

NeAT Business Plan Component

Collaborative Integration and Annotation Services for Australian Literature Communities (AustLit) Project

1. Service Description

1.1. Description of a research community and the eResearch service need

AustLit currently provides a Web portal to arguably the most important collection of information for scholarly research into Australian literature and print culture. The Association for the Study of Australian Literature (ASAL) is the peak body for this research community. The current collection primarily supports bibliographic records with some full-text and limited image, audio or video content. The aim is to expand the AustLit collection to include more comprehensive access to full-text works as well as related content (images, recordings, reviews, critiques etc). In parallel, the search interface will also need to be enhanced to enable support for metadata, full-text, empirical and multimedia searching of external sources via a single web portal. Currently a large number of searches through many different interfaces across many data sets is required. As well, there is no electronic support for a core activity of literature researchers – to create and share collaborative commentaries via document markup or annotation tools. Finally, researchers would like to be able to encapsulate related artefacts into e-learning objects that they can share and exchange with other researchers and educators.

1.2. Description of the proposed service solution and how it meets that need

The above needs will be met by the creation of several new services:

1. Data integration, search and reporting services
 - OAI-PMH metadata harvesting services that periodically harvest metadata from the specified external repositories and aggregate the metadata with the AustLit metadata repository
 - Federated Search Portal supporting metadata and full-text search across multiple data sets, and search, retrieval and presentation of records, text and images
2. Collaborative annotation services
 - Secure annotation creation, editing and attachment services
 - Annotation presentation, browse and search services
 - Annotation storage and servers (with authenticated access control)
 - Annotation harvesting and aggregation services
3. OAI-ORE compliant compound object authoring, editing and publishing services.

AustLit-specific services will be hosted and operated by the UQ Library, which currently hosts the AustLit server. The more generic services that may be deployed in disciplines other than AustLit will be operated initially by UQ's eResearch group and in the long term by UQ's IT Services and/or ARCS.

2. Benefits and proposed measures

2.1. Benefits to the user community and associated measures

This project will widen the scope of AustLit, providing more comprehensive access to Australian literature resources. The project will also promote and expedite the adoption of eResearch practices by humanities researchers in Australia. Success will be measured by monitoring the number of site visits, searches and references to AustLit, both by

researchers, but also by web-links such as from Wikipedia, and scholarly works. The project will also enable groups of researchers to discover all material relevant to say “the visit of D. H. Lawrence to Australia”, or “the battle of Lawson and Paterson”, to create a collective annotated bibliography that can be explored and added to in a way that the current best practice – a book – cannot. A core research method of most of the humanities, law and the social sciences will be “e-enabled”. Results will be measured by monitoring usage of the services, the creation of new resources, and interviews with researchers on tool usefulness. The AustLit advisory board is derived from active researchers and teachers in the field and they will be involved in the testing and feedback cycle as the project develops.

2.2. Benefits to ANDS or ARCS (or other provider) and associated measures

The ability to search seamlessly across both the metadata and the underlying data, particularly text, is an important one for many research areas. Much of the data access is envisaged to be by metadata, yet this is not the case for Google, say – this work will demonstrate how we bridge this boundary. The project will also provide an exemplar of data integration, with a federated search across multiple distributed databases. The only relevant measure here is that researchers use this new search facility and keep doing so. The ability to annotate data and other objects, and groups of objects, is important to many fields, but especially to the humanities. We need to demonstrate that this can be e-enabled – at the moment search is electronic, but not this aspect of the “work” of the humanities researcher. We will measure this principally by use and output. The ability to easily author compound objects in a standardized format that can be shared and re-used will greatly facilitate the use of AustLit and other cross-disciplinary content within eLearning resources.

2.3. Expected flow-on benefits to others

As articulated above, this affects all disciplines where commentary on other work is important. More specifically, the services developed within this project would also be of benefit to:

- NCRIS 5.12 Marine Sciences and Climate
- Social Sciences, ASSDA
- Atlas of Living Australia, Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN),
- NCRIS 5.3 Microscopy and Microanalysis and NCRIS 5.8 Bio-security

3. Resources and commitments

3.1. Resources provided by the user community

In-kind from AustLit, including Kerry Kilner, and other data providers.

3.2. Resources provided by ANDS or ARCS

NeAT funding of \$250K p.a. for 2 years and nominally \$250K for a third year. The actual amount for the 3rd year will be dependent on the outcome of project reviews and available NeAT funds.

It is anticipated that the NeAT funding for this project would be used primarily to hire software developers at UQ. This will be decided by the Project Committee and specified in the Project Plan.

3.3. Resources provided by others

In-kind from UQ Library for hosting the servers and services, and UQ eResearch group, including Jane Hunter. \$35K p.a. for 3 years from University of Queensland. \$35K p.a. inkind for 3 years from QCIF.

Total project resources and commitments are summarized in the following table.

	Y1		Y2		Y3		Total	
	Cash	EFT	Cash	EFT	Cash	EFT	Cash	EFT
User community resources		0.5		0.5		0.5	210K	3.0
Others (UQ, QCIF)	70K	0.5	70K	0.5	70K	0.5		
ANDS	125K		125K		125K		750k	0
ARCS	125K		125K		125K			

4. Governance

4.1. Governance processes to be applied to the project

- The ARCS/ANDS agreed governance mechanism for NeAT projects, defined in the ARCS and ANDS Business Plans.
- The Project Committee will meet quarterly via phone and/or agreed electronic medium.
- A Reference Group will also be established for consultation.

4.2. Quality assurance processes to be used by or applied to the project

The ARCS/ANDS agreed arrangements will apply.

4.3. List of names against key governance and project management roles

Project Committee:

- ARCS Executive Director, Professor Anthony Williams, or nominee
- ANDS Executive Director, or nominee
- ASAL President, Elizabeth McMahon, or nominee (Chair)
- AustLit Executive Manager, Kerry Kilner
- UQ eResearch, Professor Jane Hunter

The Project Manager will be appointed by the Project Committee and specified in the Project Plan.

5. Project Summary

5.1. Deliverables / Milestones

Year 1: Full text search over both metadata and content with a variety of presentation formats.

Integrate 5 key databases, build and support federated search interface: AustLit, SETIS, Australian Dictionary of Biography Online, Dictionary of Australian Artists Online, and National Library services - National Bibliographic Database (NBD), People Australia, Picture Australia, PANDORA, and Australian Digital Theses DB.

Year 2: Collaborative Annotation creation, editing and publishing services

Year 3: Compound Object authoring and publishing services (encapsulate objects related by theme)

More detailed deliverables and milestones will be specified in the Project Plan.

5.2. Overall risk assessment

The key risk of the project is that the tools are not used by Australian literature researchers - this is mitigated by the close engagement with the community and rapid delivery of beta versions for user acceptance.

5.3. Review points

Quarterly reviews by ANDS and ARCS, six monthly written reports from the Project Manager to the Project Committee, and a yearly review each September (starting 2009) by NeAT.