OCLC’s Public Purpose and Pro Bono Activities

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What is a Public Purpose?

Nonprofit organizations are corporations that concentrate on fulfilling a public purpose rather than on making money for their “members, directors, officers or other private persons.”
What is Pro Bono?

Pro bono publico (usually shortened to pro bono) is a phrase derived from Latin meaning “for the public good.” The term is generally used to describe professional work undertaken voluntarily and without payment as a public service. It is common in the legal profession and is increasingly seen in marketing, technology and strategy consulting firms. Pro bono service, unlike traditional volunteerism, uses the specific skills of professionals to provide services to those who are unable to afford them.

What are OCLC’s Public Purposes

Statement of commitment to each other—that we will work together to improve access to the information held in libraries around the globe, and find ways to reduce costs for libraries through collaboration.
What are OCLC’s Public Purposes (cont.)

- Establish, maintain and operate a computerized library network and to promote the evolution of library use, of libraries themselves and of librarianship
- Provide processes and products for the benefit of library users and libraries
- Furthering ease of access to and use of the ever-expanding body of worldwide scientific, literary and educational knowledge and information
OCLC’s Public Purposes Serve

- Librarians
- Libraries
- Librarianship
- Society
Librarians

- Services and resources
- Events
- Publications
- Scholarships and awards
Libraries

- Resources
  - Speakers Bureau/Presentation Archive
  - Innovation Lab
  - Developer Network
  - OCLC Library and archive

- Services
  - DDC
  - Research prototypes
Librarianship

- Research
  - Research activities
  - Research publications
- Membership reports
  - Ex. *Perceptions of Libraries, 2010: Context and Community*
- Standards
  - Ex. Dublin Core Metadata Initiative
Society

- Advocacy
  - Ex. “Geek the Library” programs
- Services and Partnerships
  - Ex. WorldCat.org
- Community service and disaster relief
Preliminary Conclusions

Members clearly support OCLC’s public purposes in an abstract sense but are largely unaware of what those activities comprise or what they cost. In considering how to fund OCLC’s public purposes, the CSMTF considered such options as:

a) offering members the ability to opt in/out of funding for public purposes, or;

b) restricting access to such services to members.
Preliminary Conclusions (cont.)

• OCLC’s public purposes should remain core activities funded by all members and provided as a public benefit to the broad library, archive and museum community without regard to membership in OCLC.

• OCLC’s public purposes should remain core activities funded by all members and provided as a public benefit to both members and nonmembers.
Preliminary Conclusions (cont.)

• OCLC’s public purposes and their associated cost should be reviewed by Global Council, with feedback and recommendations forwarded to the Board of Trustees and Management.
Conveying OCLC’s Public Purposes

• OCLC will need to find, describe and create awareness about its public purposes.

• A working group composed of Kendall Wiggin, Debbie Schachter and Anja Smit reviewed a document drafted by Cathy De Rosa (VP for the Americas and Global VP of Marketing). It was then discussed by the Task Force.
  • Audience
  • Purpose