus so far is on print; PAN (Print Archive Network presentation available on website
<b>E-book Initiatives</b>	Still exploring	DDA – 3 programs, varying participation among	9 member libraries have an e- book working	DDA e-book pilot w/9 member libraries; e- book	Nothing yet – task force and e- book value statement prepared

		members	group; article in Chron. of Higher Ed in 2012	packages negotiated on behalf of members	
<b>E-Resource Initiatives</b>	Unclear	Unclear	WALDO	Unclear	Unclear
<b>Collaborative Collection Development (CCD) status</b>	Affinity group (6 seminars w/in PALNI) do some CCD; working with ALI (Academic Libraries of Indiana) on an exploratory CCD Group	Beginning process to talk about CCD	Yes – to a degree (subject level for chemistry, music); details on website	No policy or activities	Shared print retention and CCD; presentation from Charleston Conference; all focused on PRINT.

Some conclusions which can be drawn about current CCD efforts based on the above “State of the Art” CCD information include:

- CNY is not too far behind the curve on considering CCD – a few other consortia may have formal shared print programs, but few have fully developed CCDs that span print, e-books, and e-resources.
- As implied in the point above, there are three “focus areas” in which CCD efforts can be applied:
  - Print (shared print archives across member libraries; print materials distributed across member libraries with special interest areas).
  - E-books (especially DDA programs; CNY has already ventured into this area).
  - E-resources, such as shared subscriptions to databases and digital collections; it is unclear if any group except BLC has a consortium-level program of shared databases/digital assets. This is certainly popular in the public library world, and several members of CNY already participate in some shared e-resource

purchases/subscriptions (as discussed above in the section on the History and Current State of CNY Collection Sharing and Development). Throughout the review of literature and examination of current consortial CCD efforts, it is clear that in general, the smaller the consortium or group, and the more similar the members' interest are, the easier it is to begin some type of collaboration.

- Other than CI-CCI, any reviewed consortia developing plans for CCD are considering those efforts for e-books and e-resources, not print. (An exception might be the affinity group of seminaries within PALNI; there was no specific information obtained on their focus.)
- Of the consortia examined, BLC is the one that has progressed the farthest in pursuit of CCD, albeit in specific limited subject areas.

### **Collaborations for Other Electronic Resources**

The balance of this section focuses on electronic resources other than e-books; i.e., research databases and digital collections to which libraries traditionally gain access through subscription agreements and contracts. As a state-of-the-art summary of cooperative e-resource collection and management, what follows is a close look at VIVA, the Virtual Library of Virginia. VIVA is the consortium of the nonprofit academic libraries within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Members include all 39 of Virginia's state-assisted colleges and universities, as well as 32 private, nonprofit institutions and the Library of Virginia. VIVA provides member libraries (and non-members, as licensing agreements allow) access to at least 50 research databases and digital library products from almost 30 different vendors.

VIVA consists of a steering committee that oversees the entire organization, along with three standing committees: Collections, Outreach, and Resources Sharing. The Collections Committee is the focus of this summary. This committee investigates products, recommends licensing or renewal, and maintains vendor contacts for VIVA electronic databases and journals.

As found on the VIVA website at

<http://www.vivalib.org/aboutviva/organizationalplan.html>, the mission of the Collections Committee is:

- To evaluate and recommend resources to the Steering Committee that meet the needs of faculty, students, and researchers at VIVA member libraries and that meet selection criteria for VIVA cooperative collection development.
- To recommend collection development priorities to the Steering Committee on an annual basis.

- To work as a support team with the designated VIVA purchasing agent and the VIVA Director for RFP's and product negotiations.
- To organize and offer training sessions for VIVA librarians and staff when new VIVA products are introduced or when major interface changes occur in an existing product.
- For each VIVA-supported product, to identify someone from a VIVA institution who is willing to serve on a continuing basis as the primary contact for information to and from the vendor, and who will, as appropriate, send necessary information to the VIVA listserv about the product.
- To assist VIVA in optimizing investments by analyzing access, distribution, and use of collections across the VIVA libraries.

Membership (13 voting; 1 ex officio and non-voting):

- 13 members selected by the directors of their representative groups. Representation should include 6 public doctoral schools, 3 public comprehensive schools, 2 public two-year schools, and 2 independent colleges or universities.
- Membership composition will reflect expertise in a broad range of subjects: collection development and management, scholarly publishing, acquisitions practices, user experience, technology, collection analysis, and assessment.

On the Collection Committee's webpage within the larger VIVA website (see <http://www.vivalib.org/committees/collections/index.php>), there is an excellent paper that sets forth a summary of the history and working of the Collections Committee. Although it's a bit dated at this point (written in 1998), it is a snapshot of how VIVA started working as a consortium in the area of e-resources, and describes some key aspects of that work that could provide basic guidelines for any consortium as they venture into the realm of cooperative e-resource procurement. Beyond general guidelines for examining and obtaining access to e-resources, the paper also described the working process of the committee as they go about purchasing and deploying selected resources (Metz, 1998).

### **Synthesis and Recommendations for Consortial Collection Development with ConnectNY**

Building on the previous discussion, this section provides a synthesis of the topic of collaborative collection development by providing a definition and basics, then listing advantages, challenges, and best practices. This framework provides the basis for specific recommendations for the ConnectNY consortium.

#### **Framework**

In the second edition of her book, *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, Peggy Johnson (2009) quotes Joseph J. Branin's (1991) working definition of cooperative collection development: "The sharing of responsibilities

among two or more libraries for the process of acquiring materials, developing collections, and managing the growth and maintenance of collections in a user-beneficial and cost-beneficial way” (p. 82). This goes beyond “resource sharing,” which currently is taken to mean the sharing of materials - both returnables such as print monographs, and non-returnables such as journal articles - through ILL, and is understood to involve an over-arching planning strategy that libraries can employ to cooperatively provide materials and information to their patrons.

Collaborating in development of collections removes the assumption of the status quo, where, over time, each academic library builds their own representative collection through current “best practices.” This involves no coordination or collaborative action, but can be expensive for individual libraries.

Cooperation is instead synergistic; different libraries within a group take responsibility for collecting different materials in accordance with a coordinated and collaborative plan. This implies an intentional set of actions, with shared costs, written agreements, and distributed responsibilities for collection development. A given library’s collection can be divided into “core” and “peripheral” materials, assigning peripheral materials to different member libraries. Libraries within the group take responsibility for collecting in areas that also meet local needs and reflect local strengths. In this way a commitment by one library to a particular subject area doesn’t obligate other members to give up their local support of that area. In the words of David H. Stam (1983), as quoted by Johnson (2009): “Resource sharing does not remove in any way the obligation for any institution to fulfill its local mission” (p. 21).

Collaborating in collection development can be approached in several different ways and can take multiple forms. Libraries can pool their funds for purchases, or can individually spend a set amount. The collections can be stored in each library, or placed in a central location. Examples of collections, both print and electronic, contained in central locations that are shared by member institutions are CRL, JSTOR and Hathi Trust. There are various ways these collections can be distributed: through a dedicated courier service, via expedited ILL, through traditional delivery, or through member-only electronic access. The flip side of collaborative collection development is coordinated preservation, through shared storage or retention agreements, such as the print retention/preservation project that ConnectNY has already initiated. This allows libraries to thoughtfully weed parts of their collections, knowing that another institution in the consortia will still hold specific items. Collaborations could also include projects such as preservation of microfilm or mass digitization of special collections. The Working Group for ConnectNY Goal 3-1 (Sharing and marketing special collections and archives across ConnectNY via physical loan, digitization, and digital repository) is evaluating the possibilities in this area.

The advantages to cooperative collection development are numerous. The most obvious advantage is monetary savings. By reducing duplication of collections,

member libraries are able to leverage available money not only in purchasing, but also through sharing of automation and staff time in cataloging and collection management. This is especially apparent when acquiring expensive and lesser-used items.

However, there are other, perhaps less obvious, benefits. A cooperative approach can close collection gaps across members of a consortia. Using a shared catalog or discovery tool can bring increased visibility among libraries, and consequent increased use of materials across the consortium.

Of course, there are also challenges to be overcome when considering collaborative collection development. Even though monetary savings can be significant, there are often start-up costs that offset the initial savings. Institutions might hesitate to invest in a venture that won't show a cost benefit immediately. Poorly thought-out choices made at the beginning of the venture, such as decisions on resource vendors, discovery systems, access, and delivery methods can doom such an enterprise before it has a chance to succeed.

The primary challenges, though, center on the very nature of a consortia, which is a group of individual institutions, each with their own resources and mission. Collaborating by necessity decreases local autonomy. There may be a real or perceived inequality of commitment, funding, and effort. Libraries may feel that local needs could take a back seat to the consortia. Traditionally, librarians have placed a high value on ownership of materials, with self-sufficiency paramount. This professional pride can lead to development of competing collections. Combined with this, there can be a lack of trust among members; there is the fear that one institution's patrons will suffer if others fail to hold up their end of the bargain. Additionally, it is not only the librarians who may be resistant; an institution's faculty and administration may have the view that a comprehensive local library collection represents academic status and prestige.

Study of the literature and successful collaborations reveal some "best practices" that may alleviate some or all of these concerns. These guidelines include administration, decision-making, and ongoing processes and procedures. While the standards and strategies listed here primarily refer to collaboration in the area of additional purchases, they may also apply to retention agreements or resource sharing arrangements. Many of these are practices ConnectNY already employs.

To succeed, a collaborative effort must have effective governance and excellent communication. Before an agreement can be made, there must be a high level of trust between institutions and each library's collection librarians. Without this vital element, the venture is doomed before it starts. The governing body must decide on philosophical guidelines that will be used to guide negotiations and purchases, agreed upon by the consortium, striking a balance between local and group needs. If certain types of scholarship diffusion models appeal to the group as whole (e.g., professional or trade databases vs. monster aggregators),

purchases can reflect that, as long as they include resources that meet patron needs. In resource selection librarians have "...a desire to be not only a player but in a small way a shaper of emerging non-commercial modes of scholarly and scientific communication" (Metz, 1998, p. 3-4).

The initial decisions made by the group will, in a large part, determine its success. First there must be a clear understanding of local holdings, and a way to compare and assess holdings across the consortium. This may call for shared integrated library systems or patron log-in to a shared catalog showing all participating libraries' collections. Discovery of all available materials must be convenient and user-friendly. It was noted that purchasing was most convenient when all participants use same vendor for materials; in some instances, a few participants may need to switch to the shared vendor in order to participate. Of course, in selecting vendors, pricing is one of the most, if not the most, important factor. Access to requested materials must be prompt, dependable and convenient, whether through electronic means or physical delivery.

When building print collections collaboratively, start small; limit the number of participating institutions and focus on a distinct and focused subject area popular with the entire group. Make all selections in close partnership with technical staff, and include user services staff as the process proceeds. Again, ensure that the selection librarians know and trust each other's experience and knowledge.

Serve a broad mixture of clientele; cover the basic needs first, then specialize to the degree warranted by participants. Do not mandate purchases that individual libraries don't see as fitting for their collection. Ensure that new resources do not duplicate existing resources.

Don't expect perfection; look for early and small successes. Don't let the desire for the "perfect" arrangement get in the way of obtaining resources that will meet the majority of needs.

## **Recommendations**

As noted, ConnectNY institutions already collaborate in resource sharing, a shared print agreement, and joint e-book purchasing. In considering the above guidelines for Collaborative Collection Development, and the examples considered earlier in this paper, the working group offers these possible next steps for ConnectNY:

Identify the focus areas in which ConnectNY should apply CCD exploration efforts. Institutions should be polled about their collection strategies and level of interest in CCD initiatives. Factors to take into account include:

- Print Collections:

- ConnectNY has a process to discover and share print materials. Another working group is currently evaluating its effectiveness and efficiency.
  - Examine current levels of print sharing through INN-Reach, and collection overlap (SCS Analysis); see what the data can reveal about print collection usage/sharing.
  - Eleven of the current ConnectNY libraries participate in the Shared Print Archive program, and seven members in the EAST consortium. This is a level of shared collection management, but is not shared collection development.
  - Understand that for some institutions (West Point, for example) participation may be complicated due to regulatory issues under which they must operate; different focus areas (print, e-resources) may have unique restrictions and complications.
  - Is there a desire for print CCD among our institutions? If so, **it is strongly recommended that a small group of ConnectNY libraries take part in a coordinating print collecting pilot, and that a working group should be formed soon to implement this.** ConnectNY should further analyze and build on the successes of other consortia and take a closer look at the 2009 Vassar/Colgate program, in order to move forward deliberately to establish print CCD programs.
- E-books:
    - For analysis, recommendations and suggestions, refer to the working group currently managing ConnectNY's e-book projects. Their review and recommendations should be paired with this white paper to help plan future CCD efforts across ConnectNY.
  - E-resources (databases, electronic journals, primary source collections)
    - This seems like a focus area ripe for review and examination. **It is recommended that CNY form a working group to explore possibilities for consortial leveraging in the purchase of non-ebook electronic resources.**
    - Compare e-resource use across ConnectNY; determine overlap, potential incorporation of additional collaborators and vendors, and desire for consortial participation in e-resource CCD.
    - Aim for a rough balance among disciplines for selection and coverage in e-resources.
    - Explore possible group purchases and/or consortial negotiations with database vendors.

## **Budget**

The only initial cost to the above recommendations would be for the staff time involved in the two working groups on coordinated collection development and joint purchasing of electronic resources. However, if either of these groups recommend implementing a project, there would, of course, be budget implications. Given that the recommendation of the coordinated collection development pilot be among a small group of libraries, it is assumed that the cost of this would be included in the acquisitions budgets of the libraries involved. If the pilot were successful, there should be a reduction in acquisitions cost to each of those participating libraries.

If the electronic resources group is formed and recommends consortial purchases, the budget implications become more complicated. Decisions would need to be made concerning the source and process of acquisitions. Would purchases come out of CNY funds, or would each library contribute a portion of the cost from their resources budget? These decisions can be made by CNY based on recommendations from that working group. Again, for the project to be a success, the end result would be an overall reduction in the cost of electronic resources for participating libraries.

## **Conclusion**

ConnectNY already has made significant progress in resource sharing, print retention, and e-book purchases, and is beginning to explore further collaboration in e-resources. While avoiding duplicating existing initiatives, ConnectNY should explore new ways to collaborate. This group recommends that ConnectNY becomes more intentional about its efforts in sharing and purchasing e-resources through the formation a working group that will explore possibilities for consortial leveraging in the purchase of non-ebook electronic resources. The group also recommends that ConnectNY begin a collaborative collection development effort across interested member institutions.

Libraries can no longer be self-sufficient, and must rely on the resources of others. Albert Einstein noted, “Nothing truly valuable can be achieved except by the unselfish cooperation of many individuals” (Einstein, 2003). From new collaborations CNY can realize the importance of starting small, striking a balance between local and group needs, and most of all, fostering a high level of trust among participating members. ConnectNY libraries understand these qualities and can build on them to create successful models for actively managing and developing collections across member institutions.

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### **Websites of Interest**

- BLC Boston Library Consortium. <https://blc.org>
- Central Iowa - Collaborative Collections Initiative: <https://ci-cci.org/>
- PALCI Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. <http://www.palci.org>
- PALNI Private Academic Library Network of Indiana. <http://www.palni.org>
- VIVA: The Virtual Library of Virginia. <http://www.vivalib.org/>