Five Organizational Stages Applied to E-Research

The five stages model is a way of thinking about where an organization is in terms of its involvement with e-research. The stages allow organizations to have a common language for discussing their approaches internally and externally and provides a way to assess progress, e.g., moving from a stage 2 to a stage 3.

1. **Acknowledge –** determining that e-research is of interest locally

   Organizations may decide that e-research is not an area to pursue or address, but a basic commitment to exploring the organizational implications of e-research provides a starting point for making that determination.

2. **Act -** initiating relevant projects

   These projects are typically limited in scope; they may respond to immediate need or interest without addressing an ongoing plan. Projects are useful for understanding newer areas, but are not sustainable – funding, people, and other resources go away when a project ends.

3. **Consolidate** – shifting from projects to programs

   Project-based activities do not support longer-term planning. Coordination between activities increases internally and externally. These activities are increasingly seen as connected to the organization's mission and worthy of support.

4. **Institutionalize -** incorporating the broader environment and rationalizing programs

   Rationalization reduces or removes possible redundancies. The organization maps its efforts to external community action agendas and promotes coordination of initiatives. Support for e-research is internalized institution-wide.

5. **Externalize -** embracing inter-institutional collaboration and dependencies

   The organization realizes that internal programs are necessary but insufficient, and pursues cooperative arrangements with other organizations. Addressing e-research is understood as a shared responsibility, not only an individual one. At this stage, activities will be well managed, with collaboration being an inherent consideration in planning.

Adapted from: Anne R. Kenney and Nancy Y. McGovern, "The Five organizational Stages of Digital Preservation", in Digital Libraries: A Vision for the 21st Century: A Festschrift in Honor of Wendy Lougee on the Occasion of her Departure from the University of Michigan, 2003.