

## 16b – Research Commons

### Action Item Template Response

#### General Action Item Information

Lead Division/Office: Research Technologies

Action Item Number: 16b

Action Item Short Name: Research Commons

Dependencies with other EP Action Items: 4f, other?

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#### A. OVERVIEW

The Research Commons (RC) is an umbrella name for a long-term project to transform the east tower of the Wells Library at IUB into a central hub of expertise, support, and activities related to the research life of the university. The project is inspired by the highly successful Information Commons in the west tower of the Wells Library, and is intended to create a similar cohesive and comprehensive experience aimed at research faculty and graduate students. The effort is being led by the IU Libraries with support from UITs and the participation of other research-related units. UITs units planning to have a full presence (permanent staff office assignments and accompanying dedicated workspaces) are the Stat/Math Center (including UITs GIS support) and the affiliated Statistical Consulting group, the User Experience Group, and the Advanced Visualization Lab. UITs units with a limited presence (single person managing a station at shared service counter) include High-Performance Applications, Research Storage, Life Sciences consulting services, and the proposed Scholarly Data Services group. Specialized laboratories and facilities to support research include a large-scale immersive visualization facility, a usability testing suite, and a secure data analysis facility.

We anticipate that the RC will significantly improve IU's competitiveness for external funding by increasing awareness of cyberinfrastructure resources and funding opportunities, by improving the ability of researchers to transition existing ideas and research into working prototypes (thereby strengthening grant proposals), and by simplifying and deepening the support process at every major step of the research and funding pipeline through more cohesive "one-stop shopping" for assistance and expertise.

#### I. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS ACTION.

Starting in spring 2009, a working group composed of individuals from the Libraries, University Architect's Office (UAO) and UITs has been meeting to develop requirements. In fall 2009, an external consultant (Woollen Molzan and Partners, based in Indianapolis) was contracted to develop a master plan for the entire east tower, including a careful analysis of existing infrastructure components such as stairwells, elevators, HVAC, power, and lighting. This comprehensive plan should be complete in spring 2010. Based on the results of that plan, cost models for full, partial, and staged full renovation and implementation will be developed and funding options pursued at the university and state level. (To give some idea of the scope of this project, initial, back-of-the-envelope estimates for a full renovation of the tower and infrastructure, including ways to incorporate natural light on the upper floors, range from \$40 to

\$80 million.)

While the total cost and funding models are still being worked out, it is expected that UITS would fund the technology required for all specialized UITS facilities and labs, and would contribute to the cost of the renovations necessary for those facilities as well as for staff cubicles and work space.

## II. WHAT ARE THE POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR PLANS?

- I. This project should borrow and build upon the agreements and management procedures developed by the UITS Support and Learning Technologies divisions in negotiating and managing the ongoing use and evolution of the Information Commons with the Library. Clear communication of expectations and responsibilities and delivery at or beyond expectations are the keys to a successful long-term partnership.

II.  
III.

## III. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS.

- IU Libraries administration
- IU Libraries government information resources, mapping groups, and other special services and collections based in the Wells Library
- IU Digital Libraries Program
- UITS and Research Technologies clientele, especially those who make significant utilization of usability, stat/math, and visualization resources
- UITS Enterprise Software and the User Experience Group
- Department of Statistics (statistical consulting services)
- Humanities and social science researchers (the main research audiences for Wells Library)
- Institute for Digital Arts and Humanities (first tenant in the RC in 2007)
- OVPR & Research Administration