



Recommendations of the  
Contribution Model Working Group

November 2019

# Contribution Model Recommendations

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## Background

For a number of years, Partners have struggled to understand what is expected of them and, conversely, the Community has struggled to understand what to offer Partners in return. One thing that has always been clear, though, Samvera has benefited from huge investments of in-kind resources from its Partners and adopters. However, the decision to move toward one or two permanent staff has resulted in a need for a reliable and more substantial funding stream.

The Samvera Partners commissioned a Contribution Model Working Group at the Partner Meeting in March 2018 in response to a recommendation by the Samvera Governance Working Group. The group developed [recommendations](#) they shared with Partners in advance of the Fall 2018 Partner meeting. Although the report outlined the benefits of Partnership and factors to be considered as part of developing a contribution model, it did not provide an explicit model for meeting the Community's financial needs.

At the Partner Meeting in Fall 2018, a second Contribution Model Working Group was formed whose charge was to explicitly outline a method for meeting the Community’s financial needs. The group followed on the heels of the first group with the intent of identifying a more concrete contribution model building off the recommendations developed by the first group. The hope was the Working Group would identify a model that could be used by the Community to provide a sustained source of income.

## Financial Need

Going forward, the scale of current monetary contributions from the Community needs to be compared with Samvera’s needs. Figure 1 outlines Samvera’s previous fiscal spends plus an estimated fiscal spend for the 2019 fiscal year.

<b>Annual Report Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Balance</b>
2016	\$66,045	\$29,267	\$43,232
2017	\$83,933	\$14,264	\$108,901
2018	\$113,108	\$23,241	\$176,043
<i>2019 (estimated)</i>	<i>\$153,000<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>\$40,000<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>\$289,043</i>

Figure 1. Samvera’s Fiscal Spends

In addition to funding annual operating costs as outlined in Figure 1, the Samvera Community would like to hire a single staff member, with the hope of hiring a second staff member later on down the line.

Below outlines a breakdown of costs for hiring a staff member. Two models for hiring are presented in Figure 2: the first identifies costs associated with hiring through Lyrasis and the second identifying costs associated with hiring through a Partner institution. For the purposes of this exercise, it is assumed that both organizations and individuals are based in Atlanta.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on current invoices for the upcoming fiscal year.

<sup>2</sup> This estimate does not include \$40,000 Hull will invoice to Samvera for time related to salary for the Samvera Operations Officer (Richard Green). This expenditure would presumably be subsumed into salary/benefits for the Community Manager.

	<b>Lyrasis</b>	<b>Emory<sup>3</sup></b>
Salary	\$85,000 <sup>4</sup>	\$85,000
Travel and Incidentals	\$10,000	\$10,000
Overhead	\$28,500 <sup>5</sup>	\$24,950 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$123,500</b>	<b>\$119,950</b>

Figure 2. Comparison of Hiring Costs

## Financial Contribution Models

The Working Group recognized there was a diversity of organizations within the Community. As such, the Working Group developed two models for providing contributions. The first applies to the class of Partners from academic, non-profit, or similarly situated institutions. The second applies to the class of Partners that are considered a Service Provider; that is, they provide services to others for a fee.

In addition, the Working Group wanted to value in-kind contributions Partners bring to our Community, while also being cognizant the Community needed a regular and sustainable source of income. To honor these contributions and to recognize that financial situations can fluctuate, the Working Group developed a method for providing a discount to both classes of Partners should the Partner have a financial circumstance that necessitates the need to reduce their financial contribution to the community.

## Academic or Non-Profit Institutions

The Working Group recognized that not all academic, non-profit, or similarly situated institutions are in a position to contribute large sums of money. In broad terms, the Working Group attempted to work toward a model in which each Partner in this class would be expected to contribute financially per fiscal year based on their size.

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<sup>3</sup> The above is an example to illustrate what costs might look like at a Partner institution. It does not indicate that Emory or any other Partner institution has agreed to host the position for the Community.

<sup>4</sup> The expected salary range for this position is \$70,000–\$85,000. For the purposes of this report, we use the higher of the two numbers.

<sup>5</sup> Assumes a flat 30% fee charged by Lyrasis on salary, travel, and incidentals.

<sup>6</sup> Includes fringe and overhead calculated on the salary.

## Contribution Model

The contribution model outlined in Figure 3 refers to academic institutions, non-profits, and similarly situated organizations.

	Institution Classification (Based on JSTOR)					Sustain
	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large	
	JISC Bands					
	10, 9, 8	7, 6	5A, 5B	4, 3	2, 1	
25% Discount	N/A	\$750	\$3,750	\$5,625	\$7,500	N/A
Minimum Contribution	\$500	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$15,000

Figure 3. Contribution Model for Academic, Non-Profit, and Similar Institutions

Note the contribution is what is required as a Samvera Partner at minimum, partners are welcome to contribute higher dollar amounts if they so wish. A discount **may be applied** if an institution identifies a financial need for the discount, chooses to contribute in-kind to the Community, and records that contribution with the Community.

## Discount Process

If a Partner of this class finds it difficult to make the minimum contribution, Partners would annually have the opportunity to apply for a 25% discount based on the in-kind contributions they performed during Samvera's previous fiscal year.

Each year a subcommittee of Samvera Steering will gather the following information from partners seeking a discount:

- The name and title of every person at the institution who contributed to the Samvera Community during Samvera's previous fiscal year.
- The Samvera Working/Interest Groups in which your institution provided representation during Samvera's previous fiscal year.
- Did any of the staff identified lead or complete significant Samvera-related projects during Samvera's previous fiscal year?
- Did any of the developers on at the institution contribute code to the Samvera Community during Samvera's previous fiscal year?
- Did any of the staff identified attend Samvera events (Samvera Connect, developer hack sessions, regional meetings, etc.) during Samvera's previous fiscal year? If the answer is yes, please indicate whether they presented.

- Has the institution contributed in ways not covered above during Samvera’s previous fiscal year?

The subcommittee will provide a deadline to Partner representatives for providing this information. The subcommittee will assess the information based on criteria they develop and publish to the community. The subcommittee will review the information and approve or disapprove the discount based on the criteria they developed. Changes to the questions, criteria or the information the subcommittee collects will be made at least one year in advance of the discount process.

If, even after applying for the discount, a Partner still has concerns about contributing financially to the Community, the Partner is asked to contact the Samvera Steering Group ([steering@samvera.org](mailto:steering@samvera.org)) to discuss the issue further.

## Samvera Service Providers

Once again, the Working Group recognized that not all service providers are in a position to contribute large sums of money; many of the Community’s current service providers are small organizations that are tightly coupled to the Community.

### Contribution Model

Samvera service providers pay an annual fee each fiscal year to the Samvera Community; the annual fees are based on the number of hours billed by the service provider on samvera based projects or hours spent on maintaining services for customers (e.g. hosting services) during Samvera’s fiscal year<sup>7</sup>.

Samvera Service Provider Classification						
	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large	Sustain
	0 - 3000 Billed Hours	3001 - 7,500 Billed Hours	7,501 - 15,000 Billed Hours	15,001 - 22,500 Billed Hours	22,501+ Billed Hours	
25% Discount	N/A	\$750	\$3,750	\$5,625	\$7,500	N/A
Minimum Contribution	\$500	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$15,000

Figure 4. Contribution Model for Samvera Service Providers

<sup>7</sup> Note that the number of billed hours is self-reported. It is expected that service providers are either tracking this information or can provide an estimation.

## Discount Process

If a Partner of this class finds it difficult to make the minimum contribution, Partners would annually have the opportunity to apply for a 25% discount based in part on the number of Partners the Samvera service provider billed as well as a valuation of the service provider's non-billable hours spent on in-kind contributions during Samvera's previous fiscal year. This discount model is similar to the ArchivesSpace Registered Service Provider model, in which service providers encourage their clients to become ArchivesSpace members.<sup>8</sup>

Each year a subcommittee of Samvera Steering will gather the following information:

- The number of hours the service provider billed for Samvera based work during Samvera's fiscal year.
- The number of non-billable hours the service provider spent on in-kind contributions during Samvera's fiscal year.
- The number of Samvera partners the service provider served during Samvera's fiscal year.

The subcommittee will provide a deadline to Partner representatives for providing this information. The subcommittee will assess the information based on criteria they develop and publish to the community. The subcommittee will review the information and approve or disapprove the discount based on the criteria they developed. Changes to the questions, criteria or the information the subcommittee collects will be made at least one year in advance of the discount process.

If, even after applying for the discount, a Partner still has concerns about contributing financially to the Community, the Partner is asked to contact the Samvera Steering Group ([steering@samvera.org](mailto:steering@samvera.org)) to discuss the issue further.

## Implementation Plan

The Contribution Model Working Group recognizes that financial situations vary from Partner to Partner. The Contribution Model Working Group recommends providing Partners three years from 2019 to contribute, with the expectation that by Summer 2022, when the call for contributions goes out, all Partners would be expected to pay the minimum contribution amount or apply for the discounted contribution.

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<sup>8</sup> [Why and How to Become an RSP](#) from the ArchivesSpace Website.

## Income Expectations

Figure 5 shows an estimate<sup>9</sup> for the amount of income the Community can expect to take in on a regular basis under the proposed models:

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Samvera Classification</b>	<b>Minimum Contribution</b>	<b>Discount Contribution</b>
Columbia University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Cornell University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Duke University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Emory University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Indiana University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Lafayette College	ACAD	Small	\$1,000	\$750
London School of Economics and Political Science	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
Northwestern University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Oregon State University	ACAD	Medium	\$5,000	\$3,750
Penn State University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Princeton University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Stanford University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Tufts University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
University of California, San Diego	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
University of California, Santa Barbara	ACAD	Medium	\$5,000	\$3,750
University of Cincinnati	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
University of Houston	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
University of Hull	ACAD	Medium	\$5,000	\$3,750
University of Michigan	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
University of Notre Dame	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
University of Oregon	ACAD	Medium	\$5,000	\$3,750
University of Utah	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
University of Virginia	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
University of York	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
Virginia Tech	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625
Washington University St. Louis	ACAD	Large	\$7,500	\$5,625

<sup>9</sup> If in the process of reviewing this table you see a discrepancy, please contact the Chair of the second Contribution Model Working Group, Rosalyn Metz ([rmetz@emory.edu](mailto:rmetz@emory.edu)).



Yale University	ACAD	Very Large	\$10,000	\$7,500
Boston Public Library	NP	Medium	\$5,000	\$3,750
Digital Library of Ireland	NP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
Digital Public Library of America	NP	Very Small	\$500	\$500
WGBH Boston	NP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
COSECTOR, University of London	SP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
Data Curation Experts	SP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
Duraspace	SP	Very Small	\$500	\$500
Notch 8	SP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
Ubiquity Press	SP	Small	\$1,000	\$750
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$230,500</b>	<b>\$173,125</b>

Figure 5. Income Expectations for the Samvera Community

## Next Steps

Below are recommendations and next steps for the community.

## Benefits of Partnership

While seeking to provide a steady and largely predictable level of resourcing for the Community, the Working Group also recognizes that this is a two-way process. In return for Partner contributions, the Community should undertake to provide a number of benefits. These benefits have been outlined by Samvera Steering on the [Samvera Community Framework](#) wiki page under the [Benefits to All Samvera Partners](#) section. However, the Working Group recommends that these benefits be reviewed by the Partnership if this contribution model is to move forward.

## Supporters

Supporters are organizations that are not Partners but are, nevertheless, willing to support the Community by way of financial donation or in kind contributions. The initial Working Group recommended that Samvera develop a list of benefits that such Supporters might expect. In the interim period, the Community has begun to raise funds for Samvera Connect by seeking out sponsorship for Samvera Connect event. Further benefits to Supporters might be the subject of later, more detailed work if Partners agree it is necessary to do so.