arXiv Give Button Proposal, June 2015

Submitted for Review by the Member Advisory Board and the Scientific Advisory Board

Cornell University Library

This proposal outlines the rationale and requirements for arXiv to receive online contributions from donors via a 'give' button.

Rationale: arXiv's operating budget is currently supported by member libraries, the Simons Foundation, and Cornell University Library. It is essential to raise additional funds in order to fund new initiatives that are beyond the routine operational work. Illustrating this need, the arXiv roadmap describes this year's operational priorities in addition to a section with special projects that require additional revenue sources. Therefore the arXiv team is investigating new fundraising opportunities. This pilot will assess whether a give button placed prominently on arXiv's web pages will garner additional resources from the program's active and supportive user base. We also want to explore potential impediments.

Benchmark and assessment: A modest benchmark for this pilot is to fund efforts toward one small new initiative. arXiv has, on average, more than 4 million downloads per month and 6,000 submissions.We need a very, very small fraction of these individuals to give to reach our goal.

While the amount of funds raised is the single biggest factor in determining the success of this pilot, we will also look carefully at other information to inform our future fundraising strategies. This information includes how many individuals gave to arXiv and what industry they work in. The latter two factors will provide information about other potential viable sources of ongoing revenue. We will also assess any administrative overhead, questions, suggestions, and reactions.

Pilot details: A nine-day web banner campaign in September 2015 where 100% of the contributions received will be used to fund new initiatives. All arXiv.org pages that do not have submission or moderation functionality will feature the banner. We will also investigate including information about the banner on the Cornell University Library homepage, an announcement on our listserv, and other appropriate media channels. One of the goals is to use this fund raising strategy to encourage publishers and societies to contribute to arXiv.

The banner would be styled to appeal to the arXiv branding but not blend too closely. The user would experience the following **workflow** from the arXiv web pages when he or she selects the banner. Please see figures 1 and 2 for a mockup.

1. Proposed language for the **banner**, which has been approved by CUL Communications and the Cornell Alumni Affairs and Development:

100% of your contribution will fund improvements and new initiatives that will benefit arXiv's global scientific community. Please add your support today, alongside that of the Simons Foundation, our generous member libraries, and research labs.

2. **Payment page**
   arXiv has a special designee fund arranged through Cornell Alumni Affairs and Development. It is the most straightforward and secure way of ensuring all contributions go directly to arXiv program.

   arXiv is appears prominently as the "fund" to which the user is contributing when the user decides to donate. See figure 2.

3. **Thank you page**
   We will customize a thank you page that will also serve as a tax-deductible donation receipt.

4. **More information**
   We will add a section to the sustainability FAQ (http://arxiv.org/help/support/faq) with the following information (Personal/Institutional Donations):

   - What initiatives will my contribution help support?
   - What is arXiv's history and impact?
   - What is arXiv's sustainability plan?
   - What is arXiv's current operating budget?
   - Wait, I thought I was supporting arXiv. Why does a payment page from Cornell University appear?
   - Is my institution currently supporting arXiv?
   - My institution currently supports arXiv. Why should I?
   - How can I stay up to date on arXiv?
   - Is my gift tax deductible?
   - What is Cornell's tax ID number?
   - Do I get a receipt?
   - I'm international. Can I still contribute?
   - I have other questions and want to talk with someone from the arXiv team.

Additional considerations: We will create pages on the arXiv sustainability wiki about the give button pilot that includes that total amount raised, which new initiatives we are currently investing in, and other aggregate information about giving such as the total number of supporters, etc., and explore how to list individual contributions that want to be recognized.

FIGURE 1, Banner.

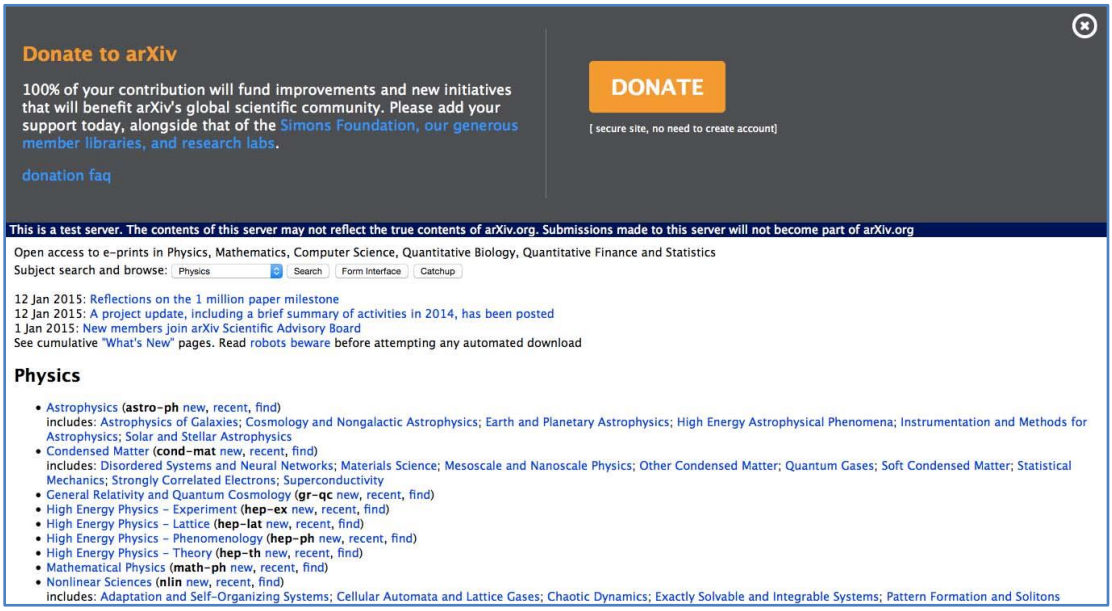
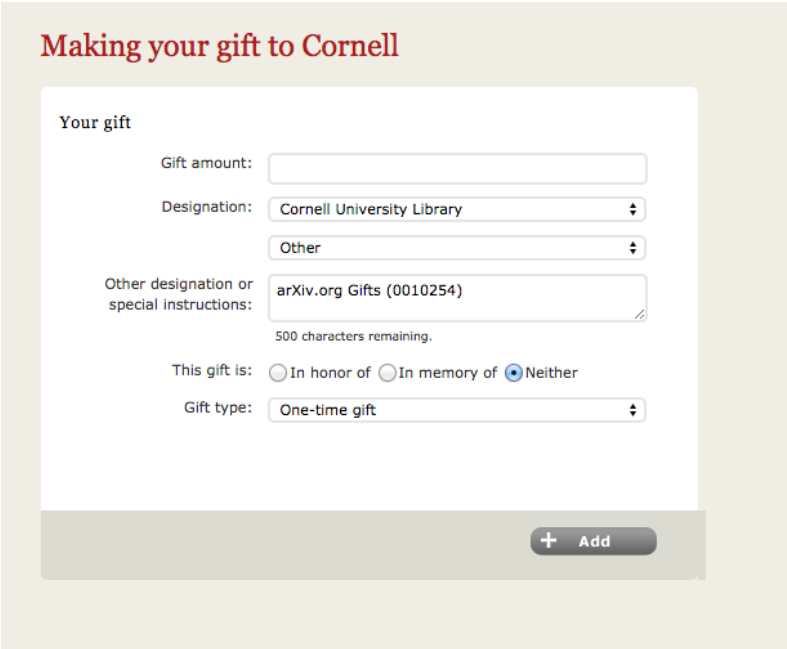
FIGURE 2, Payment Page. Note that the fund is "arXiv." (PS: without the test server message)