

GATHERING IDEAS FOR FUTURE STATEWIDE PROJECTS 2014

The Library Council of Washington is looking for your help in identifying ideas for the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding to meet statewide library needs and opportunities.

Project name (a short descriptive title)

Washington Digital Newspaper Hub or Access Washington Newspapers (AWN)

Library, group, or person submitting proposal:

Shawn Schollmeyer, Washington State Library, Digital & Historical Collections

Library Name, if different _____

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1. Briefly describe your idea for the use of LSTA funding (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

The Washington State Library has a unique opportunity to provide newspaper digitization services and expertise to public libraries, historic organizations, and academic institutions in our state. We believe there is a strong need to build a repository of Washington newspapers to support smaller libraries, who cannot afford to digitize short runs of local historic newspapers on their own, as well as academic institutions, which may have collections ready to digitize, but no knowledge of current best practices for digitization.

A three year grant of \$65,000 per year would allow us to contribute to the hiring of one full time managing librarian; establish practices for file creation; purchase film, shipping and delivery of film and drives; set up processing for OCR and full text search. Remaining costs will be borne by WSL Digital and Historical Collections.

By acting as a digitization service center for organizations across the state, Washington state library not only allows all participating agencies to take advantage of bulk discounts on digitization, but also aggregate historically significant newspapers to become a comprehensive online newspaper resource.

If awarded, funding for this program would be used to provide each participating agency with their own file copies of their locally held titles and eventually to become a source of content for the Digital Public Library of America. We are currently working with the University of Washington Microfilm & Newspaper department to digitize culturally significant titles to contribute to the Chronicling America website. This project will end in August 2014 and we feel there is still a need to continue preparing rare content for preservation and free online access.

2. Briefly describe why funding of this idea is important to the Washington library community (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

This project would be beneficial to helping public and academic libraries provide access to their newspaper collections for all residents of Washington with online access from their homes or libraries. We would use this grant to gather film from interested public libraries and provide files back for their own collections. University of Washington is already an interested partner in supplying microfilm negatives for a collective newspaper archive. We would use this opportunity to provide practical experience in digitization projects for iSchool students at the university.

Users of this collection would not need memberships or library cards to access the content. There is a growing interest from the Millennial generation and remote users to access information online and to reach a wider audience, beyond those who can visit the physical presence of the state library in Tumwater. With the implementation of the Common Core standards in Washington, students between grades 4-12 will need access to primary resources, to meet their language arts requirements. Many of our historic newspapers were established during early statehood and provide a northwest point of view on national topics normally dominated by eastern perspectives. This gives historians and researchers access to rich sources of data to mine for analysis and publications.

Due to the pioneer nature of many early publications across the state, one of our most active audiences are genealogists. Online access to vital statistics, wartime enlistment and casualty lists, election results and local events eases requests on limited library staff and allows users to browse information freely at their leisure.

3. Briefly describe the outcome that is expected should the idea be funded. In other words, how will we know if the project has been successful and has achieved its goals? (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

The past eight years we have gained significant experience digitizing 300,000 pages for the National Digital Newspaper Program and <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>. We can reasonably estimate production of 30,000-50,000 pages per year depending on availability and cost of microfilm negatives from storage repositories. Over the last few years it has become increasingly difficult to retrieve negatives from commercial negative storage facilities due to pricing and ownership issues. They may charge 3-5 times more for copies than sourcing through University of Washington Libraries or Washington State Archives. Many times libraries can only offer access to these titles via costly commercial products with only a short date range. Therefore, success would also be measured by ease of access to newspaper titles in a free online format.

With a large contributor such as the University of Washington, we would also measure success by supporting at least five rural libraries in partnership the first year. Depending on the level of interest the following year we would look at partnerships with larger organizations such as Washington State University, Tacoma Community College, and perhaps the Washington State History Archives and continue partnerships with smaller libraries.

Another measure of success would be to become a significant online presence for Washington newspapers comparable to the collections currently presented by the University of Oregon and University of California, Riverside Digital Newspaper Program. We are noticeably behind other states in presenting local online access to these valuable resources.

General Information

Which library types are intended as the primary beneficiaries of this project? (check all that apply)

- Academic (private and public two-year and four-year academic institutions)
 Public (libraries organized under RCW 27.12)
 School (private and public K-12 schools)
 Special (business and industry, law, medical, other government, tribal, other)
If other, specify: _____

The intended beneficiaries of the project? (check the primary beneficiary)

- Library staff
 Library users or potential library users
 A specific group of staff or users, or a potential user group. Name the target beneficiaries(s): (e.g., children, adults, disadvantaged, remote access library users, unserved community members, reference staff, IT staff, students).
High school, university students & researchers; genealogists, Washington library staff & historical organizations

The activities needed to implement this project are envisioned to include (check all that apply):

- User training
 Staff training
 Grants
 Development of best practices
 Demonstration of emerging technology or practices
 Other, please explain:

This funding would allow us to establish efficient processes and guidelines for newspaper digitization projects. It would also allow us to develop and test effective methods of collaboration with local organizations and communities.

Considering the outcome desired, how long should the project continue? _
(Note that most projects are from one year to four years in length.)

3 years beginning autumn 2015

Which Library Council areas of focus support the idea you are submitting (check all that apply)

1. Advance applied literacy in the state of Washington in areas such as legal research, health information, employment/job searching, and developing civic/voter education resources.
2. Enhance libraries relevancy in a democratic society.
3. Serve underserved, unserved, and culturally diverse communities and populations.

University of Washington libraries see significant newspaper usage by Native American researchers. Many early newspapers show experiences of Asian immigrants and opportunities to show the diverse history of Washington.