

November 8, 2021

TO: RAILS Consortia Committee – LLSAP Sustainability Working Group
FROM: Anne Slaughter
SUBJECT: Find More Illinois update and growth plan

Background

- Find More Illinois was designed to assist libraries of all types and sizes in resource sharing, regardless of whether they are a standalone library or consortium member. For some libraries, it can provide an affordable alternative to OCLC for interlibrary loan and/or as a source of cataloging records. The RAILS Board considers it a priority service to offer to standalone libraries in particular.
- Net expenditures for FY2022 are budgeted at approximately \$196,000, or just under 2% of the RAILS System Area and Per Capita Grant revenue.
- Pilot activities for Find More Illinois began in February 2018, with 21 libraries trained and going live in April 2018
- A Find More Illinois Working Group was charged by the RAILS Resource Sharing Committee to advise on the expansion of Find More Illinois. This group met in April and June of 2018.
- The first fee structure was approved by the RAILS Board in August 2018. A revised fee structure which reduced fees at the higher tiers was approved by the RAILS Board in 2019, as part of the FY2020 System Area and Per Capita Grant application, and effective July 1, 2019.
- Using feedback from the Find More Illinois Working Group, membership expansion beyond the pilot libraries began in late fall 2018 and continued through 2019.
- A major marketing push for additional expansion was planned for early 2020.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent delivery shutdown, Find More Illinois was suspended for several months, and the marketing initiative was delayed. Additionally, due to budget concerns at member libraries, several members withdrew from participation in the 2020 and 2021 renewal process.
- Growth has continued, but very slowly. Due to the aforementioned external challenges, Find More Illinois is still effectively in a pilot-like phase, without the critical mass needed to demonstrate its potential for seamless statewide and multistate interlibrary loan.

Growth Plan

RAILS has worked internally and with Auto-Graphics to develop a plan that includes significant financial incentives to encourage adoption and gain critical mass. The plan for this multi-faceted growth initiative is summarized below.

Membership growth

- Financial incentives
 - Provided by Auto-Graphics
 - Fully subsidized setup fees for new participants until March 2023
 - No annual fees charged to new participants until July 2023
 - Free trial of MARCIt through March 2023
 - Provided by RAILS; funds in FY2022 budget
 - No annual fees charged to current participants until July 2023

- Marketing of incentive plan
 - Initial focus on large standalone libraries and small resource sharing groups
 - Expansion to statewide marketing
- Review and updates of procedures, training, and documentation to support large expansion

New opt-in features

These new features are listed in rough chronological order. Enhanced Borrowing is in active development. Due to the need to balance staff workloads appropriately, no timeline is available yet for the other two items. Cost for these services is minimal, and labor will be provided by existing staff.

- Enhanced Borrowing will provide participating libraries with the option for RAILS to convert and manage requests that go unfilled in Find More Illinois to requests in OCLC WorldShare
- Evaluation of MARCIt with partner libraries and consortia; possible expansion of use to provide MARC records from a variety of sources
- Implementation of AutoGraphics Interstate Sharing Initiative to enable out-of-state borrowing and lending through SHAREit
 - Explore potential for delivery handoff with Wisconsin, Missouri, and Wisconsin