

CRRA Membership Dues and Cost Sharing Model Task Force

Charge and Roster

October 6, 2010

Sponsor: CRRA Board of Directors

Start Date: October 2010

Proposed End Date: March 2011 for submission to the CRRA Board of Directors for consideration at its March 2011 meeting

This charge convenes a CRRA Membership Dues and Cost Sharing Model Task Force to develop a dues or cost sharing model to replace the current system of dues set at specific amounts for full and associate members respectively. The Task Force is requested to develop a dues or cost sharing model that will enable the CRRA to carry out its mission. The Task Force will submit its recommended dues structure to the CRRA Board of Directors for review and approval. We are deeply appreciative of your service as the financial health of the CRRA is critical to developing and sustaining the Catholic portal.

Chair: Janice Welburn, Marquette

Members: Joe Lucia, Villanova

Evelyn Minnick, St. Joseph's University

Bob Seal, Loyola University

Need for Membership Dues and Cost Sharing Task Force

At the annual membership meeting at the Lauinger Library, Georgetown University, June 29, 2010, one participant asked whether smaller libraries will have sufficient financial capacity to join the CRRA. This raises an important question as membership dues provide the funds for sustaining the portal. Although we will develop a business plan for sustaining the portal that includes other sources of revenue, membership dues will continue to be a major source of revenue in the business plan. It is critical, however, that dues do not prevent institutions from becoming members. It is only through the membership that the CRRA can achieve its mission. Membership dues or cost shares must make it possible for the CRRA to invite institutions not only with content, expertise and interest but also with a broad range of financial capacity to join in growing and sustaining this scholarly resource. We ask that you develop a new model for the purpose of creating an environment supportive of both membership growth and content contribution, and helping to ensure a sustainable future of long-term positive financial health of the CRRA.

Task Force activities

Key documents and background from Board discussions of direct relevancy are listed below. The Task Force may wish as well to consult other members. We encourage the Task Force to examine the dues or cost sharing principles and models used in other similar kinds of not-for-profit library consortia or alliances, including but not limited to the Center for Research Libraries and the MetaArchive Cooperative, to explore their applicability to the CRRA. We ask the Task Force to identify and describe the relevance of principles, such as predictability, transparency, equity, and/or other principles, to a new cost sharing or dues model. We would like the Task

Force to consider if, or to what extent, the terminology of cost sharing (which apportions the costs of an organization and/or activity among participants) might convey to current and potential participants that the purpose of membership “dues” is to develop and sustain a scholarly resource (the Catholic portal) that can be done only through the collaboration of members. Last, we would like the Task Force to recommend three options for setting membership dues or apportioning cost shares to members.

Key documents and background

- The *Principles of Membership in the Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA)*, established by the Board, March 2010), identify the purpose and criteria for membership. <https://www.catholicresearch.net/admin/docs/Bylaws%20and%20Membership/> or <https://www.catholicresearch.net/admin/docs/Bylaws%20and%20Membership/Principles%20of%20Membership%20in%20the%20CRRA.pdf>
- Section II (Organization and Membership) of the Bylaws describes the three membership categories – founding, full and limited – and defines dues and fees. “Dues are defined as the standard assessment paid by members to support central services...” <https://www.catholicresearch.net/admin/docs/Bylaws%20and%20Membership/Bylaws%2002-04-08.pdf>
- In February, March and April 2009, the Board discussed dues in the context of the question “what can the CRRA/Catholic Portal do in enabling smaller entities with limited financial resources but with unique and important content to participate.” The following points were made.
 - Dues set at specific amounts will too high for some and too low for others.
 - A sliding fee scale is capacity-based and could allow some to pay more while others pay less than the current specified amounts
 - Flexibility could lead to more affordability.
 - A tiered approach with multiple levels of fees might be easier than a sliding scale but retain the advantages of a sliding scale.
 - One membership category with governance for all should be considered.
 - Limited members could be defined as “content contributors” who would agree to certain obligations in maintaining their data and pay an affordable fee. All participants – including content contributors – should pay something. The need for sustainability is recognized as is the concept that all participants should pay something. Some allowances could be made in hardship or other situations.
- The Center for Research libraries offers one version of a capacity-based cost sharing model. Each member pays an amount set at a percent of its acquisition budget. <http://www.crl.edu/about/governance/member-library-cost-shares>
- The MetaArchive Cooperative offers membership in two distinct tiers relating to the goals and needs of the Members. The membership types and fees are described in Section 4 (Membership types and fees) of Appendix B: Membership Agreement, which is part of the Membership Charter. See <http://metaarchive.org/institutions> And scroll down to click on Membership Agreement.