

The Offline Internet Consortium

Newsletter #4
March 26, 2019

This continues our periodic series of updates on developments in the domain of offline internet and our proposed consortium, following on the Tempe summit of February 2018. For any readers unfamiliar with our work, the web site at <https://www.offline-internet.org/> as relevant material. We may do a general report at some point soon, but for now these are some brief updates.

We would like to schedule a call for the whole group soon. To select times when you are available, please go now to <https://framadate.org/cVzLgnNFoxHRr5r5> and enter your choices.

The provisional steering committee (Jérémy Lachal, Jim O'Donnell, Ann Okerson, Muy-Cheng Peich) meets via Skype monthly. Most of what follows was discussed on the most recent call.

I. Update on software working group. Excellent progress, functional now but in unattractive mode. The integration of the design will be completed by Mid-March. We could schedule a demo in April. In short, this aspect is progressing well with the support of the Share-IT Accelerator, and we are now coming to the point where we need systematically to add vetted content and need to start working with the Content subcommittee.

II. Discussion around fundraising. Jérémy and Muy-Cheng have started a list of possibilities. Modest funding is possible from the French ministry. We reviewed an early draft PPT from BSF, designed to show how OLI will support outreach, including fundraising. Group felt this would go better with an in-person meeting if at all possible, so we are benefitted by a group synergy plus a time dedicated to the specific task. At that point, discussion shifted to organizing a meeting again (at ASU with ASU funding, though reimbursements could not be as comprehensive as in February 2018). It would be in a workshop format, with everyone rolling up their sleeves to develop the mission and plan for OLI and to fill in many details and possibilities, such as branding (name, graphic identity, etc.) and a plan of action for collective moving-forward.

III. Opportunity for advocacy highlighted by Don Means: Call for contributions for the Digital Cooperation of the UN (<https://digitalcooperation.org/call-for-contributions/>) : https://docs.google.com/document/d/16gtaqdHyLY1ndBZ8XAUZ_1Pozcr-onDMt7VXTQeYYe0/edit?usp=sharing We agreed that the opportunity identified by Don is well worth pursuing, but right now not easy to bring to attention of members. Hence we circled back to II above.

IV. Update on IFLA events (Athens, August 2019)

IFLA session (open programme) planning: Ann applied for a one-hour session, and we are awaiting formal notification of acceptance. We will need to decide how to manage, do a call for papers, or other organization. We are targeting end of March for decisions and then execution on those steps. There was discussion about whether it would be possible for the majority of the OLI group to attend; this could be a challenge, though.

V. Outcomes & next steps

Discussion concluded with three potential interactions in sequence:

- A. Schedule a call sooner than later with the larger group to report on software, discuss outreach, and build awareness of next steps. We should develop a circulatable version of a PPT for that meeting, and also the PPT should be framed to target other audiences to an even greater degree.
- B. Face to face meeting later spring/summer:
 - 1. If in US, ASU can offer support for venue and meeting costs and some limited support for attendance by those most challenged.
 - 2. Give prospective participants homework beforehand, so they come prepared.
 - 3. Focus on making the meeting a workshop; expect to have a detailed demonstration and some hands-on experience with the software; have tasks for the group to perform together.
 - 4. PRELIMINARY: survey potential participants -- therefore do some work very soon on prospective dates and sketch the likely needed funding.

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