

2016-03-17 Trip Report -- Duraspace Board Meeting and Summit

Tuesday – Duraspace Board Meeting, March 15

The board discussed the budget and the financial performance of the VIVO Project and Duraspace services. VIVO will change how it approaches membership (see below). Duraspace services has already changed FTE assignments to significantly lower its costs. Open board positions were discussed. The board then discussed the merger and the status of due diligence. Robert Miller then joined the meeting in person, along with additional Lyrasis board members via webEx. Additional discussion of the potential merger followed.

Wednesday – Summit Day 1, March 16

Laura Wood of Tufts, opened by the Summit by thanking Duraspace for another fine year and for its leadership and introduced the concept of the merger as one of complimentary strengths. [debra hanken kurtz](#) followed, along with Robert Miller of Lyrasis, discussing the merger and taking questions. The projects then each presented their current work and their plans for the coming year. [Dean B. Krafft](#) and [Mike Conlon](#) presented for VIVO. [Their presentation can be found in Figshare here.](#)

Following the presentations, the tables were tasked as breakouts to consider two questions: 1) What should be preserved in a possible merger? and 2) what should be pursued in a possible merger? A vigorous conversation ensued. Following the breakout, [Tyler Walters](#) of Virginia Tech gave a keynote talk on the work of SHARE in assembling research events from around the world. VIVO can provide events to SHARE through the SHARE Harvester for VIVO. The day ended with a cocktail reception. Many members of the VIVO Leadership Group and Steering Group were in attendance.

Thursday – Summit Day 2, March 17

The day began before the Summit with a meeting of the VIVO and Fedora attendees to discuss the possibility of VIVO/Fedora integration. Three use cases emerged: 1) A faculty member uses a Fedora front-end (Hydra-based or other) to enter a work into a repository. The work is then represented on the faculty member's profile automatically with links to the content in the repository. 2) The faculty member uses VIVO to add a work to their profile. The work is automatically stored in Fedora and represented on the VIVO profile of the faculty member. 3) A faculty member leaves the university. How can the faculty member's profile be archived in a repository?

The Summit then began with a recap of the table breakout discussions of the previous day. How will the merger benefit the projects? Presumably through Lyrasis' financial strength, reach (4,000 user sites) and operational best practices. Will project autonomy be preserved? Yes, Duraspace is a leader in community-supported open source software for the academy. The merger is intended to strengthen this position. How will branding/naming be addressed in the merger? This is under active discussion. The goal is to strengthen all activities of the resulting organization.

The projects then each held breakouts, each with two sessions. The first VIVO session was chaired by [Dean B. Krafft](#) and addressed the nature of VIVO, as an application specifically for representing scholarship, and supporting research discovery, and then as a more general semantic web data management tool, capable of hosting other domain specific ontologies and supporting research programs in other areas. The group discussed progress that has been made in supporting sites implementing VIVO. New documentation, better advice, improved interest groups, and other enhancements have led to an improvement in newer sites being able to implement VIVO with less time and effort than in the past. VIVO is still missing important features to provide a compelling adoption story. What should VIVO be able to do in the future? If you could assume that VIVO was loaded with quality data, how would you answer the question "I wish VIVO could"

The second breakout focused on issues related to VIVO membership. [Jonathan Markow](#) will chair a membership task force, focused on increasing the number of VIVO members. [Robert Cartolano](#) of Columbia, a VIVO Gold Member, offered perspectives on membership from the Fedora project. Several years ago, Fedora needed a significant new approach to membership. Over the years, Fedora tripled its membership. Rob believes VIVO is in a stronger position to begin membership growth. The task force will organize a membership campaign for 2016.

Final Thoughts

This was my third Duraspace Summit meeting. It is one of the best meetings of the year – lots of good idea, lots of good people. The Summit is a members meeting. If you are a VIVO member, please plan to attend the Summit next year. If you are not a member, please consider becoming a member, and plan to attend the Summit. The Summit is chance to discuss the future of scholarship and of VIVO, and to meet and discuss these issues with other VIVO project. I hope to see you at the Summit next year.