



<http://projecthydra.org/>

Hydra Project

Overview

The Hydra project began in 2008 as collaboration between three universities to create a “Fedora application kit.” At present, Hydra is a technical framework that allows institutions to build custom front-ends – in the form of applications or workflows, otherwise known as “heads” – to their repositories. Hydra is also the nucleus of a consortial technical community, providing like-minded institutions with the mechanism to combine their individual development efforts and create collective solutions that would far outmatch individual ones. Hydra’s code base is primarily in Ruby on Rails.

Objectives / Problem to be Solved

Hydra’s principal objective is to give institutions a shared application framework to complement Fedora; enhancing the value and utility of Fedora repositories and making it quicker to deploy repository-powered applications for managing, preserving and providing access to assets.

Hydra also actively promotes best practices and shared development across participating institutions. By investing in staff skills training, test-driven development and peer review of work, it is creating a technical network of experts with a shared approach to like problems.

Recent Activities

Hydra has many recent accomplishments including (but not limited to):

- HydraHead Gem: Ruby on Rails application that provides web interface for creating, updating and deleting Fedora Objects.
- Sufia: A Rails engine for creating a self-deposit institutional repository. A web application for ingest, curation, search, and display.
- Avalon: a Hydra head for managing and providing access to video objects.
- HydraCamp training opportunities offered at partner institutions and at conferences.

Governance

Hydra Partners, institutions that have signed up to further Hydra’s aims, are

Members/Partners

As of August 2013 there are 19 partners in the Hydra project.

- Stanford University
- University of Virginia
- University of Hull
- DuraSpace
- MediaShelf LLC
- University of Notre Dame
- Northwestern University
- Penn State University
- Indiana University
- London School of Economics
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
- Royal Library of Denmark
- Data Curation Experts
- WGBH
- Boston Public Library
- Duke University
- Yale University
- Columbia University
- Virginia Tech

Funders/Funding model

There are no membership dues from partners, etc. All of the development, coordination, and common infrastructure is supported and underwritten by the participating institutions.

responsible for community maintenance, growth, and coordination of resources. The partners shape and direct work based on their own use of Hydra. Project coordination happens in regular phone calls and quarterly face-to-face meetings. Administrative needs are met by a small Steering Group comprising the first five partners to join the Hydra Project: Stanford University, University of Virginia, University of Hull, DuraSpace and MediaShelf LLC. In addition, the Hydra Developers, those who are actively writing and maintaining Hydra Heads for their institutions, define technical architecture and integrate new code. Developers conduct peer review on each other's code contributions.

Next Steps / Planned Future Work

In the upcoming years, Hydra's goals include:

- Develop a full suite of “solution bundles”: institutional repositories, ETD systems, image management systems
- Develop “turnkey applications” to attract more members to the community
- Grow vendor ecosystem
- Invest in the project's documentation framework
- Enhance and deliver training to new Partners and adopters
- Evolve the community framework to keep pace with the rapid growth of the project
- Advance the technical framework, to maximize functionality and code re-use