

Research Library Issues

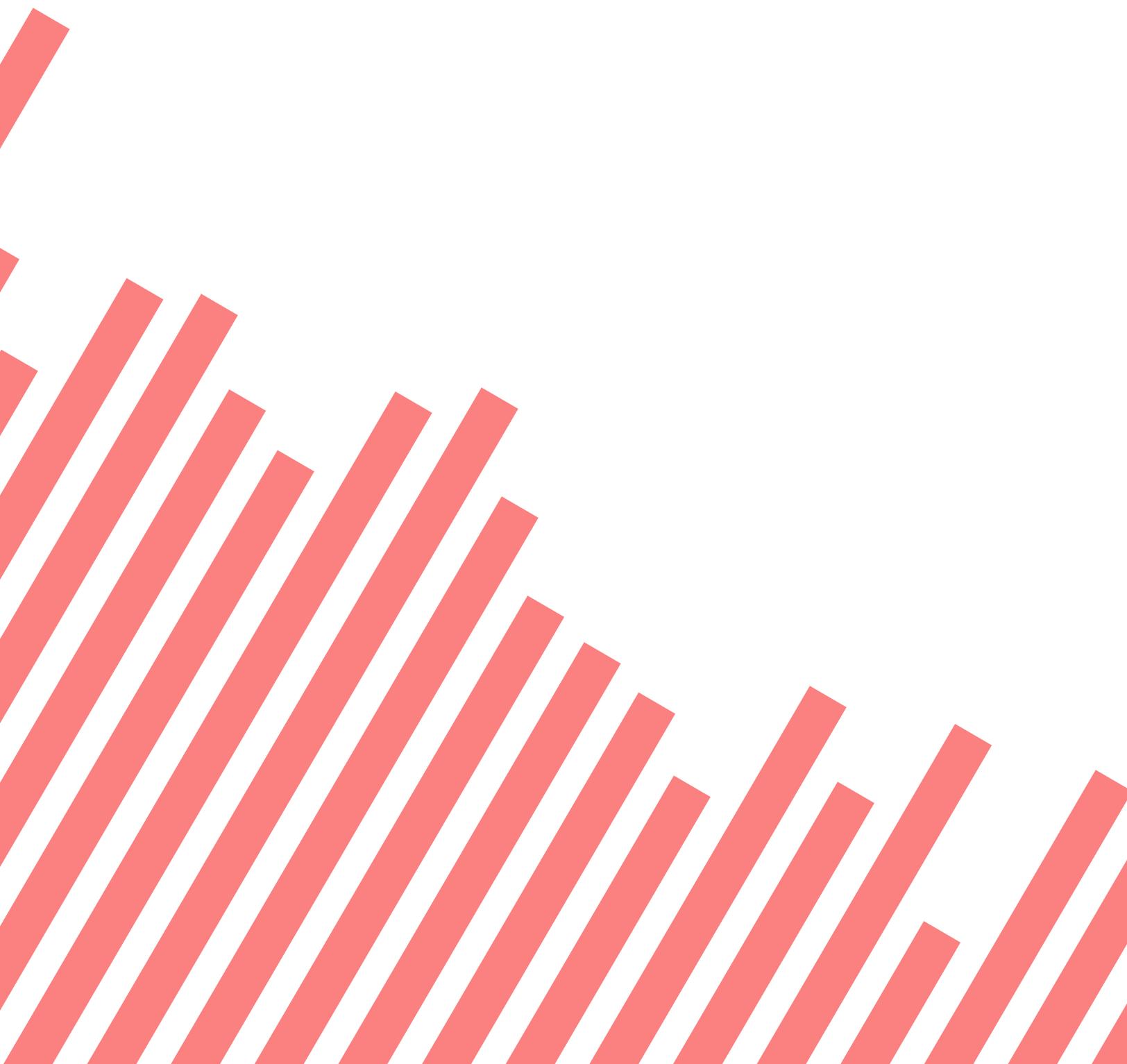
RLI 300:

GLAM Collaboration

Opportunities and Challenges

2020

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Introduction

Mary Lee Kennedy, Executive Director, Association of Research Libraries

This time of accentuated interdependence and acute awareness of a historical moment calls on galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAMs) to respond together and to lead forward. Memory institutions are unique trusted stewards of time. When humanity experiences a global event such as the current pandemic, our institutions are grounded in the moment, and in their role throughout history told and yet to come. In this issue of *Research Library Issues* we offer three articles that reflect on the value of GLAM collaborations as well as the voices of institutional leaders looking at the opportunities for even greater collaboration as we work through history in the making.

Eerily familiar today, the article by Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada Emeritus, looks back at a time of economic uncertainty when GLAM collaboration was essential to creating a new narrative for GLAM institutions, and to quantifying their economic contribution to

society. In 2014 the Canadian federal government announced a large investment in cultural institutions, which would become the largest investment in cultural institutions in Canadian history between 2015 and 2020. No funding was included for the GLAM community. In response, the Library and Archives Canada and the Canadian Museums Association held a summit and there the national collaboration began. 2020 represents the end of the first phase of collective work of the Canadian GLAM sector and a time in which the sector can build on the progress they made to change the narrative and demonstrate their economic value. Both goals seem incredibly relevant today.

“This time of accentuated interdependence and acute awareness of a historical moment calls on galleries, libraries, archives, and museums to respond together and to lead forward.”

Jill Deupi, Chuck Eckman, and Christina Larson’s article also begins in 2015, with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s support for identifying and addressing opportunities for deep library-museum collaboration within institutions of higher learning. Following a summit, the University of Miami responded to and received funding for CREATE,¹ an interdisciplinary initiative designed to catalyze and support innovative pedagogies, exhibitions, research, and public programs that hold the university’s library and art museum collections at their core. Their article highlights what is achievable through collaborations on paper conservation, information discovery, exhibitions that transcend object sharing, and digital initiatives. The authors provide insights on how they continue to collaborate during the current pandemic and the opportunities they are exploring to continue to develop, expand, and refine the collaborative efforts to date.

The third article reflects conversations on GLAM collaborations under COVID-19 conditions and what that might mean for the future. Mark Sweeney and Jacob Nadal of the Library of Congress, Kurt Graham of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, and Trevor Dawes of the University of Delaware Libraries and Museums share how the institutions they lead are building on the strength of past and existing collaborations, and how the challenges of the pandemic may accelerate strategic opportunities. This article focuses our attention on a variety of collaboration types and what they mean, and invites us to move boldly forward embracing our potential synergies.

More than ever it is essential that we share what we have experienced, open up our conversations to imagine the possibilities, and celebrate our shared mission. I hope this issue of *Research Library Issues* provides you with inspiration for what lies ahead.

Endnote

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To cite this article: Mary Lee Kennedy. “Introduction.” *Research Library Issues*, no. 300 (2020): 3–5. <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.300.1>.

If You Want to Go Far, Go Together: The Collaboration among the GLAM Community in Canada (2016–2019)

Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada Emeritus

1. Sunny Ways—Really?

In November 2014, a new, center-left federal government was unexpectedly elected in Canada. That election raised great hopes in the cultural community, as the newly elected Liberal Party had made reinvesting in culture one of its most significant election promises. Indeed, upon its formation, the new government kept its promise by announcing investments in culture that proved to be the largest in recent Canadian history: \$1.9 billion over the next five years (2015–2020).¹

However, memory institutions or GLAMs—galleries, libraries, archives, and museums—quickly became disillusioned: none of the new funding would be directed to them. It was going to be concentrated exclusively on direct assistance to artists (via the Canada Council) and on the government agencies responsible for putting culture “on screens”: CBC/Radio-Canada, the public broadcaster; Telefilm Canada; and the National Film Board. Moreover, to make its new directions even clearer, in the months that followed, the work initiated by the new government to provide Canada with a *Policy Framework* called *Creative Canada* completely ignored the realities of memory institutions. The final *Policy Framework* document released at the end of September 2017 did not include a single measure targeting GLAMs, and only 1 of the 38 pages of the report was devoted to them, mentioning the role they play “in preserving, interpreting and promoting Canada’s culture.”² Memory institutions—particularly libraries and archives—were presented as repositories for works created elsewhere and by others, with no significant impact on the development of cultural production.

2. Taking It to the Streets: The Ottawa Summit (2016)

Recognizing this new landscape, the heads of two of the most representative institutions of the Canadian GLAM community—Library and Archives Canada and the Canadian Museums Association—decided to hold a public event to raise awareness among their own stakeholders, as well as among decision-makers in the public and private sectors, about the relevance and importance of GLAM in the so-called cultural ecosystem. At this point in time, despite some significant local initiatives, notably in Victoria, British Columbia, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Canadian GLAM group as a whole had not yet worked together in a systematic and structured way. It should also be noted that, in the United States, initiatives supported by the Mellon Foundation had begun to emerge in previous years, but these were focused solely on collaboration among GLAMs in academia, whereas the Canadian public event was intended to encompass the entire sector.

It was felt by the organizers that an effective way to mark the territory would be to hold a major conference called a GLAM Summit, and to hold it in Ottawa, the country's capital, in order to give it maximum visibility. Thus, on December 6, 2016, on a cold Canadian winter's day, nearly 300 participants and some 30 speakers, a good number of them from outside Canada, met for the summit whose theme was: "Taking It to the Streets: Summit on the Value of Libraries, Archives and Museums in a Changing World."

The summit organizers asked this group to consider some tough questions, such as:

- In a society where digital access is everywhere, why should we build new libraries?
- Or, since virtual museums offer culture and history to people across the country and around the world—who needs the expense of bricks and mortar?
- And what about archives—can't you get everything you need from their own platforms, or those of Ancestry or Findmypast?

For those of us who spend countless hours with works of art, artifacts, books and archives, these questions might sound ridiculous. Yet, they are being asked on a daily basis, despite the fact that more people than ever are visiting galleries, libraries, archives, and museums. This counter-intuitive fact led the British Library to conclude in a recent document that:

The more screen-based our lives, it seems, the greater the perceived value of real human encounters and physical artefacts: activity in each realm feeds interest in the other.³

Following are some of the conclusions the summit participants reached in December 2016. First of all, and this was no surprise, GLAMs are not unfamiliar at all with the use of information technology and they have a very strong presence “on screens.” In fact, GLAMs are very often among the early adopters of new technologies. Participants were treated to many real-life examples of successful innovation in the GLAM community due to technology. But they were also reminded that technology is a source of both challenges and opportunities. On the challenges side, there is the need to find the resources to acquire technology, and to hire and train the people who know how to make the most of it. On the opportunities side, technology allows us to reach our users where they are, which is mostly online. But perhaps the

“There is a magic to these spaces: memory institutions, such as libraries and archives, represent not only safety, but freedom as well. Freedom to think and to question, to create and, of course, to disagree. And this freedom is at the heart of democratic societies.”

greatest challenge—which is also the greatest opportunity—comes from the fact that the more people use the web to access our collections, the greater their appetite for visiting our actual physical spaces. Essentially, memory institutions cannot de-invest in their in-person services in order to invest in their virtual services. GLAMs have to do both.

Another conclusion reached at the Ottawa Summit was that memory institutions are increasingly playing new roles, despite the fact that the popular image of GLAMs remains that of institutions consisting of book and archive shelves and exhibition rooms. Examples of these new roles include providing comfortable spaces for people to gather, welcoming new immigrants and refugees, even providing high-speed internet access to those who need it. The importance of public spaces, whether a library or a gallery or a museum, is now only beginning to be widely understood and, throughout the world, millions of dollars are being invested in buildings that invite people in. Sometimes these spaces are called urban living rooms, or third spaces. There is a magic to these spaces: memory institutions, such as libraries and archives, represent not only safety, but freedom as well. Freedom to think and to question, to create and, of course, to disagree. And this freedom is at the heart of democratic societies.

During the Ottawa Summit, we also determined that one of the most misunderstood roles for GLAM institutions is the link between their activities and economic development. The need to “prove our value” is one subject that comes up a lot. We were reminded that a study made for the British Library by the firm Oxford Economics in 2013,⁴ did estimate that for every £1 of public funding the British Library receives annually, £4 and 90 pence was generated for the UK economy; and that five-to-one ratio proved to be similar in Canada, according to recent studies undertaken for the Toronto Public Library and the Ottawa Public Library.⁵ Unfortunately, while this value is well known by memory institutions themselves, it is virtually unknown by the political, economic, and media elites who spend very little time in GLAMs—especially libraries and archives—those who prefer to purchase rather than to borrow, and those whose economic status means that free services are not really necessary. Cultural consumption for this group means something very different from that of many library users. And yet these are often the people whom we need to reach in order to demonstrate our value.

The last conclusion from the December 2016 Summit that is worthy of being shared is about the role of memory institutions in the creative ecosystem.

During the summit, it was made clear that this role could not be reduced to the simple function

of collecting and preserving works. GLAMs have an important role to play at the very beginning of the creative chain, providing inspiration and material to artists of all disciplines—not just to authors and poets, but also to digital artists, musicians, painters, and directors. This is an area of rapid growth for memory institutions, until recently often seen as the final resting place for creative work, as opposed to a source of inspiration at the start of the creative process. Participants were surprised to learn just how much artists and creators rely on GLAMs. They were shown how material from GLAMs' collections takes on a second life through the creative interpretation of artists from all disciplines. Indeed, thanks to the summit, GLAMs were revealed as sources of inspiration, places where connections can be made, where collaboration can take place, where history can be understood, and where the future can be imagined.

“GLAMs were revealed as sources of inspiration, places where connections can be made, where collaboration can take place, where history can be understood, and where the future can be imagined.”

3. The Ottawa Declaration

At the end of the December 2016 GLAM Summit, the participants collectively adopted “The Ottawa Declaration,” a commitment to moving forward, based on a shared recognition of how much they had in common, and how great it would be to work together. They agreed to:

Increase collaboration between our institutions...to catalyze new partnerships that spark creativity and enhance engagement;

Develop innovative programs and services...that empower us to engage our publics; and

Enrich and expand access to our collections to ensure that our institutions contribute significantly to the public good and sustainable development.⁶

Leaving the summit, participants knew that they needed to keep the momentum going. So, a working group was created to put the Ottawa Declaration into action. The group was composed of eight members, with expertise from across the GLAM sector, and it had the mandate to flesh out the vision of the Ottawa Declaration, to explore and study how GLAMs bring value to Canadian society, and to take an active role in identifying areas where new partnerships could be developed.

The group's first task was to work on creating a template for a study on the value of the GLAMs. Of course, there had been studies on the value of libraries in the recent past, including the ones from the British Library, the Toronto Public Library, and the Ottawa Public Library mentioned above. But—to the best of the collective knowledge of the working group—there had never been a study on the value of the whole GLAM sector.

So, in order to scope what such a study should look like so that the reality of all types of memory institutions would be encompassed, the working group commissioned Brightsail Research Inc., in February 2018, to provide the basis for a national study. The Brightsail report was published at the end of March 2018 and it did confirm that “while there is a significant number of library value studies...to date no studies addressing the value of memory institutions as a multi-sector community have been done.”⁷ The Brightsail scoping exercise also revealed that there was a high degree of inconsistency in terms of data collected by GLAMs and concluded that a global value study would present a unique opportunity for the Canadian GLAM sector to innovate.

In the meantime, the co-chairs of the working group fundraised to get the funds needed to undertake the study. Thanks to generous donations from the McConnell Family Foundation, from Rosamund Ivy, and

from the Department of Canadian Heritage, they were able to proceed with a call for tenders to select a firm to conduct the study under the supervision of the working group. Oxford Economics, the same firm that carried out the pioneering study on the value of the British Library, was commissioned to undertake the study.

4. Taking It to the Next Level: The Toronto Summit (2018)

Also, to keep the momentum going, a second GLAM Summit was held on January, 30, 2018, at the Royal Ontario Museum, in Toronto. The summit was entitled “Taking It to Next Level” and it welcomed some 280 participants on yet another cold Canadian winter day. The summit focused on four topics that were seen as drivers as the sector moved forward:

- 1. Communities:** How can collaborative relationships among GLAMs benefit local communities, as well as provide greater opportunities for building links and fostering community identity?
- 2. Indigenous peoples:** How can GLAMs work more closely with Indigenous peoples to renew relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect?
- 3. Private sector:** How can GLAMs work with the private sector to foster greater innovation?
- 4. Government priorities:** How can GLAMs work with various levels of government?

The need for a supporting foundational narrative that would demonstrate the value and the breadth of social and economic benefits of GLAMs emerged as the core conclusion of the second GLAM Summit. That narrative should show relevance, illustrate how GLAMs matter, and highlight what they have to offer to partners from other sectors of activity, such as the private sector, government, and not for profits.

5. Taking It to the People: The Montreal Summit (2019)

On May 13, 2019, the third and last, to date, GLAM Summit was held in Montreal. Once again over 280 participants from the whole sector showed up at the National Library and Archives of Quebec to further the Ottawa Declaration agenda. Placed under the theme “Taking It to the people,” the discussion focused in three areas:

- 1. Collaboration:** What are the benefits, challenges, and actionable strategies involved with collaborating within the GLAM sector and across sectors?
- 2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation:** How can GLAMs work more closely with Indigenous communities and individuals to renew relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect?
- 3. Technology:** How can GLAMs collaborate with technology partners to improve user experience?

Over the course of the 2019 summit a number of cross-cutting themes emerged. First of those themes was the goal shared by representatives from GLAMs of reimagining traditional forms of collaboration. The second cross-cutting theme was that of bolstering GLAMs’ work as agents of social cohesion in a time of growing ideological fragmentation. Finally, another recurrent theme was the need for GLAMs to embrace agility as they find new ways to innovate. In addition to the panels and keynotes, the summit was also the occasion for representatives from Oxford Economics to present an overview of the initial findings of the value study they had been conducting over the last four months. The presentation was followed by interactive sessions during which the participants had the opportunity to offer their views on these findings.

6. A New Narrative for the GLAM Sector

As well, in Montreal, exchanges were held on the foundational elements for a narrative designed to support the GLAM sector in its

entirety. The goal of the narrative, placed under the theme “A Rapidly Changing World Needs GLAMs,” is to demonstrate the value and breadth of the social benefits of GLAMs. The narrative is built on four strong statements:

- 1. People turn to GLAMs for the credible and trusted information they want and need.** GLAMs remain the most trusted of public institutions.
- 2. People connect, experience, and write their stories together in and with GLAMs.** In a digital landscape, GLAMs are inclusive physical and virtual spaces where people connect with and understand each other.
- 3. GLAMs help Canada prosper and innovate.** GLAMs are economic engines that power smart, creative communities. They inspire entrepreneurs and artists and act as incubators for innovation and creativity of all kinds.
- 4. GLAMs make citizens and communities better.** They enrich lives and are foundational to personal and community growth and regeneration. They favor greater emotional awareness, compassion, resilience, and openness to ideas that differ from our own.

7. Value Study of GLAMs in Canada

Taking into account the conversations held at the Montreal Summit, Oxford Economics completed the *Value Study of GLAMs in Canada* in December 2019. Recognizing that GLAMs are much more than simply visitor attractions, the report aims to capture their fundamental role using a combination of quantitative value metrics and qualitative assessments of societal values. Therefore, the findings of the study are based on available data as well as a national survey of 2,045 Canadian residents. A range of economic techniques were used, in line with the diversity of activities GLAMs undertake.

The study estimates 150 million visits are made to Canadian GLAMs by members of the public each year. Online visits (websites, catalogs,

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) were also taken into account, as well as the educational value of GLAMs and—the most innovative measure—the well-being effect of GLAMs usage. The model used by Oxford Economics suggests that the annual value to a Canadian GLAM user is equivalent to \$1,440 in improved well-being. To quote the study: “visiting GLAMs has the same wellbeing effect of receiving a monetary bonus of \$1,440 per annum.”⁸

Combining all components, the total gross value of GLAMs to Canada is \$11.7 billion per year (2019 Canadian dollars). Given that the operational expenditure needed to run GLAMs is estimated at \$3.0 billion, dividing the \$11.7 billion benefits by the \$3.0 billion costs gives a benefit-cost ratio of 3.9. In other words, for every dollar invested in GLAMs, society gets nearly four dollars in return. The authors of the study added “GLAMs perform very favourably when compared to other major social investments, such as transportation infrastructure.”⁹

8. More with More

At the time of writing (spring 2020), the Canadian GLAM sector is at the end of a first cycle of collective work. Thanks to the organization of three well-attended summits, the sector’s cohesion has progressed significantly over the past three years and the group has equipped itself with the two major tools it had identified as absolutely necessary: a narrative for the entire sector and a study on the value of GLAMs demonstrating the profitability of increased investments in memory institutions. Work is now poised to restart, focusing more on outreach, communications, and promotional activities. Building on the cohesion that the sector has developed in recent years, the sector is now looking at intensifying the dialogue with public and private decision-makers and the general public in order to highlight the contribution of GLAMs to our collective future.

During the Ottawa Summit of December 2016, Maureen Sawa, the CEO of the Greater Victoria Public Library, hit the nail on the head when she said that instead of looking at doing “more with less,” the

collective goal of Canadian GLAMs must be to do “more with more.” More collaborations, more partnerships, more public outreach, more relevance. Because it sums up all of the wonderful possibilities that working together can mean, I think it makes for a perfect mantra for the GLAM sector: *More with more.*

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To cite this article: Guy Berthiaume. “If You Want to Go Far, Go Together: The Collaboration among the GLAM Community in Canada (2016–2019).” *Research Library Issues*, no. 300 (2020): 6–17. <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.300.2>.

C-R-E-A-T-E: Building an Institutional Cultural Resources Platform

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The authors wish to acknowledge and thank the following individuals who contributed to this article: Mark Osterman, John S. and James L. Knight Digital Experience Manager, Lowe Art Museum; Martha Horan, Head of Preservation Strategies, UM Libraries; and Elliot Williams, Digital Initiatives Metadata Librarian, UM Libraries.

Background

In late 2015, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation invited the University of Miami (UM) to pilot an Academic Art Museum and Library Summit; an invitation that UM—through the offices of its Libraries (UML) and Lowe Art Museum (LAM)—gratefully accepted. Several months later, 14 pairs of museum and library directors from colleges and universities spanning the nation gathered in Coral Gables, Florida, for three days of shared learning. In advance thereof, the organizers asked participating teams to submit brief narratives highlighting obstacles to their collaborative efforts as well as visions for a shared future. This pre-work shaped the summit's agenda, which featured keynote addresses by Daniel Weiss, president, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Winston Tabb, dean of University Libraries and Museums, Johns Hopkins University; Clifford Lynch, executive director, Coalition for Networked Information; and Jeremy Upton, director of Library and University Collections, University of Edinburgh. These distinguished guests further framed the meeting's overarching theme: identifying and addressing opportunities for deep

library-museum collaboration within institutions of higher learning. The proceedings, which included presentations by all participating institutions, were captured in a detailed white paper that is freely available online.¹

Following this impactful summit, the Mellon Foundation invited several participating institutions to submit funding proposals addressing museum-library collaborative opportunities. UM responded with a three-pronged plan to create two new, integrated, matrix-reporting fellowships (one devoted to paper conservation, the other to academic outreach, engagement, and support) as well as an incentivizing grants program for faculty wishing to incorporate University of Miami Libraries and Lowe Art Museum (UMLLAM) holdings into their curricula. Mellon generously committed \$500,000 to these intertwined initiatives, which were specifically designed to further the respective missions of UML and LAM, to advance UM's fundamental commitment to pedagogical support across all disciplines, to foster ongoing research and scholarship, and to leverage the expertise of UM's world-class faculty and staff. The outcomes and outputs to date have been encouraging, but challenges—as well as new opportunities—remain. In addition to highlighting some of the most impactful areas of UMLLAM's partnership, this paper will touch upon shared successes, surface obstacles, and paint a vision for tomorrow.

Cultural Resources | Engagement | Academics | Technology | Enrichment (CREATE)

Binding the three central threads of UMLLAM's Mellon initiatives together is CREATE,² an interdisciplinary initiative designed to catalyze and support innovative pedagogies, exhibitions, research, and public programs that hold UMLLAM's collections at their core. Launched in June 2017, CREATE is more than just an administrative home for the aforementioned faculty-incentivizing grants, however: It is an interdisciplinary committee comprising faculty drawn from UM's Coral Gables, Virginia Key, and downtown Miami campuses as well as staff from both UML and LAM. Participating constituents

“CREATE has succeeded in both strengthening extant relationships with faculty while encouraging new partnerships. Students have also significantly benefited, above all by participating in curricula infused with object-based learning experiences.”

have three principal responsibilities during their one-year (renewable) terms of service: to function as UMLLAM ambassadors; to raise awareness about CREATE grant-funding opportunities; and to evaluate funding applications thrice

annually. The program is managed by the Andrew W. Mellon Fellow for Academic Engagement, Christina Larson, and supported by UMLLAM staff, including those who may not serve on the committee but are, nevertheless, essential to the success of CREATE projects.

By heightening awareness of UMLLAM’s cultural resources and offering critical support, CREATE has succeeded in both strengthening extant relationships with faculty while encouraging new partnerships. Students have also significantly benefited, above all by participating in curricula infused with object-based learning experiences.³ Animating Antiquity, a CREATE-funded project developed by Karen Mathews, associate professor of art and art history, is instructive in this regard.⁴ Rooted in a cross-listed upper-level course (ARH 333/CLA 226) that was co-taught by Mathews and senior lecturer in classics Han Tran, this project focused on select works in LAM’s Greco-Roman antiquities collection. Participating students conducted object-specific research and drafted contextualizing dossiers, the results of which were used to launch a unique website.⁵ They also used photogrammetry to create 3D prints of the sculptures they studied and, ultimately, to develop analog as well as digital interactives, available both online and in the Lowe Art Museum’s Marchman Gallery.⁶

CREATE has also served as a powerful catalyst for the production and dissemination of new knowledge by supporting and advancing scholarship rooted in UMLLAM collection objects. The CREATE-funded project, Attic Treasure: Flagler’s Dream Train, for instance,

focused on the UM Libraries' newly discovered, recently acquired, archival blueprints for the Oversea Extension of Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway connecting Miami to the Florida Keys. This initiative prompted a series of online articles⁷ and a new publication.⁸ Senior lecturer in English Judy Hood worked closely with a range of Special Collections and Conservation professionals at the libraries to preserve these invaluable plans, whose significance extends far beyond our region. She also conducted extensive scholarly research, which culminated in her publication of *Attic Treasure: Flagler's Dream Train*.

CREATE's metrics to date speak to its significance and impact. Between its June 2017 launch and today, the program has funded 22 separate projects spearheaded by 23 faculty members drawn from 6 distinct University of Miami colleges or schools and 13 separate departments.⁹ In addition, nearly 300 UM students have been directly involved in CREATE-funded projects, while countless others have been indirect beneficiaries. A further 500 individuals, drawn from our campus and community, have also enjoyed CREATE-sponsored public programs and performances. Overall, CREATE has been an effective vehicle for elevating UMLLAM's collections, for stimulating faculty development and innovation, and for promoting deep intra-institutional collaboration, the focus of the 2016 inaugural summit.

Regarded in its entirety, CREATE has proven to be a relatively low-cost, extremely high-impact initiative. It has not been without its challenges, however. Perhaps the most significant trial was determining how best to manage workflows and, relatedly, how to equitably distribute labor amongst UMLLAM's already busy team members. Effectively promoting the program to the university community was another obstacle, as were the sheer mechanics of grant submissions and reviews. Overly ambitious faculty proposals that did not reflect programmatic or budgetary realities posed another set of difficulties, as did the management of cost-sharing across two units with separate financial management offices. None of these issues proved prohibitive, however, and all were eventually resolved.

Conservation of Works on Paper

Like CREATE and UM's Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship for Academic Engagement, UM's Mellon Fellowship for Paper Conservation has proved an invaluable asset to the university's campus and surrounding community. Beyond expanding institutional capacity to address critical collections needs, this position has equally provided important training for the two individuals who have filled this two-year, fixed-term, postgraduate post since its launch: Laura Fedynyszyn (2017–2019) and Clara Huisman (2019–present). Highlights from Fedynyszyn's term of service include her treatment of a 1718 edition of the Roman poet Publius Vergilius Maro's *Maronis Opera*; a volume printed in iron gall ink, the acidic tannins of which were effectively eating away at its paper support. Fedynyszyn, working under the supervision of the UM Libraries' lead conservator Duvy Argandona, was able to successfully stabilize this important work while also repairing losses and tears throughout.¹⁰ In addition, Fedynyszyn assisted Argandona with preparing materials from the libraries' distinctive collections for display at UML and LAM, including the latter's 2018 *Antillean Visions: Maps and the Making of the Caribbean* exhibition (see "Collaborative Exhibitions" section below). As UM's second Mellon Fellow in Paper Conservation, Huisman has similarly performed a range of conservation treatments, designed and constructed custom mounts and housings for artists' books, treated photographs and other fine art works on paper, and stabilized materials containing iron gall ink. She has also developed a sampling methodology for collections assessments and carried out UMLLAM collection condition surveys.

UMLLAM Shared Discovery Initiative

Collection objects are, of course, only useful if they are discoverable. Thus, in 2016, UML and LAM began exploring single, open-access portals that could surface all of UM's research resources as well as UMLLAM's collections materials. UML, which has a fuller complement of technology staff than the Lowe, took the lead on developing the related request for proposals. LAM staff, however,

were closely consulted at key points to ensure that metadata generated by the museum’s collections management system, The Museum System (TMS), would be discoverable whichever new platform might ultimately be selected. In May 2016, UML went live with the Alma library services platform and Primo discovery service by Ex Libris North America, with which they piloted the combined holdings of all UM Libraries. Internally branded “uSearch,” The Primo discovery service accommodates multiple metadata formats and allows for a variety of ingestion paths, including Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) and application programming interface (API) web services. An upgrade of LAM’s TMS and eMuseum software in late fall 2016 enabled a new API web service to interoperate with TMS. The following year a UMLLAM Shared Metadata Initiative Team worked on identifying and testing optimal solutions for harvesting metadata from TMS for use by uSearch. A UMLLAM team then explored options for sharing records including the new API, direct XML export, OAI-PMH, and crosswalk opportunities. Ultimately, OAI-PMH was selected as the best method for sharing records between TMS and uSearch. The work concluded in 2019. LAM’s collections are now discoverable in uSearch and in results for searches done using the “Everything” scope. New options have since been added to the “Availability” and “Library” facets to limit search results to LAM materials should a user so desire.

Collaborative Exhibitions: Transcending Object Sharing

The enhanced discoverability of UMLLAM’s collections has encouraged and facilitated more thoroughly integrated, thoughtful collaborations, including shared exhibitions. UML had, for years, lent select materials from their distinctive collections to LAM’s temporary exhibition and permanent collection displays. With the inauguration of the Kislak Center at the University of Miami last year, LAM was able to reciprocate in kind by releasing works from its collection for display in this new library-based, multi-function space, which features state-of-the-art exhibit cases and museum-grade lighting, environmental,

and security controls. This type of bilateral sharing is entirely logical given that both units are, by nature, repositories with contiguous or concentric educational missions. What was lacking, before the Mellon-catalyzed reconceptualization of UMLLAM and shared metadata efforts were rendered more seamless, were comprehensive initiatives that transcended the merely transactional.

“The enhanced discoverability of UMLLAM’s collections has encouraged and facilitated more thoroughly integrated, thoughtful collaborations, including shared exhibitions.”

Antillean Visions: Maps and the Making of the Caribbean is a powerful example of this richer collaborative model. Co-curated by UM professors William Pestle (anthropology) and Ashli White (history) with support from LAM’s exhibitions team and UM Libraries’ creative team, this groundbreaking show was exhibited at the museum between February 1 and May 27, 2018. A truly interdisciplinary project, *Antillean Visions* featured nearly 200 historic and contemporary maps of the Caribbean, nearly all of which were drawn from UML collections. This multifaceted project also featured several audience-centric engagement opportunities (including a juried mapmaking/data visualization competition, a bespoke in-gallery board game, and a digital mapmaking app) as well as a multi-author, award-winning catalog.¹¹ What really set this initiative apart, however, was the early involvement of cross-departmental working groups and the integral role played by UMLLAM’s Mellon Fellows. Specifically, teams drawn from a multidisciplinary set of schools, departments, and research institutes participated in the development of this project from the start, rather than at the end as consultative add-ons. Both Mellon Fellows as well as UML’s lead conservator were also brought into the process as early as possible to ensure that effective, efficient engagement strategies as well as conservation assessment and treatment plans could be developed and implemented. This deeply collaborative approach resulted in a project that enabled UML and LAM to advance their interwoven missions in impactful ways while also contributing to

the creation and transference of new knowledge in the service of the University of Miami and a plurality of audiences, objectives that are severely hampered if collaborations do not move beyond simple object sharing.

Digital Collaborations

The enhanced reliance upon and inclusion of digital technologies into both LAM and UML's work have also helped to facilitate a shared commitment to stronger, fuller collaborations. Illustrative in this regard is UMLLAM's combined response to a fall 2018 call for proposals for developing mixed-reality applications. Sponsored jointly by UM and Magic Leap,¹² this internal competition sought innovative digital projects intentionally designed to foster, promote, and support research, teaching, and public outreach. The museum and libraries' successful proposal took as its organizing principle *Radical Conventions: Cuban American Art from the 1980s*, a groundbreaking exhibition curated by Elizabeth Cerejido, Esperanza Bravo de Varona Chair and Director of UML's Cuban Heritage Collection, and slated for exhibition at LAM in summer 2021. Specifically, UMLLAM will create a new app that, using Magic Leap devices, will allow constituents to interact with works featured in *Radical Conventions* through unique visual and auditory experiences. These works include voice recordings of individuals who were a part of the Mariel Boatlift (an overarching theme of the show, which commemorates the 40th anniversary of this historic event) as well as opportunities for guests to contribute their own oral histories through prompts keyed to specific exhibition objects. These personal narratives will be added to other crowdsourced content stored on an augmented reality (AR) cloud, ensuring persistent availability and ease of access and use.

The Digital Turn: Before, during, and after COVID-19

On Monday, March 16, 2020, the University of Miami swiftly and decisively suspended virtually all in-person operations on its three campuses in response to the mounting global health emergency. UM,

which had taken great care to pilot remote teaching, learning, and working capabilities for the vast majority of its nearly 35,000 students, faculty, and staff the preceding Friday, devoted the first few weeks of “alternate” work arrangements to improving the off-site capacities and capabilities of everyone impacted by this transition. Despite these preemptive measures, the sheer volume and all-encompassing nature of these changes posed a range of practical difficulties, particularly for those with limited digital facility and/or a lack of essential hard- and software. Just as challenging were the theoretical and philosophic struggles faced by those who theretofore had relied heavily on in-person, on-site interactions to advance their missions, including not only faculty but also LAM and UML.

Fortunately, each unit, to varying degrees, had embraced the “digital turn” well before the global health emergency hastened their fuller moves into cyberspace. For instance, 88% of UML acquisitions were already electronic. In addition, UML has long been digitizing out-of-copyright collections, providing select virtual channels for research assistance, and servicing faculty and students through e-reserve support. LAM’s pre-pandemic efforts were far more modest (as is often the case at academic art museums, compared to their library counterparts), and comprised mainly digital enhancements to extant programs, rather than virtual surrogates or stand-alone enterprises.

During the pandemic, UML worked diligently with teams of faculty and academic technologists to seamlessly incorporate online and digital content as well as research guides into the learning management system course sites. They also migrated research advising and peer counseling services to virtual environments by adding videoconferencing technology to their extant array of channels. Furthermore, they “flipped” instruction sessions and workshop programs in order to continue providing in-depth, online training for faculty and students and focused on acquiring e-books. LAM, too, leaned into digital engagement, through new initiatives such as #LoweOnTheGo; virtual mindfulness sessions; online course

facilitation (co-taught by faculty and LAM staff); remote visual literacy workshops; virtual lectures; and a born-digital, student-curated exhibition.¹³

Conceived in crisis and delivered in calamity, LAM's and UML's pandemic-related initiatives were developed under conditions that rendered normal, iterative workflows impossible. Additionally, because these all-digital pivots were reactive rather than proactive, prototyping and proofs of concept had to, in the main, be cast aside in the name of expediency and responsiveness. This raised concerns for both units about strategic alignments, intentionality, calibration, sustainability, and mission drift. The possibility of inadvertently eroding institutional commitments to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion due to compressed timelines and limited capacities for consultative work also caused significant apprehension.

To manage these issues as well as possible under the circumstances, LAM took a two-tiered approach. First, it convened a new cross-departmental Remote Engagement Task Force, helmed by Mark Osterman, LAM's John S. and James L. Knight Digital Experience Manager, and charged with prioritizing, developing, and, ultimately, launching the museum's menu of new digital initiatives. In addition, it convened four new working groups—Collections; Teaching and Learning; Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI); and Audiences—to parse the four pillars of LAM's 2019–2021 strategic plan with a view to ranking priorities in a vastly changed world. UML, too, hewed closely to the five pillars articulated in its 2017–2025 strategic plan—Learning; Global Collections; Research and Scholarship; Community Engagement; and Workforce Development—as it navigated this unprecedented crisis. The fact that UML and LAM did not actively pursue such strategies together surfaced, *ex post facto*, a blind spot in our organizational cultures; something that UML and LAM will be addressing together as we all adjust to the “next normal” in COVID-19's catastrophic wake.

Looking to the Future

As we look to a future that sees us safely back on our campus, UML and LAM are committed to maintaining expanded footprints in the digital sphere. The more exciting question for both units is how we can continue to develop, expand, and refine collaborative efforts while maximizing the benefits that the network turn affords, including enhancing object-based teaching and learning opportunities while leveraging technology's power to increase our reach, maximize our impact, and promote DEAI. Early thoughts include born-digital,

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crowdsourced exhibitions that unite objects from LAM and UML collections in heretofore unimagined ways; a dynamic range of livestream programs as well as archived talks, lectures, and symposia; projects intentionally designed to give voice to the voiceless; and MOOCs that harness the distinctive expertise of both units' staff members. Practical considerations include the continued expansion of object-based learning concepts to include both physical objects and their digital surrogates as well as ensuring that UMLLAM has a scalable, shared, digital storage space.

UMLLAM's embrace of the virtual, however, does not mean that either LAM or UML will abandon the analog. On the contrary, the pandemic and related economic contraction have made clear that, now more than ever, humanity craves authentic experiences that involve all five senses, foster connections, and promote unity and togetherness. The UM Libraries and the Lowe will, therefore, be closely examining the feasibility of shared spaces specifically designed to address the “whole” student. The idea of communal gathering areas for the local

community will also be explored, with a view to supporting our constituents' self-directed learning, enrichment, and self-care needs in our spaces. Learning from the lessons of our matrix-reporting Mellon Fellows, UMLLAM will also be looking more closely at integrated workflows with a view to not only identifying (and shifting) overlaps but also, and perhaps more interestingly, discovering new opportunities for ever more innovative programming and sharing more professional positions. Shared storage is another promising vein that UMLLAM will be mining in the future. Binding all of these efforts together is a shared commitment to the mission and vision of our parent organization; to excellence in the service of higher education; to supporting personal growth and development on our campus and throughout our community; and advancing DEAI while also helping to build out a sustainable pipeline of future museum and library staff from underrepresented, underserved communities.

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To cite this article: Jill Deupi, Charles Eckman, and Christina Larson. “C-R-E-A-T-E: Building an Institutional Cultural Resources Platform.” *Research Library Issues*, no. 300 (2020): 18–31. <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.300.3>.

GLAM Collaborations under COVID-19 Conditions and Beyond

Mary Lee Kennedy, Executive Director, Association of Research Libraries

As COVID-19 disrupts the world, and memory institutions respond, there is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reflect on the strength of collaboration among galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAMs) and to accelerate shared goals to advance research, learning, and human understanding. There is much to build on locally, nationally, and internationally. There are a plethora of local collaborations within and across institutions. Nationally associations bring the community together, and initiatives such as the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s support to enhance collaboration among campus libraries and museums¹ encourage increased use of library and museum resources in research and teaching. A research partnership between OCLC, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and Battelle—the



Now more than ever, it is critical to decide what is most strategically important to act on together to shape the future. The potential to leap forward is real.



REopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums (REALM) project²—aims to inform decisions regarding the handling of core museum, library, and archival materials as a result of COVID-19. Internationally the OpenGLAM community³ is

focused on open access and copyright. Even with temporarily disrupted events, such as the Library of Congress–sponsored “Connecting Collections as Data: Transforming Communities, Sharing Knowledge, and Building Networks with International GLAM Labs,”⁴ active consultations among memory institutions experts and leaders around the world are informing COVID-19 choices.

Now more than ever, it is critical to decide what is most strategically important to act on together to shape the future. The potential to leap forward is real. In late May, I interviewed Mark Sweeney, principal

deputy librarian of the Library of Congress; Jacob Nadal, director for preservation at the Library of Congress; Kurt Graham, director of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, US National Archives and Records Administration; and Trevor A. Dawes, vice provost for Libraries and Museums and May Morris University Librarian at the University of Delaware. We discussed GLAM collaborations under COVID-19 and what these conditions might offer as opportunities for the future. This article reflects our conversations.

Collaborations among the museums, libraries, and archives discussed in the interviews take many forms: internal collaborations, collaborations among institutional partners, individual leader and expert collaborations, collaborations with community organizations, collaborations with partners in research and learning, and collaborations with “the people.” In all of these the central theme is to share information with and among scholars, students, citizen scholars, and the general public.

Collaboration under COVID-19 Conditions

Collaborations are not new among the GLAM community. Although they are unique, individual disciplines, archives, museums, and libraries share a common mission—to provide people with information that they can use to learn, to conduct research, and to contribute to society. They interact through shared collections and access to collections, shared expertise, and shared events and exhibits. They capture and reflect human history and steward it throughout time. So, how have collaborations changed in the face of the global pandemic and subsequent societal challenges?

The Library of Congress *Strategic Plan* for 2019–2023⁵ highlights the significance of internal and external collaborations, with federal peers, nationally and internationally. With COVID-19 there has been even more opportunity for progress on the web archiving program⁶ in collaboration with the International Internet Preservation Consortium. The Library of Congress is in regular contact with the Smithsonian

and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as the three jurisdictions share many similarities and operate under US federal rules. For these entities, COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of a trustworthy network of peers. The Library of Congress has weekly calls with colleagues in the US and around the globe to share knowledge. For example, talking with experts in Australia and New Zealand led to a better understanding of the effects of weather on COVID-19.

COVID-19 has highlighted the urgency and the very human impact of shared knowledge among a broad set of stakeholders—whether that knowledge is related to safe practices for reopening buildings and providing access to physical materials, or ensuring trustworthy information is available when it is so crucial that myths be dispelled by facts. Academic and public GLAM organizations are in the process of planning for and even reopening portions of their buildings and services. One of the primary concerns for staff and users is the safe handling of physical materials. Over the next few months the REALM collaboration will provide scientific data to inform decisions about high-circulating items, and special museum and research library collections. The project provides for a shared understanding of the science, as well as collective knowledge in how to handle the materials in operational workflows. Imagine how even one user community—such as those who count on the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled that circulates 20 million items a year from the Library of Congress collections alone—depends on a **safe** means for reading pleasure as well as learning and research. Now multiply this by the hundreds of thousands of GLAM organizations serving people around the world.

At a time when people need more reliable and trustworthy information, research libraries and museums such as the University of Delaware have quickly pivoted with their partners to provide their shared community with virtual services, such as serving the small business community as they seek to understand how best to address the economic challenges they are facing or providing access for students and scholars through digital collections. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to

presidential libraries, research materials requests, and reference requests are being met as much as digital access allows. Catalogers who may have been working with physical materials are now focused on electronic records and e-books. Staff are developing new research guides and web archives. New digital collections have been launched (seven at the Library of Congress), with the potential for providing even more opportunities for collaboration among the GLAM community. As Kurt Graham stated in our interview, “Anytime we digitize a collection or make it accessible through technology, it is an act of collaboration—collaboration with anyone who wants to use that information. That is the future—seeing digitization as an act of collaboration rather than an act of service. By sharing knowledge in the public sphere, we create a market of ideas and of information which in term facilitates all kinds of collaborations.”

With a long history of GLAM collaboration, institutions such as the University of Delaware’s Library and Museums already have strong community relationships. Together they play an important role in grounding truth from rumor and providing a source of information during turmoil—such as helping small businesses deal with the economic depression. In maintaining partnership commitments, GLAM leaders also count on each other—they check in, touch base, and remind each other that “we are here—we care—we’re in this together,” as Trevor Dawes said in our interview.

As stewards of human (and machine) knowledge, GLAM communities are living and documenting the pandemic and its impact on our society. Just type “documenting COVID-19” into your browser and you will get over 445,000,000 hits. These range from the Smithsonian and other museums collecting COVID-19 artifacts, to local newspapers, historical societies, and university libraries collecting oral histories. Having not read all of the hits, there may be other themes. Nevertheless, a lot of work will remain to make sense of what we learn.

GLAM Collaborations beyond COVID-19

With so much of our lives upended, this is a time to choose what to accelerate in pursuit of the shared mission, and what to stop. All of the interviewees see the potential for significant opportunities while acknowledging significant challenges.

Now there is an opportunity to accelerate the ways in which the GLAM community helps people discover the myriad materials available to them from GLAM institutions—particularly in terms of integrating the collections intellectually in ways that engage the intended audiences. This will also highlight GLAMs’ role as trusted stewards of information. The synergies are multiple. The collections serve as rich resources of research materials for scholars. As part of a curated experience (online or in person), the collections are packaged as a powerful narrative presented in a digestible way for general audiences—and as an inspiration for future scholars. By working with faculty together, GLAMs engage them in finding complementary collections, and in teaching students with all types of materials represented in the shared collections. GLAM institutions reinforce the inherent human story in their collective knowledge assets.

“By increasing digital access to collections, together the GLAM community has an opportunity **beyond** providing a service. Digitization becomes another path to collaboration and to human insight.”

By increasing digital access to collections, together the GLAM community has an opportunity **beyond** providing a service. Digitization becomes another path to collaboration and to human insight. With an emphasis on digital access, even more collections are likely to be digitized and more electronic records made available. Partnerships among the GLAM community and with the public create trust and inspire engagement. Examples of such partnerships include the Library of Congress crowdsourced transcriptions projects,⁷ NARA’s citizen archivists,⁸ and the role of University of Delaware as a hub

for the Digital Public Library of America. Even more than before, the public may be an integral part of GLAM collaborations.

Joining up the knowledge assets to increase ease of use is essential and challenging. This may be a moment in time for a breakthrough in barrier-free information discovery. Certainly Mark Sweeney believes this moment provides that potential. The Library of Congress is trying to move the community from the MARC standard to the linked-data world using BIBFRAME.⁹ Most recently the library has been able to “complete the circle”—MARC records can be converted to BIBFRAME records and now BIBFRAME records can be converted to MARC records—by working with its partners in the larger BIBFRAME set of projects. This allows libraries to leverage the power of linked open data for their collections and also to continue to leverage their investment in integrated library systems. This makes it possible to live in a hybrid world using open source code. Still excited about the opening of the new museum in the fall of 2020, the Truman Presidential Library and Museum has discussed creating online companions to physical exhibitions. They, like the GLAM community itself, recognize that the physical and digital experience reinforce the full mission of the institution.

The future has yet to be written. The balance of our physical proximity and the virtual world is yet to be defined. The job descriptions for collaborating in a changed world do not exist today. Nevertheless, it is certain that the opportunity rests with people. It is up to us to attract talented individuals, and to inspire the next generation of leaders to build the future in collaboration with others. As Trevor Dawes stated, “Irrespective of our role or the time, the creation and maintenance of these relationships is what makes us successful.”

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To cite this article: Mary Lee Kennedy. “GLAM Collaborations under COVID-19 Conditions and Beyond.” *Research Library Issues*, no. 300 (2020): 32–38. <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.300.4>.

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ISSN 1947-4911 <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli>

Editor-in-chief: Mary Lee Kennedy

Copy editor: Kaylyn Groves

Layout editor: Katie Monroe

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