Report from the Bamboo Planning Project

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CNI Fall Task Force Meeting, Washington D.C., December 2009
The Bamboo Planning Project is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
Today, **1/3 time** spent on research and scholarship and **2/3 time** sorting through technology.
What if \textbf{2/3 time} was spent on research and \textbf{1/3 time} directed toward technology?
Both the 5% and 95% of arts and humanities scholars...
...should work across fields and disciplines, and engage libraries, museums, humanities centers, information schools, technology organizations, and other institutions to support the digital evolution of the arts and humanities.
Fundamental Question

How can we advance arts and humanities research through the development of shared technology services?
...identify, through a series of facilitated workshops carried out over 18 months, a blueprint and core set of institutions to build and deliver shared services for the arts, humanities, and interpretive social sciences.

1. Carry out a **community planning and design** process...

2. Develop a[n] ... **understanding of humanities scholarship and artistic practice** which can be used to guide technology services design and organizational models for delivery.

3. Develop a community-endorsed **technology services roadmap**...

4. Identify **organizational, staffing, and partnership models** to support the on-going provision of these services.

5. Identify a **community of collaborators** who want to work toward the vision of Project Bamboo

6. Produce a **proposal**...
Workshop Approach

Original proposal outlined a program of seven workshops, an array of documents, and a set of pilot projects to engage an estimated 65 institutions and 200 people who would work together in a community design process through September 2009.

We anticipated that 15 institutions would continue through to the end of the planning project, and that between five and seven would take part in implementation.

Over 114 institutions and organizations took part.
Over 600 people were engaged in the community design process.
30+ institutions had reps. at the last workshop.
Between 7-10 institutions are interested in implementation.
## Current List of Participants

Based on attendance at Workshop 5 and active contribution to the planning process.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>American Academy of Religion</th>
<th>University of California, Berkeley</th>
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<td>Australian National University</td>
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<td>University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill</td>
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<td>Ithaka/JSTOR</td>
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<td>Microsoft Research</td>
<td>University of Rome, Sapienza</td>
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<td>Open University</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin, Madison</td>
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<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
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<td>Tufts University</td>
<td>CenterNet</td>
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<td>San Jose State University</td>
<td>CHAIN: Coalition of Humanities &amp; Arts</td>
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<td>Washington &amp; Lee University</td>
<td>Infrastructures &amp; Networks</td>
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<td>University of Alberta</td>
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Bamboo Planning Project Timeline
Bamboo Launched
14 March 2008

Berkeley and Chicago receive word that the Mellon Foundation approved the proposal.
Bamboo Workshop 1a
28 April 2008 – 30 April 2008
Bamboo workshop sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley. Berkeley, California
Bamboo Workshop 3

12 January 2009 – 14 January 2009

Bamboo workshop sponsored by the University of Arizona.
Tuscon, AZ
Bamboo Program Document 1.0
7 April 2009

First public draft of the 7-10 year scope and vision of Bamboo.
Bamboo Workshop 4
16 April 2009 – 18 April 2009
Bamboo workshop sponsored by Brown University.
Providence, RI
Bamboo Institutional Conference Calls
8 May 2009 – 16 June 2009
Initial conversations with institutions regarding interest and investment in Bamboo.
Bamboo Workshop 5
17 June 2009 – 19 June 2009

Bamboo workshop sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley. Washington, DC
CenterNet/Google/Bamboo Meeting
28 July 2009
Joint meeting with Bamboo, CenterNet, and representatives from Google Books.
Chicago, IL

Bamboo Implementation Proposal 0.6
3 August 2009
Draft of the Bamboo Implementation Proposal sent to the Mellon Research in Information Technology program for formal pre-submission review.

**Bamboo/Mellon RIT Discussions**

18 September 2009 – 2 October 2009

Dialogue between Bamboo and Mellon RIT to address issues raised during the formal review of the Bamboo Implementation Proposal draft.
Proposal Submission Deferral
3 October 2009

Submission of the Bamboo Implementation Proposal is formally deferred pending continued discussions with Mellon RIT.

Bamboo Technology Proposal Scope Development
4 October 2009 – 14 October 2009

Following discussions with Mellon RIT, developed a revised scope of work to focus on the technology elements of Bamboo.
Bamboo Technology Proposal Scope Development

4 October 2009 – 14 October 2009

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Mellon Response to Scope of Work for the Bamboo Technology Proposal
9 November 2009

Mellon RIT submits a formal letter of response to the revised and proposed scope of the Bamboo Technology Proposal.
Bamboo Partner Discussions

25 November 2009 – 18 December 2009

Conversations with tentative Bamboo partners regarding revised scope of work and long-term vision of Bamboo.
Community Design Lessons – People

- Engage the breadth of backgrounds and experience – Bamboo developed a contribution framework of explore, plan and build to create a number of ways to channel individual contributions

- Cultivate interest in shared understandings and scholarly connections – work toward bringing communities together at multiple levels

- Aligning communities around a common vision is a challenge – avoid the “all things to all people” trap

- Adapt, adapt and adapt even more – sometimes things won’t work or the community is at a different place than you expected; don’t be afraid to change things mid-stream
Community Design Lessons – Technology

- **Don’t need another tool** – define and create a *platform* upon which to build and connect existing and future tools and content.

- **Frame a comprehensive vision** – we adapted the NSF three rings of cyberinfrastructure as a model for Bamboo (shared understanding across communities, shared technology, shared organization).

- **Participating in and Evolving the Ecosystem** – is it part of an ecosystem of technology efforts? In the case of Bamboo, it is best to “fit in rather than stand out”.

- **Innovation is not normative** – driving toward common technologies must not come at the expense of individual creativity.
Community Design Lessons – Technology

- **Shared services (SOA) approach is relatively new** – a services based approach to the development, distribution, and operation of teaching and research technologies is in very early stages, and there is much to be learned about development life cycles and incentives.

- **Content is king; services applied to content fundamental** – forms of content management and data interoperability seem to appear everywhere, and scholars are increasingly seeking ways to mash together and manipulate content.

- **Challenge of too much abstraction** - sometimes you need to build end-user tools to work back to platforms.
Community Design Lessons – Organization

- Individual efforts don’t lead to sustainable activities – some kind of structure is needed to sustain and guide efforts at both the local and inter-institutional levels for both the short and long term.

- Achieving sustainability requires some kind of organization – a successful community design process can lay the groundwork for a community of practice and a sustaining organization.

- Organizational model will have to be evolutionary – things change over time and for an infrastructure effort to succeed in the long term, it must grow technologically, culturally, and structurally.
Benjamin Franklin
Patron Saint for Cyberinfrastructure for the Humanities

“I would like to propose a patron saint for cyberinfrastructure … my nominee is Benjamin Franklin. Why Ben, you might ask? It is partly that Franklin was a tinkerer with new technologies, a printer and a publisher, someone who established the first circulating library in the US, a politician with more than a dash of provocateur, and a pragmatist who figured out some important aspects of how to make revolution sustainable. Franklin was also famous for his maxims, and one of the best known of those he delivered at the Continental Congress just before signing the Declaration of Independence. On that occasion, he said: We must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly, we shall hang separately.

That's my short-hand definition of cyberinfrastructure, actually – the environment in which we all hang together, as opposed to the one in which we all hang separately.”

John Unsworth, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
from Bamboo Workshop 1d

projectbamboo.org
Bamboo Vision of Cyberinfrastructure

- understanding of practices and commonalities
- shared technology services
- organizational, partnership, and social models

Adapted from the "Borromean Ring Team" model for cyberinfrastructure presented by D.H. Atkins, Office of Cyberinfrastructure, National Science Foundation

projectbamboo.org
What’s Next?

• Completion of the planning process that will include the authoring the final report and publishing the data gathered during the community design process.

• Submission of one-year Bamboo Technology Proposal to the Andrew W. Mellon foundation with a targeted start date of July 2010.

• Formulation of a long-term program for Bamboo that includes a model for ongoing community engagement and future technology development. This effort is slated to begin in early 2010.
Bamboo Technology Proposal

Bamboo Services Platform
A set of robust and reusable core technologies to enable tool builders, campus IT, and libraries to collaboratively develop and support humanities technologies across institutions.

Bamboo Collections
A set of humanities collections services, along with reference implementations built atop the Bamboo Services Platform, to support humanities scholars in the curation, analysis, and communication of scholarly collections.

Bamboo Communities
A set of services built on the Bamboo Services Platform to make it easier for humanities scholars and communities of practice to identify and discover projects, people, tools, and content of interest.
Bamboo Collections
Bamboo Communities
Proposal Scope
Too Grand or Doable Project?

Are we thinking too big?
Are we taking on too much risk?
Are we trying to change too many things?
Is it really worthwhile to pursue such a grand agenda?
“What is Bamboo?”
from Workshop 1a (Berkeley), April 2008

BAMBOO ENABLES A SOCIAL NETWORK OF SCHOLARS & IT, REPOSITORIES & INSTITUTIONS TO SHARE TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES & DIGITAL RESOURCES ACCORDING TO PROTOCOLS & STANDARDS THAT REFLECT IDEALS OF OPENNESS & NEW MODELS OF PUBLICATION & SCHOLARLY OUTPUT. LEVERAGE INVESTMENTS BY INSTITUTIONS & FUNDERS.
What is Bamboo?

**Program** led by a partnership of colleges and universities to develop shared and sustainable technologies for use by the arts and humanities.

**Focused project** to develop, within its first year, a platform for sharing technologies and content across institutional boundaries toward advancing scholarship, learning, and research in the arts and humanities.