

## CIFNAL: A Decade of Collaboration (2006-2016)

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### *Abstract*

CIFNAL, the Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections, promotes and facilitates the cooperative exchange of ideas and resources between Francophone and North American research libraries. Founded in 2006 with just a few institutions, CIFNAL is the youngest of the expertise groups within the Global Resource Network administered through the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). With a shoestring budget and essentially a volunteer work force, CIFNAL has succeeded where individual libraries or other regional consortia have faltered because of two constants: dedicated librarians and unwavering centralized support of CRL. This presentation provides a short history of the group's activities over the past decade, highlighting its contributions to digital scholarship, building regional and international alliances, and cultivating relations with information professionals from and outside of the United States. A careful assessment of CIFNAL's projects, working groups, and publications provides insight as to what might be in store for the future.

CIFNAL, the Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections, has been promoting and facilitating the cooperative exchange of ideas and resources between Francophone and North American research libraries since 2006. It was formed shortly after more than a dozen librarians from academic institutions across the U.S. and the University of Alberta, in Canada, submitted a proposal to the ARL/CRL Global Resources Network in 2005 to create a cooperative partnership based on a desire to share French language resources.<sup>1</sup> The group was incorporated at the 2006 meeting of the American Library Association (ALA) becoming the youngest of the expertise groups within what is presently called the Global Resources Program administered through the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). This paper provides a short history of the initiative's activities over the past decade, highlighting its contributions to digital scholarship, building regional and international alliances, and cultivating relations with information professionals from across and outside of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposal for French-North American Resources Partnership (March 15, 2005), <http://www.crl.edu/sites/default/files/d6/attachments/pages/fnarp031505.pdf>

*CIFNAL's Beginnings (2004-2006)*

In a paper delivered at the conference of Western European Specialists Section (WESS), held in Paris in 2004, Thomas Kilton of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign stressed the urgency of establishing a collaborative group uniting French-speaking librarians in North America and their colleagues abroad:

“The successes of various projects of the North American Global Resources Network in promoting closer initiatives between individual librarians in separate countries suggest that the time for a French-American Resources Project to enhance library relations between France, the United States, and Canada, is ripe.”<sup>2</sup>

Inspired by the success of the German-North American Resources Partnership (GNARP), he cited a demonstrable need for rapid access to materials from both sides of the Atlantic whether through purchase, borrowing, electronic delivery or digitization, and also a need for “contact partners” in France and the U.S. who could rely on one another for difficult reference queries and referrals. His paper outlined four basic goals of such an initiative: collection development and reference, bibliographic control, digital projects, and document delivery.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after, Kilton served as chair of the ad hoc Committee of the of the Association of Research Libraries' Western European Specialists Section (ACRL-WESS) charged with exploring the feasibility of the French-North American Resources Partnership known by the acronym FNARP.<sup>4</sup> In their meeting at the ALA Annual in Chicago in 2005, they created both an advisory group and a steering committee. The participants were Yvonne Boyer (Vanderbilt University), Dominique Coulombe (Brown University), Richard Hacken (Brigham Young University), Sebastian Hierl (University of Chicago), Sarah How (Cornell University), Denis Lacroix (University of Alberta), Jeffrey Larson (Yale University), Kati Radics (University of California, Los Angeles), Beth Remak (University of California, Santa Cruz), Susanne Roberts (Yale University), Kathleen Rutter (Harvard University), Bryan Skib (University of Michigan), Sarah Sussman (Stanford University), Barbara Walden (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Heather Ward (University of Oregon), Sue Waterman (Johns Hopkins University), and Sarah G. Wenzel

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<sup>2</sup> A French-American Resources Project: Needs and Potentials in a World of Migration, <https://www.crl.edu/sites/default/files/d6/attachments/pages/kilton.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 5.

<sup>4</sup> WESS ad hoc Committee Minutes (June 26, 2005)

(Massachusetts Institute of Technology).<sup>5</sup> In the same meeting, the group voted to change the name to the Collaborative Initiative for French and North-American Libraries (CIFNAL) and it was documented in the minutes that “a small number of enthusiastic partners would be enough to move the project forward,” identifying the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and L'École nationale des chartes as potential partners in France.<sup>6</sup>

The steering committee created in fall 2005 was charged with setting out the agenda and development plan for the initiative: Sarah Wenzel (chair), Tom Kilton (past chair), Jeffry Larson (French Partners Working Group coordinator), Sarah Sussman (Potential Sources of Funding Working Group coordinator), and Kati Radics (Goals Working Group coordinator).<sup>7</sup> The next physical meeting of the group took place at the following ALA Midwinter in San Antonio, Texas where governance and the progress of the working groups were discussed.<sup>8</sup> The Goals group proposed the following activities be pursued for the short-term: Collection Development, Digital Libraries, Organization of Information/Intellectual Access, and Research and Reference Services.

#### *Formative Years (2006-2008)*

CIFNAL incorporated at the 2006 ALA annual meeting in New Orleans. Most of the effort the following two years focused on completing the development plan, developing lists of potential contacts, and devising a sustainable funding strategy. The Goals working group reported that it had accomplished its mission of identifying attainable goals and no longer needed to meet.<sup>9</sup> Tangible projects began to take shape including the Microfilm Project begun by Ceres Birkhead at the University of Utah in order to identify, locate, and publicize major sets of microfilm pertaining to the history, culture, language, and literature of France and francophone countries.<sup>10</sup> Susanne Roberts took the lead on assessing North American libraries' coverage of regional and local French research resources, including publications of learned societies, local institutions and associations, and specialized publishers.<sup>11</sup> Another foundational project was the Strong Subject Collections among North American and French Libraries. Its aim was to identify strong French collections, strong sub-areas within French collections, and special collections

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<sup>5</sup> Proposal for French-North American Resources Partnership (March 15, 2005), 1.

<sup>6</sup> WESS ad hoc Committee Minutes (June 26, 2005)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grn/cifnal/about-cifnal/history-cifnal>

<sup>8</sup> WESS ad hoc Committee Minutes (January 22, 2006)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grn/cifnal/current-projects/microfilm-project>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grn/cifnal/current-projects/regional-and-local-french-research-resources>

with strong French collections in the U.S.; provide information about the organizational framework of library systems for French and U.S. librarians; and set up an annotated gateway to the most vital French libraries.<sup>12</sup> The group endorsed the projects because they showed promise for researchers in North American libraries but also might be of interest to Francophone partners abroad.

In the arena of collection development, Sebastian Hierl and Sarah Wenzel identified a number of electronic resources and explored possibilities for consortial pricing. Arranging for discounted rates for databases of interest to member libraries was seen as a way of attracting more institutions to CIFNAL.<sup>13</sup> This model of leveraging licensing through CRL had already proven itself successful GNARP. In the first years of CIFNAL and largely due to Hierl's efforts, licenses and consortial pricing were negotiated for the full-text databases of Classiques Garnier Numérique, Le grand Robert électronique, and CAIRN—a large collection of scholarly journals in the social sciences and humanities founded in 2005. While CIFNAL members located resources and made first contact with publishers, CRL staff hosted trials, negotiated the licensing once a minimal number of subscriptions could be met, and centralized payments for all member libraries, mitigating a separate workload for each institution.

Based at the University of Chicago, The Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL)— that provides access to thousands of French texts online— became the first partner of CIFNAL.<sup>14</sup> CIFNAL members and ARTFL discussed possible digital projects, and decided to pursue a project making a text corpus of a collection of 300 digitized chapbooks of fiction, popularized histories, and advice manuals printed in France in the 17th to the early 19th centuries that they had received from the Médiathèque de l'agglomération troyenne (MAT) in France.<sup>15</sup> The Bibliothèque Bleue Online became the first collaborative project of CIFNAL part of ARTFL's collection of openly accessible full text corpora.<sup>16</sup> When ARTFL became an institutional member of CIFNAL, Sarah Sussman came up with the idea to establish a new category of self-selected members (SMARTFL) who would pay a higher rate in exchange for having a voice in which materials were selected for digitization. Since then SMARTFL members have not only allocated funds for enhancements of PhiloLogic—the full-text search, retrieval and analysis tool that powers ARTFL databases—but also

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grm/cifnal/current-projects/strong-subject-collections>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.cairn.info>

<sup>14</sup> <http://artfl-project.uchicago.edu>

<sup>15</sup> <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu>

<sup>16</sup> <https://artfl-project.uchicago.edu/node/170>

furnished the source texts themselves as was the case when UC Berkeley provided 32 additional Bibliothèque Bleue images in 2008. Partnering with ARTFL has brought CIFNAL one step closer to connecting with institutions in France such as the Laboratoire ATILF (Analyse et Traitement Informatique de la Langue Française) of CNRS, the University of Neuchâtel, and the Groupe d'Étude en Histoire de la Langue Française (GEHLF) in Paris even if they were not collaborating directly.

### *AIFBD in Montréal*

How to establish relationships with French institutions was a recurring topic at CIFNAL meetings and the purview of the working group headed by Jeffrey Larson of Yale. At the 2007 ALA Midwinter meeting, he reported that the “[Partnership] subgroup had made many contacts in France, but has been hesitant to formalize agreements for lack of text.”<sup>17</sup> What exactly CIFNAL could offer French libraries remained a key challenge. Was it better to approach from a particular project and set of players? Knowing that the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) would take place in Québec in August 2008, a working group was formed to explore the possibility of hosting a satellite meeting. They discovered that an international group of Francophone librarians and archivists—L'association internationale francophone des bibliothécaires et documentalistes (AIFBD)—had already made plans to hold their inaugural congress in Montréal as a satellite meeting. Their director Réjean Savard invited Larson and CIFNAL to attend.

CIFNAL members seized on what Dick Hacken of Brigham Young University referred to as a “goldmine of collaboration” to engage with librarians and information-specialists from French-speaking countries world-wide. Five CIFNAL members Sebastian Hierl, Birdie McLennan, Sarah Sussman, Sarah Wenzel, and Matthew Loving presented papers, most of which focused on CIFNAL’s projects-to-date.<sup>18</sup> Dominique Coulombe of Brown University, at that time CIFNAL Chair, moderated a session, and Larson was one of two distinguished speakers who spoke at the closing session. Participation at CIFNAL’s annual in-person meeting was the highest on record, with 11 CIFNAL members attending and non-CIFNAL members from across the Francophone world outnumbered CIFNAL members by 3 to 1. A proposal was also presented to affiliate CIFNAL with AIFBD as well as to strengthen cooperation through the formal exchange

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<sup>17</sup> ALA Midwinter minutes (January 21, 2007)

<sup>18</sup> Coulombe, Dominique, “CIFNAL’s Début Launching the Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections” *Focus on Global Resources* 28: 3 (Spring 2009) <https://www.crl.edu/focus/article/5507>

of librarians between countries. “[T]he satellite meeting of IFLA gave the opportunity to 250 librarians from 60 francophone countries to exchange ideas, share their expertise, and network in the language they have in common,” wrote Coulombe.<sup>19</sup> Approximately eleven CIFNAL members attended which was particularly impressive considering there were only nineteen institutional members in CIFNAL at the time. Chairs of existing projects received valuable feedback and McLennan introduced a project to explore library collections, academic centers, subject specialties, partner needs, and topics related to the Francophone Experience in North America. Loving presented the steering committee with a proposal to partner with The Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC) in improving its representation of and participation from the Francophone Caribbean, and a memorandum of understanding was signed with Loving becoming CIFNAL project coordinator.<sup>20</sup> Coulombe announced that “CIFNAL would serve as the first point of entry/contact for all Francophone libraries for questions regarding holdings and access to collections in the U.S. — with Francophone libraries offering the same service to their U.S. partners.”<sup>21</sup>

#### *Highlights and Accomplishments (2008-2016)*

CIFNAL’s positive reception at AIFBD was as an accomplishment in itself and was well documented in not only the Fall 2008 *WESS Newsletter* but also in *CRL’S Focus on Global Resources* (Spring 2009), and by the French Studies Working Group (UK). *Livres Hebdo*, the most important weekly for French publishers, librarians, and booksellers, ran a short piece on Larson and “une quinzaine de responsables des grandes universités d’Amérique du Nord.”<sup>22</sup> CIFNAL had indeed made a splash and at the top of its to-do list was to formally change its name again—this time to be more inclusive of the French-speaking world beyond France. In its December meeting, the membership voted unanimously for the name change from the Collaborative Initiative for French and North American Libraries to the Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections in order to better convey the association’s intention to include the francophone community outside of North American and France.<sup>23</sup> That same year, CIFNAL joined AIFBD as an institutional member and the Identifying Francophone Partners working group became the Engaging Francophone Partners working group with Sussman elected chair. Wenzel was elected Chair of the Collection Development

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<sup>19</sup> “A Librarians’ *Ouverture* to Francophonie” [https://wessweb.info/index.php/AIFBD\\_Meetings\\_in\\_Montreal](https://wessweb.info/index.php/AIFBD_Meetings_in_Montreal)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grm/cifnal/current-projects/dloc>

<sup>21</sup> CIFNAL Minutes (August 6, 2008)

<sup>22</sup> *Livres hebdo* (September 12, 2008, no. 745)

<sup>23</sup> Coulombe, 2.

working group which three other members joined, and it was decided to post the inventory of microfilm collections on WessWeb with a link from the CRL site.<sup>24</sup> By 2010, CIFNAL had grown to 29 institutional members and 13 personal members.<sup>25</sup>

Apart from the AIFBD congress, CIFNAL's next big success was its alliance with dLOC led by Matt Loving. Not only had dLOC been empowering Haitian libraries to take hold of their own cultural patrimony by providing digitization equipment and on-site workshops but Loving was also cultivating relationships with librarians Anne Pajard, Sylvain Houdebert, and Chantal Godet at the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane (UAG). In 2010, an agreement was forged between dLOC and the digital library MANIOC to cross-harvest periodical data loads of new Caribbean content from the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) and make them openly available through Open Archives Initiative Protocol.<sup>26</sup> Loving and Emilie Songolo (University of Wisconsin) were both awarded CIFNAL travel stipends to attend AIFBD's congress in Martinique in 2011. Dominique Coulombe served on the organizing committee and also attended along with a few other CIFNAL librarians.

When an earthquake devastated Haiti in January 12, 2010, the focus on the collaborative work shifted to direct assistance to partners such as the Archives Nationales and Bibliothèque nationale of Haiti, the Bibliothèque haïtienne des Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne, and the Bibliothèque Haïtienne des Pères du Saint-Esprit (BHPSE). At the same time that it was continuing its digitization training with partner libraries, dLOC launched the Protecting Haitian Patrimony Initiative to provide an avenue for increased communication and collaboration in the international community and for financial, in-kind, and technical assistance.<sup>27</sup> Unveiled in 2011, the trilingual online exhibition *Haiti: Une île lumineuse* was created by Adam Silvia—a graduate student at Florida International University—and hosted by dLOC. This online exhibit showcases rare books, manuscripts, and photos scanned by archives and libraries in Haiti and the United States with commentaries by over one hundred scholars.<sup>28</sup>

During this time Sussman was invited by the *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France* to contribute an article on French and Francophone collections in North America. The article was in line with one of the early goals of CIFNAL while also providing an informative overview of the collections that might appeal to French-speaking scholars

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<sup>24</sup> CIFNAL Minutes (January 17, 2010)

<sup>25</sup> CIFNAL Minutes (June 27, 2010)

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.manioc.org> and memo from Matt Loving to CIFNAL (June 21, 2010)

<sup>27</sup> <http://dloc.com/dloc1/haitianlibhelp>

<sup>28</sup> <http://islandluminous.fiu.edu>

from around the world. She envisioned it as a vehicle for identification of unique holdings that might be collaboratively digitized at a later date. After querying more than twenty librarians from CIFNAL institutions, “Les collections francophones en Amérique du Nord” was published in print and online catching the attention of most informational professionals in the French-speaking world.<sup>29</sup> The goal was clearly in sync with CIFNAL’s emphasis of opening itself up to collaborations beyond France inspired by AIFBD in Montreal: “Les bibliothèques nord-américaines disposent également de fonds francophones richement dotés en documents provenant d’autres zones francophones, d’Afrique, des Caraïbes, d’Asie du Sud Est, d’Afrique du Nord et du Moyen.”<sup>30</sup> From the Schomburg Center in New York City to Tulane University in New Orleans, the article provides a broad yet accurate overview of the richness of Francophone collections in North American libraries.

While librarian exchanges were suggested as one way of engaging Francophone partners, it proved more practical to host interns for three months at a time. As early as 2009, several institutions such as Yale and UC Berkeley began hosting library school students from the École nationale supérieure des sciences de l’information et des bibliothèques (or Enssib) in Lyon. Because these graduate students are guaranteed employment in French libraries or archives upon matriculation, an additional benefit was continued professional contact. Interns also provided an educational window into the complex French library system and culture as well as specialized assistance with larger projects that may have otherwise not been realizable. Raphaëlle Bats of Enssib’s International Relations Office served as a member-at-large from 2013-2015 and remains instrumental in placing these highly qualified interns with North American libraries. Bats attended the ALA Midwinter meeting Boston in 2016 and gave an informative presentation on how North American libraries might develop collaborative relationships with French libraries, reinforcing the importance of attending conferences in France if possible.<sup>31</sup>

When the site for the third congress of AIFBD was announced in Limoges, France, CIFNAL increased the number of travel stipends awarded to its members as an incentive to attend. Seven CIFNAL members were able to join more than 150 librarians

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<sup>29</sup> Sussman, Sarah. « Les collections francophones en Amérique du Nord ». *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France (BBF)*, 2012, n° 6, p. 26-31. Disponible en ligne : <<http://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-2012-06-0026-006>>. ISSN 1292-8399.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> CIFNAL Minutes (January 9, 2016)



and information professionals from twenty countries to share ideas, experience and expertise. Claude Potts and Sarah Sussman presented on their bilateral cooperative collection development agreement for French and Italian collections, first put into practice in 2008.<sup>32</sup> Denis Lacroix (University of Alberta), presented on the benefits of information literacy in teaching translation studies, and Deb Raftus gave a poster session on rethinking library spaces titled “Librairies as Salon” at IFLA immediately preceding AIFBD. Sussman also co-presented with Frank Hurinville (Bibliothèque Nationale de France) on the French Pamphlets Project—a CIFNAL project launched by Matt Loving to centralize access to pamphlets owned and digitized by different libraries.<sup>33</sup>

In spring 2011, Sebastian Hierl was elected as the third chair of CIFNAL. His contribution to the French Pamphlet NEH proposal was notable as was his diligence in setting up trials and negotiating consortial prices for French electronic resources such as Cairn, Érudit, Klapp-Online, and L’Harmathèque. When he left Harvard for a job as library director of the American Academy in Rome in summer 2012, he continued to convene virtual meetings from Italy before Matthew Loving agreed in 2013 to serve out the rest of his term as interim chair.<sup>34</sup> Soon after, Loving announced that he had accepted a position in the private sector with the ITER project based in the south of France. As the Engaging Francophone Partners working group strived to recruit participants from abroad, CIFNAL had regrettably lost two dynamic and uniquely qualified advocates to Europe. In May 2015, Sarah How of Cornell University was elected and continues as current chair. Her chief contribution has been to plan this international symposium co-sponsored by CIFNAL and the German-North American Resources Partnership (GNARP).<sup>35</sup>

### *Looking Towards the Future*

As is the case with other initiatives of the Global Resources Program, the chair and the steering committee play an indispensable role. In all of their activities from writing By-laws, to licensing e-resources, to dispersing travel grants, CRL staff has provided consistent and dependable support at every step. CIFNAL benefits from an array of CRL professional staff including but not limited to area studies program manager Judy Alspach and James Simon who is vice president of collections and services. Without their presence and guidance, whether face-to-face or virtually, so many of CIFNAL’s

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<sup>32</sup> [https://wessweb.info/index.php/Librarians\\_in\\_Limoges:\\_IFLA\\_Satellite\\_for\\_La\\_Francophonie](https://wessweb.info/index.php/Librarians_in_Limoges:_IFLA_Satellite_for_La_Francophonie)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/grm/cifnal/current-projects/french-pamphlets>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.aarome.org/news/features/dr-sebastian-hierl-new-drue-heinz-librarian>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/events/frankfurt2017symposium>

ideas would never have been realized. CRL's centralized administrative, logistical, financial management and communications support is a critical component of its success that cannot be overlooked. Collaborations between North American libraries would not be possible without CRL's tried and tested systems of support and capacity. In the association's own words, "CRL provides an administrative umbrella for these programs and promotes cross-fertilization and economies of scale."<sup>36</sup> Today, CIFNAL has more than 52 institutional members and 21 individual members.

CIFNAL's two broad working groups—Collection Development and Engaging Francophone Partners—have been the nucleus of CIFNAL's range of projects thus far and provide a robust framework for further engagement. Projects like the Bibliothèque Bleue Online or the French Pamphlets Project can easily be reignited once circumstances change or if more partners become interested in moving them forward. Hélène Huet (University of Florida), who is currently chairing the Collection Development working group, recently published a LibGuide for French and Francophone Digital Humanities Projects currently underway in the world.<sup>37</sup> Building on the work of Roberts and Sussman and with the assistance from an Enssib intern, she is constructing a searchable database featuring unique French and Francophone collections or collections strengths from libraries in North America. Like any project of such scale, it will rely on accurate reporting by CIFNAL members and non-members alike and has the potential to serve as an valuable research tool for scholars in North America and abroad, fulfilling one of CIFNAL's early goals identified by Kilton of mapping North American Francophone collections.

The Engaging Francophone Partners working group is currently chaired by Jill Baron (Dartmouth). Most of her work in these first six months has been on helping plan the Frankfurt Symposium.<sup>38</sup> She has been reviewing the decade-old contact list and shared the sentiment of former chair Potts that it be updated for relevancy of contacts. At the same time, she urged all recipients of CIFNAL travel stipend to share their contacts and update the list accordingly. Attendance at international conferences and symposia remains a core strategy in cultivating relationships with Francophone partners, and a key motivation for hosting this symposium and offering generous travel stipends so librarians in North America might attend. In addition, CIFNAL has granted stipends to

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.crl.edu/collaborations/global-resources-programs>

<sup>37</sup> French and Francophone Digital Humanities Projects,  
<http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=592869&p=4100264>

<sup>38</sup> New Directions for Libraries, Scholars, and Partnerships: an International Symposium  
<https://www.crl.edu/events/frankfurt2017symposium>

two CIFNAL members to attend the AIFBD Congress in Sierre, Switzerland this coming August. If there is one critique of the work of the working groups, it is that the chairs do not delegate enough. Historically, there has been no shortage of ideas, just not enough people to make them happen. Too often, a working group chair focuses on what she or he alone can accomplish and does not ask for assistance or encourage simultaneous projects within the context of the working group.

Arguably the biggest draw to CIFNAL for many North American institutions is the rich array of French language electronic resources at discounted consortial pricing. For differing reasons, attendance at meetings whether virtual or in-person has been particularly low considering the number of institutional members. Diverse personalities and interests of each chair have shaped the priorities of CIFNAL during their terms, and each has left their mark on the evolving association. With a shoestring budget and essentially a volunteer work force of librarians with varied responsibilities and who already have full-time jobs (sometimes even two), CIFNAL has managed to succeed where individual libraries or other regional consortia have faltered because of three constants: strong leadership, collaboration, and CRL's unwavering centralized support. Nevertheless, challenges persist if the association is to adhere to its initial goals of improving access to French and French-language resources and encouraging collaboration between North American and Francophone establishments.

### *Conclusion*

CIFNAL has come a long way since 2004. A careful assessment of its projects, working groups, and publications provides insight as to what might be in store for the next decade and how best to move forward. Continued success can be met by: 1) identifying projects of a scale that can reasonably be achieved; 2) making greater efforts to include all members – institutional and individual; 3) continuing to seek viable paths for engaging international partners; 4) accurately promoting and taking credit for achievements and disseminating them widely; and 5) continually assessing and defining the scope of our collaborative work. It was Grégory Colcanap, director of Bibliothèque Universitaire de l'Université d'Evry Val d'Essonne and coordinator for the library consortium COUPERIN, who remarked at the first AIFBD meeting in Montreal that “collaborations remain theoretical unless they are tied to a concrete project with tangible results.”

Looking towards the future, here are a few thoughts on how CIFNAL might better leverage current relationships and ideas and act on ideas. How might we assist with initiatives of other Global Resources Network groups like AFRINUL, CAMP, and MEMP? What other associations or meetings might we join outside of the U.S.? It is fantastic that so many members are also now involved with AIFBD but what other professional and scholarly associations might also lead to mutually beneficial collaborations? Are there existing bilateral projects between North American and Francophone institutions that might be amenable to including other CIFNAL institutions or are searching for a stable home? CIFNAL not just an idea but it is limited its own collective vision and how much time its members, both individual and institutional, are able to contribute.