**Hydra: State of the Project**

Proposal for A Panel Presentation at the Fedora User Group Meeting

Open Repositories 2013

Hydra is a free, open source project that gives institutions a framework to build and deploy robust and durable digital repositories (the body) supporting multiple “heads”: feature-rich, digital asset management applications with tailored workflows. Now in its fourth year, Hydra has dozens of adopters worldwide, and an array of solutions that range from traditional institutional repositories and electronic theses and dissertation solutions, to media management systems for images, audio and video, to customized systems for data, digital preservation or repository management.

This extended panel discussion (proposed for 120 minutes) will provide a “state of the project” review for Hydra, and will anchor a “Hydra track” within the Fedora Users Group. This will give Hydra project participants from throughout the world chance to meet and plan, as well as share their latest developments.

As of year end 2012, Hydra has doubled in size from the founding three institutions, and doubled in size again; in the next year it's going to double one more time, with a Partner base of roughly two dozen institutions. This growth creates new opportunities and new demands on the project's social and community infrastructure. In December of 2012, members of the community gathered to assess the current state of the project and form a vision for it moving forward. This resulted in the seed of a strategic plan which was validated and built out in Hydra Partner meetings in March and June of 2013.

To ensure the continued health and success of the project, this plan identified three key requirements:

* Hydra must realize the opportunity to create a full suite of "solution bundles" in the HydraSphere, fulfilling the original project vision of one repo-body and many tailored apps to fulfill the full range of DAM needs of any given institution.
* The project’s technical framework must continue to advance to enable it to incorporate the code and coding of new partners and new solution bundles; robust code-sharing mechanisms are critical to avoiding the risk of creating many (non-interoperable) point solutions within the framework
* The community framework must evolve to cope with the increased number of participants, and enhance our centripetal strategies. This includes advancing the communication and collaboration channels to incorporate contributors from 3 continents across 12 time zones; and growing the governance & administrative structure of the project to keep pace with the needs of the growing community.

And to fulfill these demands, the core of the plan revolved around seven distinct strategic areas:

* Strategy 1: Develop A Full Suite of Solution Bundles
* Strategy 2: Develop Turnkey / Hosted Solutions
* Strategy 3: Grow the Vendor Ecosystem
* Strategy 4: Enable Distributed, Quality Training
* Strategy 5: Establish a Documentation Framework
* Strategy 6: Advance the Technical Framework
* Strategy 7: Expand Community Governance and Contributions

This panel will present aspects of both the current state of Hydra as well as the plans for the future. In addition to presenting on the strategic plan, it will include:

* a "state of the community" review
* a "state of the technical framework" review
* presentations of innovative Hydra developments, showcasing the best work in the community in the last year
* mini-panels that highlighted developments of particular solution bundles with their own burgeoning communities (Avalon, Sufia, Hypatia)
* an awards ceremony

The panel will be structured to complement specific Hydra presentations that are part of the plenary OR program, as well as to introduce other Hydra-related proposals within the Fedora User Group track. The session will be targeted specifically to current Hydra community members as the centerpiece of a Hydra User Group meeting; other OR attendees interested in Hydra developments will also be welcome.

Presenters for individual sections of this track will be drawn from throughout the Hydra community.