

# V-Cat ILS Evaluation and Review Committee

## Meeting Notes for Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

This meeting was held at the WVLS office. Remote attendees are marked with an \* below.

Meeting Facilitator: Katie Zimmermann, ILS Administrator

Committee Members Present: D. Frandrup\* (Antigo), E. Brewster\* (Demmer/Three Lakes), K. Heiting\* (Granton), M. Handel\* (Simek/Medford), C. Luebbe (MCPL), R. Metzler\* (WVLS), K. Zimmermann (WVLS)

Others Present: T. Blomberg\* (Rib Lake)

Committee Members Absent: A. Johnson (MCPL), A. Polinski (Rhineland).

The meeting was called to order at 9:31 am

No one requested changes to the meeting agenda.

Meeting schedule for 2022 was reviewed. The committee will meet the second Thursday of each month from 9:30-11:30 am. Meeting times will be confirmed on a monthly basis and can be adjusted as needed.

K. Heiting agreed to serve as Committee Recordkeeper and submit draft notes to K. Zimmermann after each meeting.

The Committee's purpose was reviewed:

The Committee is charged with reviewing available Integrated Library Systems / Library Service Platforms and their viability for the V-Cat Consortium. Ultimately the committee will be expected to present a recommendation to V-Cat to either re-negotiate the current contract with Innovative or negotiate a new service contract with another vendor.

K. Zimmermann shared information about the Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) and Northern Waters Library System (NWLS) ILS Evaluation and Review Processes.

MCFLS had an ILS Evaluation and Review Committee with multiple sub-committees/workgroups for each area of Sierra. It was noted that WVLS/V-Cat is made up of smaller libraries than MCFLS and may not have enough people for that method. might not have enough people for sub committees. MCFLS sub committees developed functional requirements for each area and sent out a Request for Information (RFI) with those requirements to vendors. Once the vendors replied the committee determined which vendors to schedule demonstrations. The vendors' demos were very specific and covered all the major functional areas. MCFLS demos were spread over the course of multiple days. Because they spent time on each area, they were able to ask a lot of questions and get a good feel for the products as a whole. After demos, MCFLS had interviews with library consortium using the product. This was followed by scoring of the products against a predefined matrix. At that point some products were dropped from consideration. Finally, MCFLS is scheduling visits to libraries using the remaining products under consideration. It was noted that MCFLS was able to get access to trials of some add-on products with Sierra. MCFLS began their process in summer of 2021 and is planning to bring a recommendation to

their directors' council by summer 2022. The MCFLS RFI was shared with the V-Cat ILS Evaluation and Review Committee.

Products under consideration at Milwaukee County Federated Library System:

- SirsiDynix, Symphony
- Innovative, Sierra (current ILS)
- Innovative, Polaris - dropped from consideration
- The Library Company, CarlX - dropped from consideration

NWLS is not as far along in their process as MCFLS. Their committee is meeting every other week and selected four products to review. They began with shorter demonstrations – approximately two hours each, to get an overview of the products. After demos, NWLS requested initial price quotes. They selected two vendors to pursue and will be sending out a RFI to each vendor to gather more detailed information.

Products under consideration at Northern Waters Library System:

- SirsiDynix, Symphony - dropped from consideration
- Innovative, Sierra (current ILS)
- Innovative, Polaris - dropped from consideration
- The Library Company, CarlX
- Koha, supported by Bywater Solutions

Discussion of the MCFLS and NWLS methods followed. It was noted that shorter overview demos could come off as more of a sales pitch.

K. Zimmermann indicated that LSTA funding and other funding might be available for collaborative projects related to discovery and resource sharing between systems between 2022 and 2027. The committee and V-Cat as a whole may want to consider the benefits to working with other systems, including NWLS who has expressed interest in working with WVLS.

The committee reviewed a draft list of tasks for V-Cat ILS Review Process and discussed a possible schedule paying close attention to deadlines for contract changes, and meeting dates. A discussion of how long each task would take followed, along with development of a rough timeline. A timeline document was developed during the meeting and will be shared with committee members for review at the next meeting. Additional constraints on staff time such as summer reading and annual report were considered and will be noted on the timeline to help balance workflow. It seems possible that the Committee could complete an RFI in the next few months, demonstrations towards the end of 2022, select a product in 2023 and implement changes by the end of August 2024.

E. Brewster volunteered to draft a Gantt chart to visualize the timeline and will work with K. Zimmermann to refine possible schedules for the next meeting.

It was noted that communication with V-Cat Council throughout the process is very important, and it was suggested that a committee report be included in the V-Cat Council meeting agenda.

K. Zimmermann gave a short overview of some of the available ILS/LSP vendors and products, which will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Points that will be considered include – the number of libraries using a product, products under consideration by NWLS and MCFLS, whether the product is compatible for consortia, how many libraries have migrated to the product from Sierra, and whether the

company is continuing to develop product improvements. The committee agreed that products that are not releasing product improvements, such as Horizon or Millennium should not be considered. It was noted that established companies are becoming more consolidated yet have not grown the size of their development staff. Open-source products have seen more development staff growth. It is recommended that V-Cat consider Sierra alongside any other products, as the staff survey indicated that over 80% of staff who responded are satisfied with the areas of Sierra they use on a regular basis, however 50% are open to, or in favor of making a change.

Due to lack of time, K. Zimmermann asked if any committee members had questions about the MCFLS Request for Information (RFI) Document, and noted that V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee, V-Cat Bibliographic and Interface Committee are providing feedback. MCPL staff will be providing feedback about Acquisitions, Additional sections will be covered by WVLS staff and inquiries to library directors. K. Zimmermann will compile the information and review the staff survey so that a draft of the V-Cat RFI with Functionality Requirements can be ready for review at the next Committee meeting.

Agenda items suggested for the next meeting:

- Review of Staff Survey Results
- Review of Functionality Requirements Feedback
- Review of Draft RFI
- Review of Timeline
- Vendors to Consider
- Set Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 14 9:30-11:30 am

Meeting was adjourned at 11:34