

Notes from User / Non-User Survey Work Group

September 6th, 2016 10:05-11:04 via GoToMeeting

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Overall Summary

At this time, the work group is not ready to make a formal recommendation to the WPLC Board. The work group is seeking more information, additional input from DPI, and time to digest the value of the proposals.

UW Survey Center

Summary: This proposal is not recommended. While this survey's sample size, expected response rate, and methodology are good, the cost is a significant barrier and there is no exceptional element of this proposal that justifies the price.

MorrillSolutions Standard

Summary: No recommendation at this time. The work group felt that Option 3 was the best among the options given in this proposal. It would refresh the existing data and the methodology would potentially reach a more representative population of the state. However, the work group felt that the similar user / non-user data obtained in 2012, along with other potential data sources available, has not been effectively or widely used by the library community and the money for this project should focus on teaching the community how to analyze and use existing data.

Discussion:

Option 2 has the same methodology as 2012 and the cost isn't that much higher than Option 1. An online-only survey (Option 1) might dilute the value of the data because there is a danger of not reaching significant portions of the state's population. Option 2 would keep the data consistent with previous years, but Option 3 would provide more responses. It's important to pay attention to the "non-user" portion of this survey and there is still a large segment of the population that wouldn't complete a survey online, primarily because they don't have access to or don't have the literacy needed to take an online survey. Option 3 has benefits, because the 2012 data skewed toward older respondents, possibly because of the paper nature of the survey. Option 3 might get responses from younger residents, especially if the online survey was mobile-responsive. It might worth it to expand the survey to get a more accurate picture of the state. Andi will double check if the online survey platform is responsive to mobile platforms. Ultimately, the group will recommend Option 3 if this proposal is recommended.

A drawback with recommending Option 3 is that the methodology isn't consistent with the 2012 survey. The work group wonders if we have any use cases from the survey, where the data was used to make decisions, launch projects, etc. Is it valuable to do this without the education and focused data that is promised in the alternate proposal (below)? PEW has been gathering data, along with other organizations, so the data is out there already. Having a bunch of data but not knowing how to consume it is worthless data - this was the takeaway from the Analytics Work Group and the Alternate proposal responds to that. It's not worth the money to get more data if we can't consume it.

MorrillSolutions Alternate

Summary: This proposal is promising, but more information is needed. The work group feels that the value proposed here, in both educating the community and in developing focused research questions, would be a greater benefit as a project than the data refresh proposed in the MorrillSolutions Standard proposal. It responds, too, to data education needs uncovered during the work of the [Analytics Work Group](#) earlier this year. The work group would like to hear the input of DPI's Jamie McCanless and Ryan Claringbole, and would like more time to digest the proposal in light of the [Aspen Report](#) and its accompanying [Strategies for Success](#), before proceeding. The work group will meet again to discuss this proposal following input from DPI.

Discussion:

The WPLC has talked about making survey results more useful and this type of a project lends itself to doing just that, and the notion of focused questions / surveys is appealing. The online trainings proposed dig deeper with the survey and it starts folks thinking differently. The work group considered how this could be carried out in addition to Option 3 above and some ways this project could be administered, including running it through systems so the system is the client. It was noted that this project could be hard for smaller libraries to do with staffing and resources and that might lead to skewed results where smaller libraries are missing. System staff could help make sure the smaller libraries are involved. MorrillSolutions has a history with this survey and project. This project could also provide credibility to the larger survey with focused questions. The competitive RFP forces the community to do some deep thinking about the research and survey questions, and really consider if it would be useful to them before committing.

The group discussed recommending Option 3 of the Standard proposal above, and take the alternative proposal to the board as a possible project outside of this work group's charge, to be done on a recurring, maybe annual basis. It's important to stress the value of this - that it's better than just having the data. The work group thought, for the longer term, it could be funded by LSTA or DPI over time to potentially establish longitudinal data. It was discussed that it could also potentially be a category of LSTA further down the road. Ideally it wouldn't be a competitive grant - it's funded enough for each system to some extent or one big statewide project. It's a bit like the door counter LSTA project.

The work group would like to hear from DPI and think about how this proposal ties to the Aspen Report a little further. There might need to be additional people who should be involved.

The outcome needs to be more meaningful than just having data.

This proposal addresses the needs and lessons learned from Analytics Work Group, which Andi will send.

The work group considered if PLSR should be involved somehow, but eventually decided that would be tricky and potentially create negative perceptions of the aims of the survey. The work group felt, however, it is important to share the results with PLSR but focus this project as a response to the Aspen Report.

It was noted that this proposal could be more work, and take more effort and time to plan and execute effectively. However, taking the time on the front end to figure out what the community really wants to know will provide a better outcome and teaching the community to do this research has more value than a refresh of existing data. The group proposes that the alternate proposal should be run by Jamie McCanless at DPI to coordinate with any existing DPI projects and to get his input on the proposal.