Annual Report: Aleph Product Working Group

Abigail S. Baines, Chair
April 2017

The Aleph Product Working Group has been an active community for many years now. Our 2016-2017 activities represent both longstanding practices and new collaborations. This working group focuses on the support of the Aleph user community, managing the product enhancement cycle and organizing the Aleph program track for the annual ELUNA conference. Feedback from this group and the Aleph user community is provided to ExLibris Steering Committee and staff.

Activities in the past year include:

- Product enhancement cycle: 2016-2017 is the first formal year of join enhancement cycle with Aleph IGeLU constituents. There were some bumps in the road working out who would make what changes in the NERS system. We now have agreement between the two groups, and will continue to refine the necessary workflow to control member institutions participation in the now "single vote" system. Jane Aitkins, Enhancement Coordinator for this year, did considerable clean-up of enhancements in the system for voting and archive clarity. She also provided up to date documentation for voting participants on how to use Google forms or NERS.

  The joint ELUNA/IGeLU submission process has utilized Google Forms and the NERS platform.

  We are adhering to the following schedule:

  1. September 1, 2016 – March 1, 2017: New enhancements requests submitted on Google Forms (or NERS)
  2. March 2, 2017 – May 1, 2017: ELUNA / IGeLU Aleph PWGs review the requests and submit them via NERS
  3. May 2, 2017 – June 1, 2017 – First voting cycle
  4. June 2, 2017 – September 1, 2017: Aleph PWGs work with Ex Libris to clarify requests and assign points
  5. September 2, 2017 – October1, 2017: Final voting cycle
  6. October 2, 2017 – October 4, 2017 – Aleph PWGs select most voted enhancements for submission to ExLibris.

- Clean up of working group members log in for NERS, removing old accounts.

- Working group communication: Monthly meetings are held via Google Hangouts. Minutes from these meetings are posted in the ELUNA document repository.

- Vendor communication: Chair of the product working group participated in bi-monthly conference calls with fellow working group Chairs and Steering Committee representatives.

- Requests for adding content: Our user community has requested more of a web presence for information about the working group and specifically, transparency around enhancement cycle

dates and processes. We are actively developing content to build out this area of the ELUNA website: http://el-una.org/product-groups/aleph/

- Aleph track planning for ELUNA 2017 resulted in 14 sessions, up from last year's count of 8.

Current member list:

- Abigail S. Baines, Hampshire College – Chair 2016-2017
- Kevin Collins, City University of New York – Vice Chair/Chair Elect 2016-2017
- Greg Gosselin, City University of New York – Past Chair 2016-2017
- Jane Aitkens, McGill University – Enhancement Coordinator 2016-2017
- Camelia Anghel, New York University - Program Coordinator ELUNA 2017
- Gail Pawlowski, State University of New York – Program Coordinator ELUNA 2017
- Bill Slauenwhite, Novanet – Secretary 2016-2017

We will begin recruiting new members at the ELUNA 2017 meeting.

Special thanks go to retiring member Jane Aitkens, who has been a pleasant and productive colleague for years in the Aleph community, and who will be missed when she retires later in 2017.