NICE Project

Phase II Key Takeaways

The [feasibility report's findings](#) held true for the second phase of work. Workgroup recommendations followed a pattern of pursuing a shared ILS platform and collection with a movement towards sharing practices and policies and considered patron experience, potential cost savings, and improved ILS sustainability and service.

Workgroup recommendations respect existing processes at the local level. Many workgroups found a consensus around recommendations that, as much as possible, allowed the two systems to maintain existing practices. Once the ILS is shared and the systems work more formally on the ILS and sharing collections, the practices and policies may, over time, become aligned.

The recommendations are flexible. The workgroup recommendations were written at a certain time with certain information. It may be possible, and even likely, that the recommendations will be modified as the shared ILS is implemented.

Workgroups achieved a high level of consensus and showed a willingness to compromise. Many topics were challenging to work through, and workgroup members were not always in agreement. However, consensus was almost always possible, and where it was not, compromise was effective.

NICE Team Recommendations

Build a Shared Culture. A shared culture should be intentionally cultivated through mission development, the creation of service standards, and finding ways for members to meet across the consortia.

Perform Regular Assessments and Adjustments of Recommendations. Workgroup recommendations should be assessed at the one-year mark through appropriate data collection methods and adjusted where needed.

Prioritize Flexibility and Understanding. Focusing on open communication, assuming the best intentions, and embracing the concepts of consensus and sometimes compromise will help sustain the shared ILS and the community around it.

Lean on the Collaborative Decision-Making Recommendation in Implementation. Inevitably, decisions will need to be made during implementation, and the collaborative decision-making model will be a powerful tool to facilitate the work ahead.

Key Workgroup Recommendations

Full recommendations are available in the NICE Team ILS Merger Report on the [NICE Project website](#).

ILS Vendor Selection Workgroup recommends a new shared instance of Sierra from Innovative/Clarivate and that the consortium conduct an ILS exploration in three to five years.

Delivery Targeted Workgroup recommends each system maintain its separate delivery vendors and utilize the current statewide delivery vendor to continue delivery between the two systems. Systems and libraries should assume and prepare for an increase of 15-20% in materials being lent and borrowed and thus moved through delivery.

Funding Formula Targeted Workgroup recommends a funding approach that applies a percentage of the total shared cost based on the previous three-year average of collection size and circulation, with a per-site base cost of 1% of the total budget.

Collaborative Decision-Making Targeted Workgroup recommends a shared decision-making pathway for the NWLN and WVLS ILS Administration and Support team to make functional decisions, an ILS Advisory Group that will provide expertise and guidance on more complex decisions, and the ILS Consortia for decisions that fundamentally change how patrons access materials or how libraries do business.

Holds Fulfillment Targeted Workgroup recommends that the shared ILS prioritize local holds and allow high-demand collections. Holds will be filled utilizing the priority of local holds for all items not set to high demand.

Records Standards Targeted Workgroup recommends a detailed suite of item and patron record standards for a shared ILS.

Cataloging Targeted Workgroup recommends a set of bibliographic cataloging processes for adding new and editing existing records and that all library staff working with bibliographic records be trained on the recommended cataloging processes. Further, guidelines for member library staff, cataloging staff, and system staff will be developed during implementation.

Timeline

Recommendation report complete	June 2024
Consortia votes	By September 2024
System Board votes	Early Fall 2024
ILS Advisory Group formed for decision-making	Q4 2024 - Q1 2025 (anticipated)
Back-end configuration and implementation	Q2 2025 (anticipated)
Testing, staff training, and go-live for patrons	Q3 - Q4 2025 (anticipated)