

# AAU ARL Research Libraries Project: Update Report

by John Vaughn, AAU and [Duane Webster](#), ARL

---

## Overview

Last October 15, the joint AAU ARL Research Libraries Steering Committee, co-chaired by Myles Brand, President of Indiana University and Jerry Campbell, University Librarian and Dean of Libraries, University of Southern California, met in Boulder, Colorado, in conjunction with the AAU fall membership meeting and reviewed the work of both the Intellectual Property Task Force and the ARL Research Collections Committee. Three related, but distinct, initiatives were on the agenda: (1) a "call for proposals" for electronic scholarly publishing; (2) a comprehensive university license for the reproduction of copyrighted materials; and (3) a program to build a distributed collection of global research resources to ensure North American access to foreign publications. The AAU presidents and chancellors were briefed in Boulder on these initiatives as well as the steering committee recommendations for their further development. Later the same week, these projects and the steering committee's deliberations were reviewed and discussed by ARL directors during the [October 17-20 ARL Membership Meeting](#).

The outcome of these several discussions was agreement to move forward on development of the concept of an electronic scholarly publishing initiative and the development of a global resources plan. On the subject of a university license for reproduction of copyrighted materials, there was agreement that the terms of reference and pre-conditions for such discussions needed further definition. The following review presents the status of the three major projects being carried out under the guidance of the steering committee.

## Electronic Scholarly Publishing Program

In the spring of 1995, the AAU ARL Steering Committee asked the Intellectual Property Task Force to define an entrepreneurial venture in electronic publishing responsive to the needs and interests of the academic and scholarly community. While the assignment was made with an eye to developing cost-based electronic publishing in the sciences, the steering committee saw only advantages to broadening the initiative to encompass the humanities and social sciences as well.

The Task Force's response was to draft a "call for proposals" for an Electronic Scholarly Publishing (ESP) Program that encourages the establishment of electronic information resources of significant value to scholars in a chosen field or subfield; those resources would be expected to operate at lower than the equivalent costs of printed works and to maximize the flow and convenient use of scholarly material. To encourage ventures that meet these goals, the Task Force has tentatively suggested offering between five and eight grants, in the range of \$75,000 to \$150,000 each, as seed money to cover start-up costs.

The steering committee responded very positively to the ESP Program proposal and made several suggestions to the Intellectual Property Task Force in order to advance the concept. In simple terms, the vision for this project is to create an opportunity for a set of universities to act in concert to support electronic, scholarly communications that are simultaneously more cost effective than the current print

mode, richer in their support of scholarship, and more accessible to students, researchers, and scholars. Among the objectives already embedded in the ESP proposal or identified in discussions about the proposal are the following:

- foster a competitive market for scholarly publishing by providing realistic alternatives to prevailing commercial publishing options;
- develop policies for intellectual property management emphasizing broad and easy distribution and reuse of material;
- encourage innovative applications of available information technology to enrich and expand available means for distributing research and scholarship;
- assure that new channels of scholarly communication sustain quality requirements and contribute to the promotion and tenure processes; and
- the Task Force is continuing to develop the concept and hopes to submit a proposal to AAU and ARL for formal consideration later this year.

## **Discussions with the Copyright Clearance Center**

The AAU ARL Intellectual Property Task Force also developed a draft set of "guiding principles" for negotiating with the [Copyright Clearance Center \(CCC\)](#) for a comprehensive university license for the reproduction of copyrighted materials beyond that permitted under the fair use provision of the copyright law. The Task Force began in May to explore such a possibility with the CCC and the principles were developed as an initial response. The judgment of the Steering Committee about this type of arrangement with CCC was interested and guarded. The ARL membership discussions concurred. The pros and cons of the concept of university-wide or comprehensive license for the reproduction of copyrighted materials were recognized (for example, see [ARL 181, pages 6-7](#)). A consensus emerged that additional information is needed before the steering committee would put the initiative before the AAU or ARL members to consider endorsement.

The Intellectual Property Task Force was asked to pursue several additional steps including a revision of the draft "guiding principles" document to reflect the point of view of research universities' long-term goals, objectives, and needs, including for example, that such a license encompass electronic resources. The Task Force was also asked to investigate the university experience in Canada and Australia, where similar agreements are in place.

## **The Global Research Resources Program**

The Steering Committee reviewed a report prepared by the ARL Research Collections Committee on the scaling up of the current demonstration projects that were launched to test the viability of a distributed, networked, coordinated collection management program for foreign research resources. The document *Options for and Issues in Scaling up the AAU ARL Demonstration Projects* is posted to the ARL Gopher ([arl.cni.org/collection\\_development](http://arl.cni.org/collection_development)) [document no longer available]; the issues addressed in the report include:

- designing a mechanism for funding the global resources program;
- assuring the availability of the electronic infrastructure;

- anticipating and addressing copyright obstacles;
- establishing a management structure for the global resources program;
- redesigning information access and delivery services;
- evaluating the current efforts to pilot test the global resources concept; and
- securing support of area studies faculty and librarians in the concept of distributed collections.

The Steering Committee agreed with the need to evaluate progress and experience of the projects to address the issues raised in the report. They urged, however, that this evaluation be pursued simultaneously with expansions of current projects to advance more quickly toward the ultimate goal of a North American distributed collection of global resources. There was a judgment that the vision of the program, especially the hoped-for benefits, will be more obvious to everyone when the demonstration projects increase access to a larger universe of resources.

This winter the ARL Research Collections Committee is developing a plan to expand the demonstration projects by discipline, geography, and types of materials and to engage larger numbers of university constituencies in discussions around this set of issues. Elements addressed in the draft tactical plan include:

- the creation of a Global Resources Program with a federated management structure, and hosted by ARL in cooperation with AAU;
- appointment of a full-time Coordinator for a three-year term with responsibilities for continued development, growth and improvement of the program;
- the design of an educational effort to inform campus faculty about the Global Resources Program and to build consensus on the proposed strategies for addressing their needs for global resources;
- a proposal for a strategic investment by AAU and ARL institutions to fund program start-up and operation for 1996-1998; and
- establishment of an advisory committee made up of provosts and other academic administrators from AAU and ARL institutions to guide the development of the program.

In addition, in December, ARL reached a breakthrough agreement with OCLC to assist the projects with technical capabilities to streamline the article request process for network users and for libraries. As a first step, OCLC agreed to work with ARL's North American Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery ([NAILDD](#)) Project and the [Latin Americanist Project](#) to develop a standards-based linkage from the table of contents database hosted at the University of Texas, Latin Americanist Network Information Center (UT-LANIC). Lessons from this application will be applied to other databases, other ILL/DD messaging systems, and a wider set of libraries. OCLC is prepared to support the application of the software package to as many as a dozen different databases. This development has the potential for streamlining the process of access for users and dramatically altering the costs of operating the distributed collections concept.

## **Next Steps**

The AAU ARL Research Libraries Steering Committee plays an active role in the intergration of the three separate projects and their ramifications for the way universities conduct their business. Even if a greater proportion of scholarly communications come under university control, universities may find it useful to develop new contractual arrangements with components of the commercial sector -- thus, the importance of the discussions on licensing. To the extent that electronic publishing permits greater inter-institutional cooperation, the cooperative, networked collections management arrangements developed by the Global Research Resources program can serve as prototypes for broader resource sharing. The impact of these new arrangements will likely affect how universities recognize and reward scholarship through tenure and promotion criteria and other institutional actions. For example, see "Electronics and the Dim Future of the University," by Eli M. Noam (*Science*, vol. 270, 13 October 1995, pp. 247-249) for one view of the impact of the electronic environment on the future of the university.

The steering committee will meet again in April presenting another opportunity to review progress toward the ambitious agenda pursued by the two associations.

©*ARL: A Bimonthly Newsletter of Research Library Issues and Actions* 184 (February 1996).  
Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries.

---

[Table of Contents for Issue 184](#) | [Other OSAP Articles](#) | [ARL Newsletter Home](#)

---



[ARL Home](#)

© Association of Research Libraries, Washington, DC

*Web Design by Kim Maxwell*

*Maintained by [ARL Web Administrator](#)*

**Last Modified:** June 22, 2002