

Accomplishment - Trained local staff in top-to-bottom customization tools to support customizations and extensions to core functionality

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Description:

Coordinated knowledge transfer from project partners at Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) and Cambridge University in the UK, to ensure we have local skills to configure and customize CollectionSpace for campus deployments. We identified likely staff, set up training and peer-programming sessions, identified documentation needs and pushed for these as project priorities, and shaped initial deployment tasks to bring staff up to speed on necessary tools and techniques.

Purpose/Importance:

The CollectionSpace project will provide a common, scalable solution for managing museum and research collections across the campus, and eventually across the system. This replaces a number of aging systems based upon obsolete technologies, and that require considerable overhead to support and maintain. It adds significant new functionality, provides accessible web-based interfaces, and leverages current enterprise technologies for security and stability.

CollectionSpace is being developed by a consortium of university and museum partners, and some areas of the project have no local developers. We need to ensure we have local staff that know the entire stack well enough to configure and customize the application for each campus deployment.

In addition to the increased stability of our local services offering, this has helped to develop several staff to improve their technical skills in key areas, and has been a morale boost for those involved.

Impacted areas:

This directly impacts the museums and research collections supported by IST, including:

- Essig Museum of Entomology
- History of Art Visual Resource Collection
- Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology
- UC and Jepson Herbaria
- UC Botanical Garden
- UC Museum of Paleontology
- etc.

Because of the broad impact of these research collections, the indirect impact spans much of the research and teaching mission of the University.

Strategic Alignment:

This project represents a considerable strategic accomplishment in aligning many campus collections on a single sustainable strategy. The project leverages contemporary enterprise technology models, and the skills training has strengthened our staff in these key tools, and provided specific examples of how to focus on solutions for campus partners by leveraging a community project.