Research as a strategic tool for a research library

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Introduction

Some history

- Research libraries an integral part of the research community
  - The National Library founded 1640 as the library of the Royal Academy of Åbo (now the University of Helsinki)

- Over time, several changes in the environment
  - technological, like the printing press
  - social, like the suffrage of universities from the church

- The digital era is the latest of these changes
Introduction
Dawn of the Digital Era

■ Changes at all levels of academic life
  ■ teaching
  ■ research
  ■ publishing

■ Role of libraries is changing
  ■ new material published digitally
  ■ old material digitised
  ■ users expect digital services

■ How to keep up with the times?
Role of Libraries

Proactive Approach

- A library exists to serve its users
  - not just current but also past and future ones!

- Emphasis on the needs of scholars
  - should be obvious for a research library
  - but must not forget the rest of the clientele

- Goal: to stay relevant
  - what do people need from the library?
  - what *will* they need?
Role of Libraries

Needs of Future Users

- So, what do scholars need from the library
  - as a source of research papers
  - as a source of research material

- Focus on the humanities
  - sciences and medicine have their own sources for data

- Focus on digitised material
  - natively digital not to be forgotten, though
Staying Relevant
Taking a closer look

- What does the digital revolution mean?
  - especially for a research library
  - not easy to see in detail

- Several areas worthy of study
  - digitising old material
  - metadata collection, annotation
  - uses of crowdsourcing

- Should a library do this?
  - well, yes!
Staying Relevant
Collaboration

- Digital humanities
- Symbiosis between faculty and library
  - how can the library serve scholars
  - how can the scholars help the library
- Joint project
  - library experience
  - digital archiving
  - research methods
  - software engineering
Action Plan

Interested Parties

- National Library
  - digitisation centre in Mikkeli

- University of Helsinki
  - research in language technology and data mining
  - representing entity for CLARIN ERIC

- Mikkeli Polytechnic
  - programme in digital archiving

- Mikkeli University Centre and DigitalMikkeli
Action Plan
Joint Research Group

- Set up a research group in Mikkeli
  - professor in digital corpora (UH, NL)
  - 1–2 Ph.D. students (UH)
  - 1–2 Ph.D.-level teacher/researchers (MPoly)
  - expert in digitising (NL)

- Time frame: 2013–16
  - long-term goal to have permanent collaboration
  - funding currently finalised for 2013–14
Action Plan

Projected Research Areas

- Ways to increase the quality of data
  - crowdsourced annotation, metadata collection
  - making the data available

- Methods for using the data
  - data-driven research
  - leveraging language technology for other fields
Thank you