

Modifying a Project Memorandum of Understanding for Reuse



Poster Topic

University of Texas Arlington Libraries developed a flexible template and workbook for the use of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in Libraries. The MOU team felt the time was right for development of the template and workbook due to the shift from transactional work to long term projects occurring in many libraries and the resulting need to document project plans, timelines and expectations for all involved parties. We have found the adoption and writing of a MOU between the Libraries and external partners helps to alleviate tensions and set reasonable expectations. By clarifying those expectations and timelines, the library is able to continue to provide exemplary service to all of our patrons and partners. As hoped, the MOU has been modified for reuse to fit particular project needs. The workbook is available through UTA’s Research Commons. The workbook collection includes a general MOU template, templates for particular projects, a workflow, and instructions for each. This poster will address the benefits, challenges and lessons learned in adapting this template for new uses/projects.

Project Benefits

- . Determine if project is achievable before investing time and resources.
- . Shared expectations in regards to workload, timelines and attribution .
- . Agreed upon timeline.
- . Appendices useful to address project specific concerns.
- . Minimizes opportunities for miscommunication or misunderstandings.

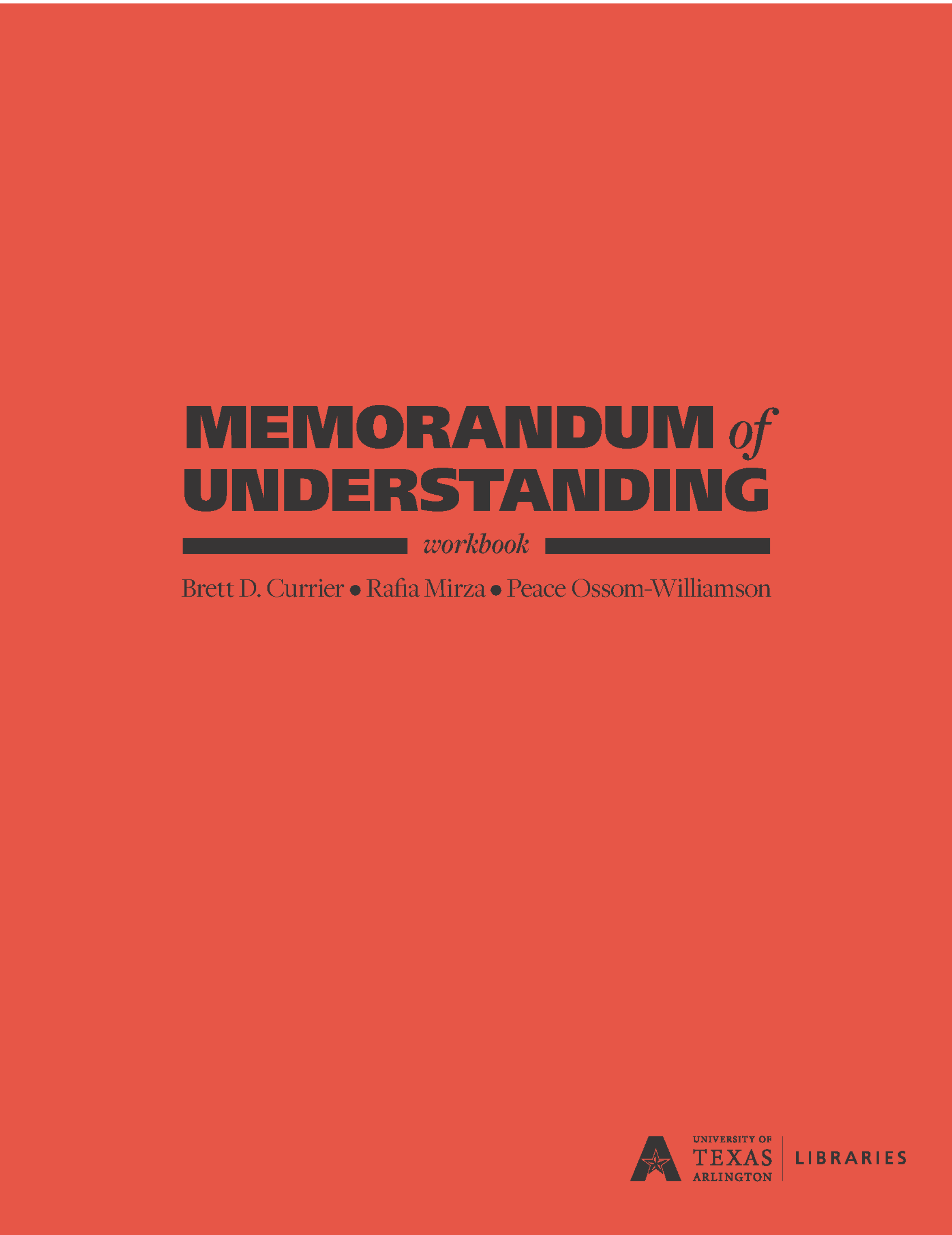
Project Challenges

- The main challenge was the initial one of unfamiliarity with the process
- Learning Curve
- Unfamiliarity with format
- Getting buy in from all partners

Contributors

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MOU Workbook



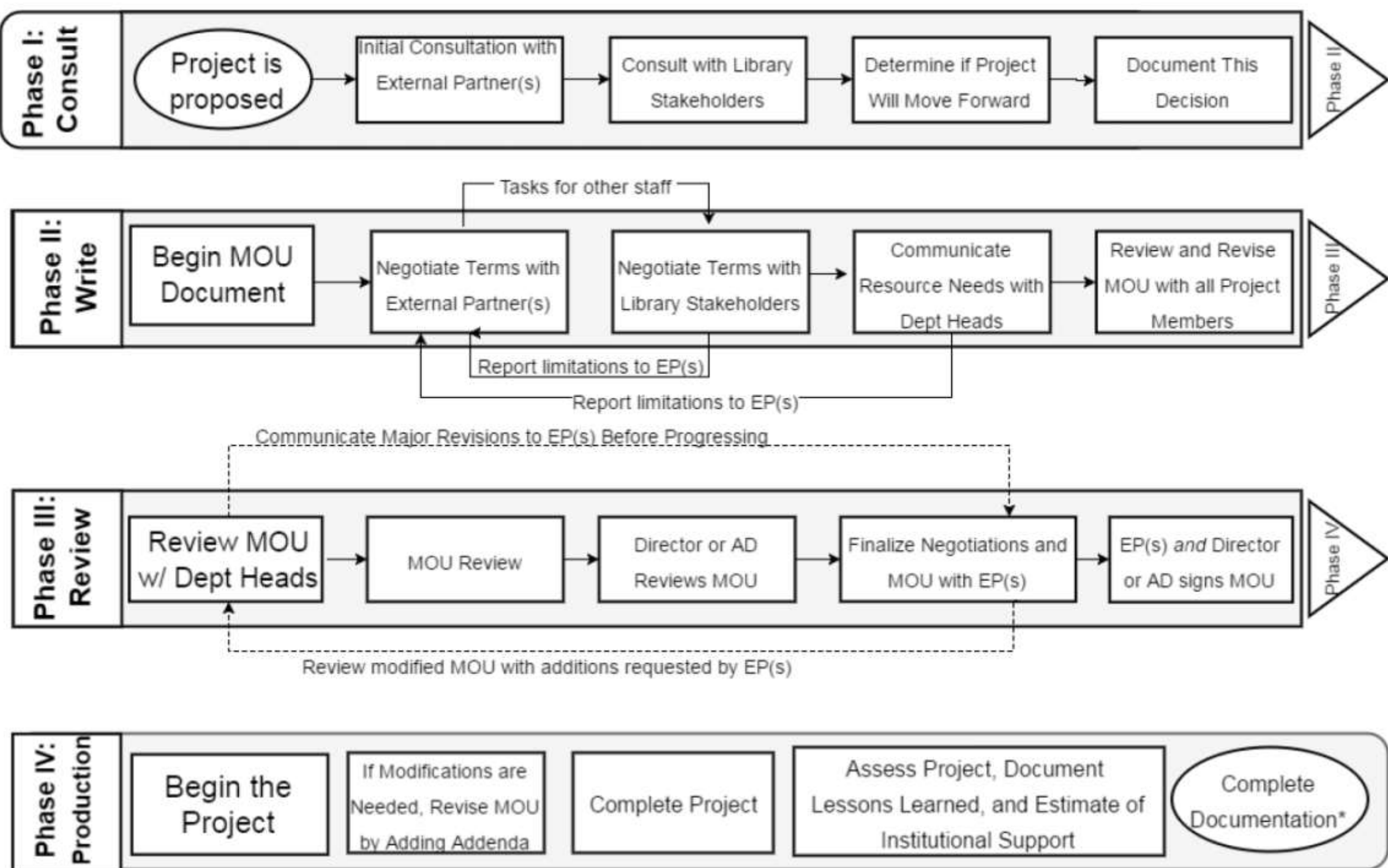
MOU Workbook Collection

<http://bit.ly/utamou>

For MOU Feedback form

<http://bit.ly/utamoufeedback>

MOU Workflow



*Begin new MOU for the next phase if it is a multi-phase project

Experiences in modifying the MOU template

“I use the Systematic Review MOU every time I start meeting to begin a new systematic review project. It really informs the other researchers on my role and theirs, and it [puts us all on the same page](#) in regards to expectations. Furthermore, it is our starting point and [provides a pathway](#) to developing a protocol for completing the systematic review. Most importantly, it provides me with [security](#): my role as co-author or contributor is secured at the beginning and align with the work that I will put forward toward the completion of the systematic review. I have yet to have any issues with presenting or completing the MOU with faculty within and outside of my institution, and I believe [the use of the MOU has allowed me to avoid issues down the line](#) in completion of systematic reviews.”

Peace Ossom Williamson, Director for Research Data Services,

“I recently created my first MOU for a project between a local group on campus and the Libraries. [At first, it was a little intimidating](#), but, once I got into filling out the template, information fell into place. I had to revise it several times because our project changed. I liked seeing our project in writing so that each party knew what their responsibilities were. I [REALLY liked the timeline](#) that kept us all on track.”

Lynn Johnson, Digital Projects Librarian

“An MOU forces both parties to truly think about the project before committing to it. [Creating a timeline for the appendix gives everyone the opportunity to decide *if* this is a project that is worth doing as well as determining *if* it is doable](#). Initial planning makes for a finished product, delivered in a timely manner.”

Ramona Holmes Digital Creation, Department Head

“In May 2017, UTA Libraries launched a new grant program to support open education. The MOU workbook and template allowed me, as the coordinator, to move quickly from selecting grant recipients to ensuring comprehensive alignment of project goals, roles, and responsibilities for everyone involved in the creation of open educational resources funded by the grant program. [Negotiating terms of the MOU with grant recipients revealed areas of misunderstanding, brought transparency to the process, and limited potential hurdles resulting from omission or miscommunication](#). I highly recommend this resource!”

Michelle Reed, Open Education Librarian

“The MoU template afforded me an [easy way to communicate project responsibilities and timeline](#) to all parties involved in our project. The signed document proved very [helpful when negotiating timelines](#) became necessary.”

Jeff Downing, Digital Projects Librarian

“Using the Memorandum of Understanding for Open Access e-Journal Hosting & Publishing Template

(template developed by Faedra Wills, Digital Projects Librarian <http://hdl.handle.net/10106/25649>)

This MoU template has been invaluable in allowing me to quickly and easily craft agreements with campus partners on publishing projects. [Its primary benefit is that it allows me to include information from all cross-departmental stakeholders in the library as well as expectations that we have of the publishing partner](#). Here are some examples of info we put into the MoU:

- the publishing software platform we use,
- assurances of library technical support and perpetual access to the digital content,
- a timeline and steps in the workflow for the project,
- responsibilities of each party to provide specific information/materials or to perform specific tasks, and

• licensing of the final product.”

Jody Bailey, Director of Publishing