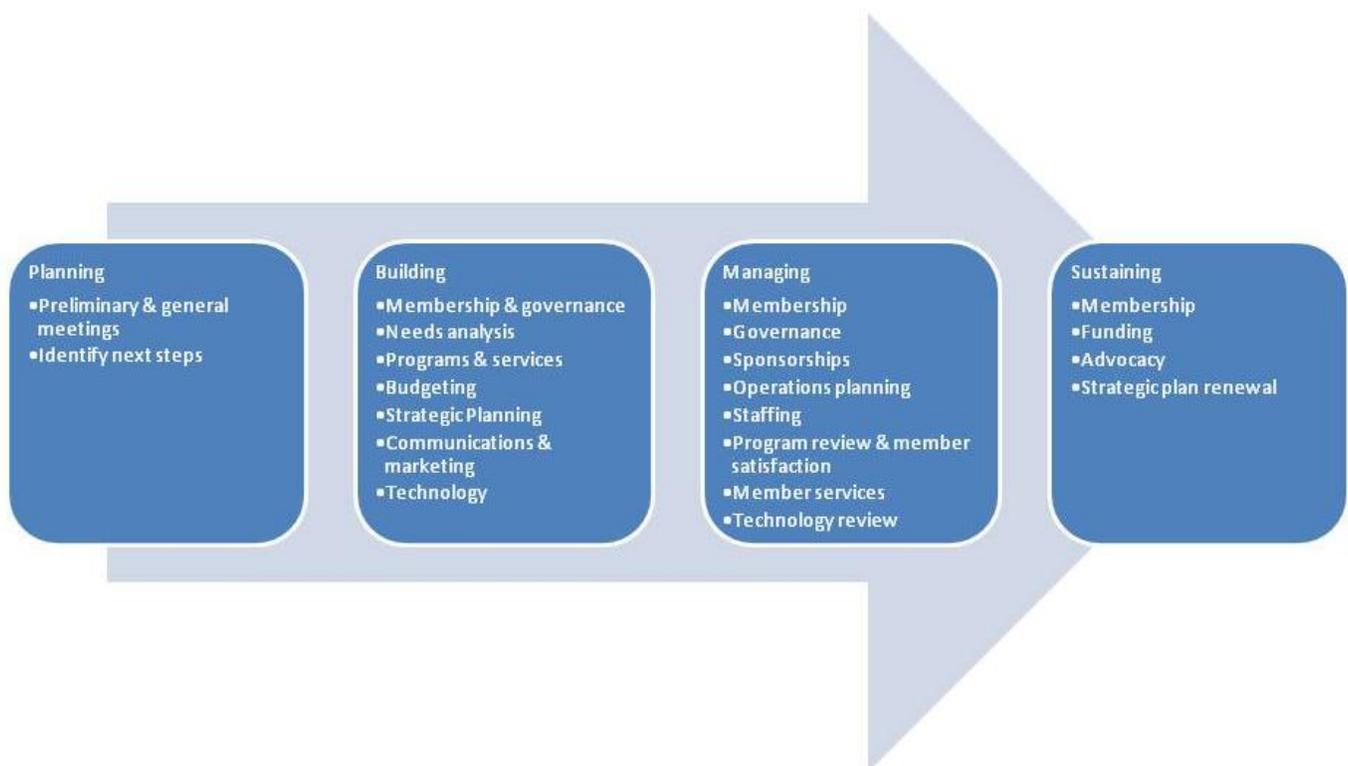# eifl

knowledge without boundaries

EIFL CONSORTIUM ROADMAP
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This document provides a checklist to help a consortium to get started, and for all consortia to advance through succeeding stages to provide high quality services to its members and ensure the sustainability of the organization. This document follows the consortium through four steps:

1. Planning

2. Building

3. Managing

4. Sustaining

Planning
- Preliminary & general meetings
- Identify next steps

Building
- Membership & governance
- Needs analysis
- Programs & services
- Budgeting
- Strategic Planning
- Communications & marketing
- Technology

Managing
- Membership
- Governance
- Sponsorships
- Operations planning
- Staffing
- Program review & member satisfaction
- Member services
- Technology review

Sustaining
- Membership
- Funding
- Advocacy
- Strategic plan renewal

STEP 1: PLANNING FOR THE CONSORTIUM

Starting a new consortium is exciting, and it doesn't have to be difficult. This checklist was developed to help you to speed the process of creating and advancing your library consortium.

1.1 Conduct an Organizational Meeting. The first step is to hold an organization meeting of the group. Typically, the first meeting should bring together individuals who either are known to be very interested in the creation of a consortium, or who are key library leaders within the country. Try to keep the first meeting limited small in size (perhaps 8-10 people) to help keep the conversation focused.

The agenda for the first should include:
o the purpose of the consortium
o the desired membership (e.g., academic libraries, public libraries)
o which individuals will lead the organizing effort toward the next steps
o host and coordinate a General Planning Meeting (see below)
o deciding the invitation list for the planning meeting
o setting the date, time and location of the General Planning Meeting

1.2 Hold the General Planning Meeting. This is an open meeting for all individuals who might be interested in creating a country consortium. For the second meeting, invite as many interested parties as possible to ensure that there will be broad support for the consortium.

The agenda for the General Planning Meeting should include:
o an explanation of the benefits of forming a consortium
o an overview of the results of the first meeting
o agreement upon the mission and membership of the consortium
o selecting the planning committee (and committee chair) to keep the momentum going
o agreement on the scope of membership
o identification of future consortium programs or services (e.g., e-resources access).

1.3 Next Steps. The final planning steps for your consortium include:
   1.3.1 Define the roles and responsibilities for each member of the planning committee
   1.3.2 Create a preliminary list of tentative priorities for future activities, using the Step 2 Checklist below as your guide
   1.3.3 Send a summation of the activities and decisions to date to all general meeting attendees, and your next steps
   1.3.4 Establish methods to maintain regular communications with members (e.g., creation of an email listserv and a basic web site or Facebook page for the consortium)
   1.3.5 Educate the planning committee and the general membership about the benefits of consortia in general, and about EIFL in particular.
   1.3.6 Create a list of potential stakeholders for the consortium (e.g., members, sponsors, funders, governmental ministries or agencies, related NGOs). Invite the stakeholders to an informational meeting about the consortium (or, if a meeting is impractical, send an informational overview to these individuals and invite their participation).

1.4 Contact and work with EIFL to:
   1.4.1 Review other information that is available to help build your consortium
   1.4.2 Review the steps and requirements for EIFL membership
   1.4.3 Identify potential speakers for a consortium building workshop, and sources of funding to whom your country can apply to support the workshop

This step is for consortia that are either entirely new, in the start-up phase, or in the process of significant redefinition. You may not have yet determined your membership criteria or created a strategic plan, and most of the consortium's work is being done by volunteers. Step 2 will help you answer important questions, such as: will your consortium be an independent organization or will it be sponsored by or be an official office of a government agency? What should the governance structure look like? Which programs or services should the consortium provide? What will be the sources of funding? What will be you measures of success?

The answers to all of these questions are of critical importance to ensure the sustainability of your consortium. This section provides you with a structured way to proceed in a logical fashion, and advance to Step 3.

2.1 Membership and Governance

2.1.1 Finalize which types of libraries will qualify to be consortium members (e.g., academic, public, research institutes, special libraries)

2.1.2 Create formal membership categories, qualifications and expectations for membership.

2.1.3 Define your form of governance, including whether you will have a board of directors, and whether you will be:

2.1.3.1 an formal independent incorporation (e.g., an NGO)
2.1.3.2 sponsored by a host organization (e.g., a lead university or government ministry
2.1.3.3 an informal organization with no established home.

Note: it is common for a consortium to begin informally or initially to be sponsored by a host organization, and to formalize or incorporate at a later stage of development. Laws and statutes within an individual country may also affect whether a country consortium can become a formal NGO.

2.1.4 If your consortium has a board, what is the composition of that board, i.e.,
2.1.4.1 determine who will be the officers or leaders, their roles, and their terms of office
2.1.4.2 begin to engage the board in the work of EIFL

2.1.5 Determine if any staffing will be hired. (*Note*: it is common to start the consortium with only volunteer staff.

2.1.6 Identify a minimum number of standing committees to ensure effective ongoing program and consortium management.

2.1.7 If the consortium will be an independent organization, prepare bylaws, articles of incorporation, and register the consortium as a legal entity.

2.1.8 If (for the time being) the consortium cannot be an independent legal entity, create a memorandum of understanding between the consortium and members to clarify roles and responsibilities.

2.2 Needs Analysis. Conduct a needs analysis (e.g., through electronic or telephone surveys, focus groups, online discussions) to identify member's primary areas of need and opportunities for the consortium to meet those needs.

2.3 Programs and Services

2.3.1 Define and place in priority order the initial (core and subsidiary) programs and services that will provide consortium members with the most value (e.g., license e-resources, educational workshops, union catalog, digitization, institutional repositories, technology support, intellectual property advocacy). (Note: the consortium may wish to provide only limited services at the beginning, and to grow additional services over time.)

2.4 Budgeting

2.4.1 Identify the short-term and long-term funding needs of the consortium (e.g., meeting expenses, travel, consultants, staff, technology, communications), establish spending priorities, and determine which needs could be funded over a multi-year period.

2.4.2 Identify the primary sources of funding to sustain the work of the consortium, e.g.,
2.4.2.1 *Sponsor Financial Support.* Identify and select potential sponsor(s), based in part upon the opportunity to receive sustainable funding (e.g., from a government agency).
2.4.2.2 *Membership Financial Support.* Determine the willingness and ability of membership to support (at least in part) the ongoing costs of the consortium through dues or fees, and develop a longer-term strategy to increase membership contributions during the transitional step.
2.4.2.3 *External funds.* Determine if and how much funding should be sought from outside of the sponsors and members (e.g., from grants or foundations). If pursuing external funding, write a short statement to describe the need and the potential benefit if the funds are received.

2.5 Strategic Planning. Conduct meetings, retreats or workshops to develop a membership profile and the consortium strategic plan. The initial strategic plan should be for a period of two-to-three years. The strategic plan should include the following:

2.5.1 Mission statement
2.5.2 Vision statement
2.5.3 Organizational values
2.5.4 Goals for the next three years. Limit the goals preferably three wildly important goals (to a maximum of five goals)

2.5.5 For each goal, define a small number of objectives to accomplish

2.5.6 For each objective, define the criteria to measure your success in achieving the objectives, i.e., qualitative or quantitative criteria by which to judge the impact of the consortium or the value the consortium creates for members.) These criteria should be used regularly to monitor the progress of the consortium.

See also: Strategic Planning Tip Sheet

2.6 Communications, Marketing and Advocacy

2.6.1 Determine the official name of the consortium

2.6.2 Create a standard logo for the consortium (which can be just the name of the consortium using a particular type font)

2.6.3 Determine the ongoing methods for communication with consortium members and stakeholders, e.g.,
2.6.3.1 Website with RSS feeds
2.6.3.2 Email listservs
2.6.3.3 Social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, wikis)
2.6.3.4 Newsletters and brochures (electronic or in print)

2.6.4 If the consortium has external stakeholders or financial sponsors, engage them in the work of the consortium through regular meetings and by providing them with a regular stream of information (e.g., reports, brochures, emails).

2.7 Technology. Identify the costs and options for technology necessary to support the core functions of the consortium, including consortium communications and service delivery (e.g., servers for the consortium web site, social networking functions), or any consortium-provided services for members, such as institutional repositories or library catalog.

2.8 Completing the EIFL Requirements

2.8.1 **EIFL Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).** Sign and return to the EIFL office the standard MoU.

2.8.2 **EIFL Country Coordinator.** Provide EIFL with the contact information for the person who will be serving as the Country Coordinator (including the coordinator's name, position title, institutional affiliation, email address, and telephone number

2.8.3 **Consortium web site.** Provide EIFL with the URL of your consortium's web site. (If you do not yet have a web site, it is important to establish one as soon as possible!)

2.8.4 **EIFL Program Coordinators.** Provide EIFL with the name and contact information for all program coordinators (e.g., open access, IP, FOSS).

2.8.5 **EIFL Listservs.** Inform all members of the consortium about EIFL listservs and encourage members to sign-up for lists in which they are interested.

2.8.6 **EIFL Dues.** EIFL will notify you of your annual dues each year, which are to be paid by the country to EIFL by the end of March.

Congratulations! By this time you have created a new consortium, and it is has begun to operate fully. You have also completed all of the requirements to become a member of EIFL. Your work now only begins. There is much that you must do to ensure the effective operations and of your consortium. The steps to accomplish this are covered in this section of the Roadmap.

3.1 Membership. Annually review membership retention rate as a measure of member satisfaction, and membership categories and pricing to determine if adjustments are necessary for the next fiscal year.

3.2 Governance
- **3.1.1** Develop a calendar of recurring Board activities.
- **3.1.2** Implement annual board nomination processes and election procedures, and conduct annual balloting to elect new board members and officers.
- **3.1.3** Conduct regular general membership meetings (at least annually, if possible).
- **3.1.4** Review the work of standing committees, ad hoc task forces, interest groups, etc., and determine if any revisions are necessary to their charges.
- **3.1.5** Prepare and implement a process for the Board to evaluate its own effectiveness.
- **3.1.6** Determine whether the consortium should migrate its governance model to become an independent incorporation (NGO) or otherwise changing its governance model.

3.2 Sponsorship
- **3.2.1** Solidify support from sponsors through effective marketing information about the consortium and demonstrating strong return on investment.
- **3.2.2** Submit proposals to expand consortium activities based upon successes to date.

3.3 Strategic and Operations Planning.
- **3.3.1** Create annual operating goals built around the strategic plan. Review the strategic plan annually to measure your progress
- **3.3.2** Create operating goals for the coming year, and assign tasks to individuals.

3.4 Staffing, Volunteers and Committees. If the consortium hires staff, annually review and approve their job descriptions and annual goals, (b) recruit new staff (as necessary)**,** and (c) develop and implement adopt an effective staff assessment (evaluation) process.

3.5 Program Review and Member Satisfaction.
- **3.5.1** Annually review all programs and services against the success metrics that are established in the strategic and operating plans. Based upon this review, determine whether to continue, modify, or eliminate each existing program and service.
- **3.5.2** At least once every two years, conduct a membership survey (and/or focus groups) to: determine membership needs and satisfaction with consortium services, generate ideas for future programs to meet the future needs of members, and accelerate the speed of development and momentum of the consortium.

3.5.3   Employ the success metrics that are described in the strategic planning tip sheet. These metrics are important to monitor the level of progress of your consortium. Publicize programs and services that achieved significant success. Where success has not been achieved, determine if there was a particular factor that impeded success, or whether the lack of success is was caused by any intentional changes in the consortium's strategic plans.

3.6 Technology

3.6.1   **Program Delivery.** If the consortium is providing members with any direct technology services, ensure that all systems are running effectively, and that all users are fully trained on how to use the system. If upgrades are required, assess the costs involved, issue requests-for-proposals (if appropriate), and begin to implement systems.

3.6.2   **Internal Infrastructure.** Evaluate what upgrades may be necessary to the internal infrastructure (e.g., to communicate with members) to ensure that it is sufficiently robust to ensure effective service delivery and communication.

3.7 Completing the EIFL Requirements

3.7.1   **Selection of EIFL Country and Program Coordinators**. EIFL has recommended criteria for the assignment of country and program coordinators. Particularly important are expertise in the topic area, an interest in engaging in the work of EIFL, and sharing what is learned with others in your country.

3.7.2   **Primary and Secondary Coordinators.** It is likely that your country coordinator and program coordinators will change over time. Your should consortium list at least two people from your for each position (e.g., the primary and secondary country coordinator). This is helpful for at least four reasons: (1) there is an automatic backup in case the primary coordinator is unavailable, (2) there is a second source of information within the country, (3) you can "share the workload", and (4) the consortium can practice succession planning, having someone ready to step into the primary role who is already well informed.

An exceptional consortium can continue to provide valuable services to its members if it has taken the necessary measures to ensure its own sustainability. This means building coalitions not only within the membership, with other stakeholders (such as your current and potential funders), users of libraries within your country, and administrators and managers of the member library institutions (such as their universities). This process requires constant communication, outreach, and involvement. This section outlines the major steps you should take to ensure that you build support and gain the financial support that are essential to the health of your consortium.

4.1 Membership

4.1.1 Hold meetings regularly (either in-person or virtually) with members to ensure they are aware of all services that are available from the consortium.

4.1.2 For consortium services that are being under-utilized, conduct telephone, email or other surveys or interviews to determine the cause. Determine whether members need more information about the service or whether the service is no longer valued and can be discontinued.

4.1.3 Create a regular stream of communications with members through meetings, electronic communications, newsletters, etc.

4.2 Budgeting. Develop and maintain a multi-year budget (e.g., a three-year budget) that predicts future revenue and expenses, and delineates and balances one-time and ongoing funding needs.

4.2.1 **Funding Needs.** On an annual basis, develop a list of funding needs and potential opportunities to obtain funding.

4.2.2 **Sponsor Financial Support**. On a regular basis, meet with and provide sponsors with information (e.g., reports, brochures, emails) to reinforce the value of their sponsorship in the past and to secure their commitment for the next fiscal year.

4.2.3 **Membership Financial Support.** If the consortium has dues and/or fees, engage members in a dialog about the importance of those revenue sources to ensure the sustainability of the consortium. If the consortium currently has no dues or fees, discuss their implementation to build ownership and provide sustainable revenue to support ongoing programs and services.

4.1.1 **External Funding.**
    4.1.1.1 Expand funding sources beyond the initial base.
    4.1.1.2 Generate and implement an effective multi-year and diversified fundraising plan (i.e., avoid over-reliance on a single source of income).
    4.1.1.3 Develop new programs that are geared toward fundable projects
    4.1.1.4 Develop case statements for these projects

4.1.1.5 Develop a list of possible sources to approach for funding.
4.1.1.6 Develop a list of potential funding sources for each case statement that can demonstrate the value of the consortium.
4.1.1.7 Document successes to build upon to seek additional funding.

4.3 Advocacy. Ensure members are aware of what the consortium has to offer by developing, implementing and maintaining an effective and comprehensive marketing and communications plan.

4.3.1 Develop and implement an outreach and communications plan to communicate and involve all key stakeholders (e.g., members, sponsors, funders, governmental ministries or agencies, related NGOs). Invite the stakeholders to an informational meeting about the consortium or (if a meeting is impractical) send an informational overview to these individuals and invite their participation.

4.3.2 Create a social networking strategic plan to maximize the availability of information, enable effective involvement, and minimize the amount of time required for support. Consider not only which social media will be most effective in your country, e.g., web site, blogs, wikis, RSS feeds, Facebook, Twitter, etc., but also which software platforms would be most beneficial. (Remember, there are many free and open source software solutions for social networking!)

See also: the EIFL web site has a wealth of information about how to engage in effective advocacy

4.4 Strategic Planning Renewal. Every three years, begin a new strategic planning (as described in Step 2 above).

See also: Strategic Planning Tip Sheet