Annual Meeting of CDNL, 12 August 2010

Discussion document for Agenda item 4.

Information note and proposal regarding 'National Libraries Global' (NLG)

Purpose:

1. The purpose of this note is to:
   a) Refer CDNL members to the 'Review of National Libraries Global' (NLG) which was carried out following a proposal from ICADS and agreement by CDNL in August 2009;
   b) Refer CDNL members to the 'Response' to the Review, from the team at the National Library of New Zealand which developed NLG;
   c) Refer CDNL members to the 'Note from the NLNZ to the Advisory Board of ICADS', including further information relevant to the actual or potential use of NLG by national libraries;
   d) Propose that CDNL decide whether further action should be taken.

Current situation:

2. The 'Review of National Libraries Global', by Bill Oldroyd (Technical Consultant to The European Library), dated May 2010, has been posted on the CDNL website, and will be available at the Annual Meeting on 12 August.

3. The following two documents have also been posted on the CDNL website and will be available at the Annual Meeting:
   - the 'National Library of New Zealand Response to the Review of National Libraries Global' (by Steve Knight, 14 July 2010)
   - the covering 'Note from the NLNZ to the Advisory Board of ICADS' (15 July 2010) for consideration at the meeting of the Advisory Board on Tuesday 10 August 2010 in Gothenburg.

4. The key points in the Note from the NLNZ to ICADS are as follows:
   a) The architecture and functionality of NLG are of high quality.
   b) NLG is complementary to other digital library programmes and services: while it shares some of their approaches and solutions, it may also be considered suitable for different markets with different strategic objectives.
   c) Users of NLG can be reasonably confident that it will be maintained.
   d) Recent experience shows that NLG can be adapted collectively by national libraries for particular purposes.

e) NLG has potential for further development and extension, although it is recognised that extensions would need to be done in collaboration.

5. It is clear that NLG has the potential to be one instrument for the realisation of the CDNL 'Vision for the Global Digital Library', and that it has the potential to be adapted to use by libraries which may have varying levels of need and capability but which still require a state-of-the-art system.

Comment from the Secretariat:

6. Given that CDNL in 2009 asked for a technical review of NLG, and has now received the report of that review, it is appropriate for CDNL to consider what further action (if any) should be taken.

7. The Note from the NLNZ asks the Advisory Board of ICADS to communicate its views immediately to CDNL for consideration in Gothenburg on 12 August.

8. The NLNZ 'Response' refers to the possibility of a decision "as to whether NLG should be supported as an ICADS/CDNL project". The implications of such a statement have not yet been worked out, but they could include some form of agreement on resourcing. CDNL has no budget, but there are precedents for the resourcing of CDNL projects on the basis of voluntary action.

9. In the expectation of receiving a statement from the Advisory Board of ICADS, in Gothenburg, the Chair of CDNL requests that members of CDNL consider the information given in the present note and the related documents (as noted in paragraphs 2 and 3 above), and reflect on what further action it might be appropriate for CDNL to take.

10. Accordingly, the Secretariat has circulated the present note and related documents to members of CDNL, for discussion under Agenda item 4.

Proposal

11. The Secretariat proposes that, at the conclusion of the discussion, CDNL members indicate whether they agree:
    a) To simply note the information provided and take no further action; *or:*
    b) To endorse the further collaborative development of NLG as a CDNL project; *and, if they do agree to such endorsement:*
    c) To consider sympathetically any future request for support for the resourcing of such collaborative development, on a voluntary basis, if the national libraries most likely to benefit are not fully able to meet such costs themselves.

W. Roberts
Executive Secretary of CDNL