



HOSTING A STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLE

A key stakeholder roundtable is a good way to share what you have learned about digital humanities resources on your campus, and to discuss institutional priorities, current organizational overlaps and gaps, and possible steps forward. You will know best who should be included in such a meeting, but some roles that tend to have a stake in this question include:

- **Senior administrators** (e.g., chief technology or information officers, deans for research, deans for arts and humanities), who are sensitive to the challenges around digital scholarship and may be able to speak to and potentially guide the strategic direction of the institution.
- **Heads of support and research units** (e.g., head of the library, head of IT services, head of a data research center, head of academic technology), whose staff members work directly with faculty and whose units may benefit from faculty grants or find it challenging to meet faculty demand. They—and members of their staff, if invited—may be able to articulate what activity looks like on the ground, such as whether support work is organized in an intentional and manageable way or whether additional staff or strategic thinking is needed.
- **Faculty project leaders**, who can explain whether it is clear to them both what the institution is able or willing to help them with and whether there are any expectations attached to an offer of support. Meetings that include faculty project leaders can be extremely productive, as well as a means to surface faculty perceptions of the current systems in place, and to voice concerns and constructive suggestions for ways to improve upon it. This too can be valuable information for administrators to hear.

Determining the best composition for this group will be based on your goals for the meeting. If you are aiming for a candid discussion of campus strategy, you may want to focus on getting unit heads and senior level administrators to participate, those who are in a position to make changes in the ways they work together.

Setting the agenda

Your agenda should be tailored to fit your aims for the meeting, but here is a good general approach that you can customize as needed. We have created a basic slide deck that offers some useful talking points and is fully customizable with your own data: Stakeholder Roundtable: Presentation Template <http://sr.ithaka.org/research-publications/sustainability-implementation-toolkit/stakeholder-roundtable-presentation-template.pptx>.

1. Introduction and aims of the meeting

Start by having all participants introduce themselves and the role they currently play in the digital project ecosystem. Clearly define the aims of the meeting, which may be something quite simple (“to share the research findings and get key stakeholders from different units to discuss this issue together”) or more ambitious (“to identify strengths and weaknesses in the current system and to consider what an ideal campus-wide system ought to include”).

2. Research findings: What our faculty are doing today

Opening the meeting by sharing the results of your faculty survey and landscape assessment provides a good starting point for discussion. Among the things to discuss with the group include:

- Does the data gathered on faculty engagement and practices match your expectations?
- What might explain any results you find surprising?
- What sorts of projects are faculty actually building, and which look likely to need further support?
- What issues are of greatest concern to faculty?

3. What support looks like on campus

Exploring the areas of overlap and gaps—as expressed by faculty practitioners—offers a useful starting point for examining the components of the current system.

- Are faculty seeking support where you thought they would?
- Are there some units that seem to clearly support certain stages of activity?
- Do there appear to be overlaps in activity that could be consolidated or better coordinated?
 - Are there any obvious gaps, where no unit seems to “own” a certain stage of activity?
 - Does the library primarily envision itself as providing support to faculty members or partnering with them on projects? What about IT and other units? How does each of the units decide which projects to support?

4. Institutional approaches: motivations and models

Finally, once the group has reviewed and discussed the current landscape, it can be productive to open up for a broader discussion about what institutional priorities should drive this strategy, what sort of institutional strategy might best fit those goals. What is the campus’s chief motivation in providing support to faculty: A commitment to supporting research and experimentation? A commitment to carefully curating resources?

- What organizational model best supports that motivation for support?
- How will we provide the assets needed to implement that strategy and make it last?
- What will be the markers of a successful institutional strategy: Broader awareness of digital scholarship? Greater demand for support? Attracting more grant money?

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