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UNM LAKH Participation in International Symposium on Research, Publication and Open Access to Scientific Production, Archiving, and Dissemination of Knowledge

IBICT: Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia
22-25 August, 2006 in Brasília, Brazil

Purpose

Johann van Reenen and Cynthia Radding, co-PI's of the UNM Latin America Knowledge Harvester (LAKH) project, funded by the university and the U.S. Department of Education Title VI TICFIA program¹, traveled to Brasília August 21-25, in order to (1) consolidate a working agreement with IBICT as a full partner in the LAKH project and (2) to deliver two formal presentations at the IBICT Seminário and Simpósio on the work on UNM in the Open Archives Initiative for electronic publishing and access to knowledge, and specifically on the objectives and accomplishments to date of LAKH in the first funding year of its operation.

Objectives

Secure a good working relationship with the IBICT director and technical team in order to harvest their comprehensive database of doctoral theses produced in Brazil; gain visibility for our project among the participating scholars and institutions in the combined seminar and symposium. Our goals covered dissemination of the content of our work, identifying potential new institutional partners for LAKH, and communicating with leading developers and promoters of OAI compliant software to facilitate archiving, retrieval, and publication of research in a wide spectrum of fields and disciplines.

Outcomes

Cynthia Radding and Johann van Reenen met with IBICT administrative and technical personnel Monday August 21, 2006, at the IBICT Brasília offices. They presented the scope of the Institute's mandate and policies as a federal institution in Brazil, charged with articulating the science and technology information sector, dissemination of information to support technological innovation, popular diffusion of scientific knowledge, and development of research and educational resources related to science and technology. Radding and van Reenen, in turn, presented an overview of LAKH, working from the live web site (<http://lakh.unm.edu>), emphasizing the reciprocal nature of our collaborative work with Latin American institutions for gathering, "harvesting," and disseminating multi-disciplinary research in different fields. This meeting culminated a series of telephone conversations and email communications that had begun in late Spring 2006, and concluded with a firm commitment by IBICT to join LAKH as a full partner in our project. The written Convênio (Agreement) is under consideration by the

¹ Technological Innovation and Collaboration for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA). Johann van Reenen is Assistant Dean of UNM University Libraries for Research and Instruction Services, and Cynthia Radding is Director of UNM Latin American and Iberian Institute Professor of History.

higher administration of the Ministry of Science and Technology, but the IBICT directors assured us on several occasions that the document is on its way for signature. The document is now signed by UNM Acting President David Harris and Provost Reed Dasenbrock. IBICT had requested a formal agreement, but they are willing to begin the work of sharing our institutional repositories now and, in fact, they have announced their collaboration with UNM on their website (<http://www.ibict.br>).

IBICT is the principal institutional repository for doctoral dissertations and other original research conducted in Brazil; the Institute uses the same open access software as UNM, Dspace. IBICT publishes an excellent journal both in print and on-line, *Ciência e Tecnologia* – in which Johann van Reenen has a recently published article – and it constitutes a well-established vehicle for scientific production and dissemination, closely linked to the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (the equivalent of the National Science Foundation in the U.S.). During the seminar and symposium, the Director of IBICT, Dr. Emir Suaiden, spoke with Johann van Reenen and Cynthia Radding several times to reiterate his pleasure that we had participated in the symposium and to confirm the decision to have IBICT collaborate with LAKH.

The Seminário and Simpósio, conducted consecutively over 4 days (August 22-25), brought together a total of 53 panelists and attracted an audience of over 200 persons for each panel, consisting largely of secondary and post-secondary librarians and educators. Johann van Reenen presented an illustrated talk on the advances in Open Archives usage internationally over the last three years, in the Symposium Panel on “Open Archives for Scientific Communication.” Cynthia Radding presented an explanation and promotion of the LAKH project, accompanied with power point text in Portuguese and illustrations, in the panel devoted to “Open Access for Institutional Repositories.” Several persons in the audience approached her at the end of the session to express their interest in joining the Harvester as partners: in particular, Dr. Ana Pavani of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Rio de Janeiro and Dr. Sueli Mara Ferreira of the Universidade de São Paulo – two of the leading universities in Brazil. We spoke with each of them separately, as well as the Brazilian representative of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME) located in São Paulo, to begin to establish our common interests and an agenda for working together.

Significance

UNM is one of only two U.S. universities represented in the IBICT seminar and symposium (the other was Virginia Tech, represented by Edward Fox, a leading proponent of open archives access and publication). Through the leadership demonstrated by University Libraries in the Open Access Movement and the innovative uses of technology in the LAKH project, UNM has achieved international visibility in what is becoming a leading edge approach to best practices in scholarly publication. Provost Reed Dasenbrock articulated these same principles in his Faculty Letter of August 28, 2006. UNM’s participation in these events, through LAII and University Libraries, has both consolidated and extended its network of institutional and collegial relations in Latin America.

University of New Mexico representatives Johann van Reenen and Cynthia Radding meet with IBICT executives in Brasília, Monday August 21, 2006, to discuss the partnership between IBICT and UNM in the Latin American Knowledge Harvester.



Persons shown: Dr. Hélio Kuramoto, IBICT Coordinator of Special Projects; Esther Hoorn, University of Groningen, Netherlands; Cynthia Radding and Johann van Reene, UNM.

LAKH, The Latin American Knowledge Harvester, LAKH is a University of New Mexico web-based service, leading users to access and retrieve content from digitized Latin American multidisciplinary collections. The UNM Harvester uses Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH). The project is funded by the US Department of Education, Title VI, through the Technological Innovation and Collaboration for Foreign Information Access program, and the following UNM institutions: the Office of the Vice-president for Research and Economic Development, the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI), and the University Libraries. LAKH represents a strong collaboration across different units and departments at UNM, including the Health Sciences Center, University Libraries, LAI, ISTE, and the Consortium of the Americas for Interdisciplinary Science (CAIS). Current Latin American partners in the LAKH project are IBICT and the Universidade de Campinas in Brazil, Universidad de Guadalajara in Mexico, and the Universidad Simón Bolívar in Venezuela.