Having a Social Impact: Supporting Social Justice and Open Access through Digital Initiative Projects

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Having a Social Impact: Supporting Social Justice and Open Access through Digital Initiative Projects

**Presenter 1 Title**  
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**Presenter 2 Title**  
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**Presenter 3 Title**  
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**Session Type**  
60-minute panel session

**Abstract**  
Digital infrastructures and tools allow organizations and institutions to create opportunities for projects, information transfer, learning, and platforms for a range of voices. It also creates opportunities that promote open access, social justice, and social impact. Panelists who are directly involved in digital initiative projects that specifically seek to impact society, either by opening up information resources to everyone, or by giving people the digital resources they need to be self-supportive, will talk about their projects and the beliefs that underpin their efforts. From libraries, to online content providers, to digital skills educators, the panel represents a wide range of organizations that are employing digital initiatives for social good. Organizations participating in this panel discussion include three nonprofit organizations: the Catholic Research Resources Alliance, Digital Divide Data, and the Center for Bibliographical and Research Studies, UC-Riverside.

**Location**  
KIPJ Room G

**Keywords**  
Open access; Social Justice; Newspapers; Preservation; Collaborative Projects; Museums; Education
ABSTRACT:

Digital infrastructures and tools allow organizations and institutions to create opportunities for projects, information transfer, learning, and platforms for a range of voices. It also creates opportunities that promote open access, social justice, and social impact. Panelists who are directly involved in digital initiative projects that specifically seek to impact society, either by opening up information resources to everyone, or by giving people the digital resources they need to be self-supportive, will talk about their projects and the beliefs that underpin their efforts. From libraries, to online content providers, to digital skills educators, the panel represents a wide range of organizations that are employing digital initiatives for social good. Organizations participating in this panel discussion include three nonprofit organizations: the Catholic Research Resources Alliance, Digital Divide Data, and the Center for Bibliographical and Research Studies, UC-Riverside.

DESCRIPTION:

Libraries, newspapers, and education are in many ways underpinned by social justice, social impact and open access. Spirited discussions about to what extent organizations aligned with these areas are, and should be advocates for particular social positions are frequent occurrences especially in light of values such as freedom of the press, access for everyone, intellectual freedom, which speak to social justice, social impact, and open access. Michael Novak, a scholar and occasional journalist, wrote that social justice was originally a Catholic term used first around 1840 and made necessary for a post-agrarian society: “Social justice is really the capacity to organize with others to accomplish ends that benefit the whole community.” (https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/report/social-justice-not-what-you-think-it). Achieving social impact through expanded training and employment opportunities in communities and countries where there are few such opportunities is an important means for advancing social justice. Open access begins with free and direct access to materials in a library. In our digital world, definitions add “freely available online” and going one step further, with no limits on reuse of the materials. (SPARC, Peter Suber). In the fifth of eight conversations in The University Worth Fighting For, students related classroom practices to larger issues of social justice in discussing Open Scholarship for Social Justice. Digital infrastructures even offered the opportunity for education to be more democratized, with doors opened to all through accessible learning irrespective of location, and especially in light of the rising cost of education.

While we aren’t the first and won’t be the last to see close connections between social justice, social impact and open access, we look at this issue through the prism of how multiple organizations make the connection in their activities. Panelists will include individuals from the Catholic Research Resources Alliance, Digital Divide Data, and the Center for Bibliographic and Research Studies. Two additional panelists have been invited. Panelists will discuss their digital initiatives, such as the Catholic News Archive, the California Digital Newspaper Collection, and the partnership between DDD and the National Museums of Kenya for the preservation of museum collections, with a focus on how these digital initiatives seek to have social impact, support social justice, and open access in a range of ways.
LEARNING OUTCOMES:
   1. Learn about different digital initiatives that have social impact implications
   2. Gain an understanding of the philosophies underpinning the projects
   3. Find out about the long term potential for these projects and the challenges they face.

KEYWORDS

Open access; Social Justice; Newspapers; Preservation; Collaborative Projects; Museums; Education

PRESENTATION NEEDS:

Projector, Laptop, presenters stand, tables for panelists with microphones.