
Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)



DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY
OF AMERICA

<http://dp.la/>

Overview

The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) began in 2010 as a collaboration between the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University and numerous leaders from libraries, foundations, academia, and technology projects to create a large-scale, comprehensive online resource that would broaden access to the national heritage. As of 2013, the DPLA operates as an independent nonprofit. It supports its partner institutions by acting as both a discovery tool and a metadata repository for their digitized content. For users, the DPLA provides a single access point to collections from repositories across the United States. For developers, the DPLA's open application programming interface (API) offers programmatic access to the DPLA's datastore for independent development.

Objectives / Problem To Be Solved

The DPLA's goal is to make digital materials from several different repositories and institutions aggregatable, interoperable, and thus more usable from the end-user perspective. Part of this goal is also to maximize usability and transferability of this information so as to encourage community and external development around its open data and code.

Recent Activities

The DPLA has had several recent milestones in its development, including

- **Discovery portal:** The DPLA launched its discovery portal in April 2013. It allows for uniform public searchability among several institutions' digital collections through a variety of interfaces, including map, timeline, and standard search. Curated exhibitions on topics of national interest are also available. All of the DPLA's front-end code is open source and available on Github.
- **Platform:** The DPLA released its open source API in April 2013. Metadata formats are completely open access to allow for development.
- **App library:** In conjunction with its platform, the DPLA created an App library to display user-created applications and tools using the open source API. In addition, the DPLA sponsored an "appfest" in November of 2012 to encourage the development of tools that are interoperable with the DPLA platform.

Members/Partners

At present, the DPLA has the following partners:

- ARTstor
- Berkman Center for Internet and Society
- Biodiversity Heritage Library
- David Rumsey Map Collection
- Digital Commonwealth (MA)
- Digital Library of Georgia
- Europeana
- Harvard Library
- HathiTrust Digital Library
- Kentucky Digital Library
- Minnesota Digital Library
- Mountain West Digital Library (UT, NV, AZ, ID)
- National Archives and Records Administration
- National Digital Stewardship Alliance
- New York Public Library
- OpenGLAM
- Smithsonian Institution
- South Carolina Digital Library
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of Southern California
- University of Virginia

Funders/Funding Model

The DPLA has been funded by The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Arcadia Fund, the Institute of Museum and

Governance

The DPLA is led by an Executive Director and a Board of Directors. Reporting to and working closely with the Executive Director and the Board are standing board committees and operational committees. Standing board committees consist of members of the board, former Steering Committee members, and additional members selected by the Board or Advisory Committee. Board committees provide advice on issues related to policy and strategy; they include the Advisory Committee, the Governance Committee, and the Finance Committee. Operational committees are composed of members of DPLA workstreams, additional members asked by DPLA staff to serve as convening members, and members of the public serving as non-convening members. Operational committees provide recommendations on issues related to the DPLA's operations; they include the Legal Committee, the Content Strategy Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Marketing and Outreach Committee.

Next Steps / Planned Future Work

DPLA has several planned future works including:

- Content: The DPLA will work to build out its infrastructure of "Digital Hubs," state, regional and content-based aggregators as well as large data providers from cultural heritage institutions that provide data to the DPLA for harvest.
- E-books: The DPLA will be looking at ways to make e-book and other currently relevant content available to the extent possible.
- Developments: The DPLA will continue to support the creation of tools, apps, and other improvements by developer communities.