In 2018 the California Digital Library (CDL) and DuraSpace (now LYRASIS) announced a collaboration aimed at building an open, international community around Archival Resource Keys (ARKs) and their use as persistent identifiers in the open scholarly ecosystem.

Over 600 institutions (research, not-for-profit, private, government) across the world have registered to use ARKs. They’ve created an estimated 8.2 billion ARKs with publicly resolvable links to objects (digital, physical, people, places, etc).

Since 2001, CDL has served as the incubator for ARK infrastructure, consisting primarily of the specification, a registry of organizations using ARKs, and a global resolver service. Now, to achieve long-term sustainability, the ARK infrastructure must emerge from CDL and mature in partnership with multiple organizations and community participants to guide its future.

To jumpstart the process, CDL sought a collaboration with DuraSpace, an independent not-for-profit organization providing leadership for open technologies and communities such as Fedora, DSpace, and VIVO. With DuraSpace/LYRASIS’s help, the ARK outreach efforts have included:

- Assembling and consulting with an ARK advisory group.
- Developing procedures for shared maintenance of the organizational registry.
- Consulting with the wider ARK community on requirements, priorities and models for shared community and infrastructure management.
- Guiding the ARK specification through the IETF Informational RFC process, as well as,
- Participating in an initiative to gauge the scope of ARK usage world-wide.

These activities are just a start, and we continue to grow. To become involved, please fill out our Expression of Interest form and our Initial Interest Survey. If you’d like to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in this project, please see the Communications page on this wiki.

To get started assigning ARKs, check out the ARK FAQ and request a NAAN.