

## Narrative

### 1. Statement of Need

#### *Introduction*

The Collections Program at the Center for Book Arts represents an essential component of the organization's mission to advance the creation, exhibition, and public appreciation of the Book Arts as a contemporary art form. To continue the implementation of this program and to realize its potential as a unique book arts resource, new major grant funding is required. A Museums for America grant from the IMLS will provide direct assistance in advancing the program toward its official launch on the Internet, providing free public access to this unique resource.

Although there are many collections of Book Arts in the country, they are usually restricted to special collections of large libraries and universities. The Center is an active studio and gallery, where, on an everyday basis, artists produce new work and the general public can see exhibitions featuring contemporary book arts. The Center's collections and archives will be free to the public and readily accessible, both on site and over the Internet, and is unique for being a collection solely dedicated to book arts and managed through the first book arts organization of its kind in the country.

#### *Background and Holdings*

The Center for Book Arts has collected and stored original works of art, fine press books, and archives from its exhibition series since it was founded in 1974. Until recently, the collections and archives were an ancillary program to the Center's primary activities of education and exhibition, and no dedicated supervisory committee or collections management plan was in place to guide the program. This changed in 2007, after the Center underwent an Organizational Review through the Museum Assessment Program, organized through the IMLS and the American Association of Museums. As a result of this review, it was determined by the Board of Directors that the Center had an obligation to manage and preserve its collections and archives, which are of considerable artistic and historic value. The holdings are in three categories:

1. Fine art and fine press books, totaling 1,100 items; the significance of this collection lies first in the intrinsic value of the work, which is by major artists like Martha Rosler and Bruce Nauman, as well as by important figures in the book arts world; secondly, the collection is significant for being intertwined with the Center's own crucial role in advancing the field, and including work by artists who created or exhibited at the Center throughout the organization's history; for photos of works from the collection, see Appendices;
2. A reference library covering the craft and history of book arts, totaling 440 volumes; the significance of this library lies in its being a coherent and specialized reference holding, and for being immediately accessible to the thousands of artists, teachers, students, and faculty that use the Center's facilities every year;
3. Exhibition archive material relating to 190 exhibitions created by the Center over a period of nearly 35 years and including more than 5,000 artists; the Center for Book Arts has the longest running, most diverse and widely conceived, and most influential series of exhibitions dedicated to Book Arts in this country; the significance of its archival material relating to this exhibition is considerable for artists, historian, and anyone interested in the field of book arts;

#### *How the Project Relates to the Mission Statement*

It was determined by the Board of Directors that a newly active collections program, which would promote and disseminate its holdings both onsite at the Center and over the Internet, represented a unique opportunity to advance the Center's broader mission, in the following ways:

- By cataloguing, preserving, and making accessible its collections, the Center will enable students and teachers to become aware of and explore contemporary book art, thereby furthering its education mission;
- By cataloguing and making publicly accessible its research library, both students and artists will benefit from increasing access to knowledge of the history and techniques of bookmaking in all its forms, advancing the Center's mission to provide services to artists;
- By conducting comprehensive research into the exhibitions archive, the Center has the opportunity to add this information into its existing web infrastructure to establish an online database of the 190 exhibitions

that have been created by the Center, whose ongoing mission to exhibit book arts spreads awareness of and increases scholarship in the field throughout the U.S. and, through the Internet, internationally;

- Finally, by institutionalizing this program into the Center’s core operations, the Center will demonstrate the use and relevance of a dedicated book arts collections, methods for overcoming challenges in cataloguing and housing this type of collection, and how a Collections Program can attract new public. This will further the Center’s mission to be an innovator in the field, demonstrating new possibilities to sister organizations, and embracing the possibilities of new technology – in this case, Internet-based database systems – to advance the state of Book Arts across the world.

*How the Project Relates to the Strategic Plan and Serves as an Investment in Institutional Capacity*

Please see attachment “Strategic Plan Summary” for complete summary of the Center’s 2008 Strategic Planning Initiative. The Center’s collections are a vital part of the Center’s strategy for the future.

The Board of Directors decided in 2007 that the Collection not only has intrinsic value but also has manifold possibilities for advancing the Center’s mission. It has been determined that Collections should be instated as a permanent core program at the Center and integrated with all operations as a crucial means for realizing organizational growth. This has been reaffirmed in the 2008 Strategic Planning process. In pursuance of these decisions, a new Collections Committee of leaders in the field was established to oversee the program, which has met the following major goals:

- Established policy statement and guidelines of the Collections as a core program at the Center
- Established a 3-phase, 4-year structure for the Collections Initiative, outlined in “Project Design” below;
- Secured foundation and government funding to support Phase I;
- Underwent the IMLS/AAM Museum Assessment Program Collections Management program to provide, from an outside peer-reviewer, a survey of the Center’s collections and to outline next steps for the program’s growth, including guidance in finalizing management plans and guidelines;
- Applied for major grant funding for Phase II (including the current application) and Phase III.

The complete Collections Initiative has been designed to meet the Center’s Collections needs both in the short-term (stabilization, cataloguing, preservation, and intellectual control) and long-term (building awareness, increasing public access, re-examining collections plan and guidelines), while also determining strategies for possible growth in the program and use of new technologies in the future. These goals all advance the Center’s unifying mission to serve artists, scholars, and the general public with increased access to and knowledge of contemporary book arts; while building upon the Center’s institutional capacity to further the field.

*The Intended Audience*

The Center’s Collections Committee and Staff have determined the existing audience for this project, both as an onsite collections resource and as multi-media catalogue accessible over the Internet. This includes the growing community of book artists in New York City, as well as teachers, students, scholars, and the general public, representing all ethnic and cultural backgrounds and serving all ages from 14 years and above; as well as an international audience, which will access the collection over the Internet. Currently, the Center receives nearly 2,000 visitors to its website daily, and approximately 20,000 onsite visitors annually.

**Project Design**

The Collections Program has been divided into three main phases to be accomplished over four years. *The current application for grant funding from IMLS Museums for America applies only to specific aspects of Phase II, as indicated in bold below.*

Phase I (May 2007 – July 2009)

*Note Phase I is **not** covered by the present application*

- Securing of funding to commence program;
- MAP Collections Management peer-review process;
- Search and hiring of Collections Specialist;
- Involvement in concurrent Strategic Planning initiative to establish Collections as a core program of the

Center and an essential aspect of future growth;

- Initial cataloguing of the collection, including entry of data into Collections Database program, [OpenCollection.org](http://OpenCollection.org);
- Complete cataloguing of Research Library;
- Photographic documentation of all items in Fine Art and Fine Press collections;
- Composing drafts of Collections Management plan and guidelines and documentation, to be reviewed;
- Architectural planning for new Collections Room at the Center. (As determined by the Board as part of the Strategic Plan, the Center will undertake to renovate its 5,000 square loft space in midtown Manhattan; included in the plans is a dedicated and secure Collections Room which will house the fine art and fine press collection. *No IMLS grant funds will be applied to this purpose at any phase of the program.*)

Phase II (August 2009 – July 2010)

*The following points **in bold** are those covered by the present application:*

- **Upgrade from part-time to full-time employment of Collections Specialist;**
- **Collections Specialist to complete background research into provenance and accession information of the fine art and fine press collection (identified as Priority 1 in the MAP Collections review);**
- **Collections Committee to perform assessment of holdings to determine best action for each item (identified as Priority 2 in the MAP Collections review);**
- **Re-examine, finalize and Implement Collections Management Documents, including: Collections Management Policy, Collection Plan, Accession and Deaccession Forms, Emergency Response Plan, and Conservation Plan (implementation of these documents identified as Priority 2 in the MAP Collections review); for current draft collections documents, see Appendices;**
- **Securing necessary rights, permissions, and ownership agreements with artists as pertains to the permanent housing of the collections at the Center and dissemination over the Internet; including archival records of all correspondence with artists;**
- **Completed research and documentation of exhibition archive (see Appendices for screen shots or visit <http://www.centerforbookarts.org/exhibits/archive>), with complete documentation uploaded to existing online database structure, including scans and complete catalogue data on artwork displayed in exhibitions;**
- **Research trips by Collections Specialist to three libraries that have Book Arts as part of their collections: the Artist Book Collection at the University of Iowa (Iowa City); the collections of the Arthur and Mata Jaffe Center for the Book Arts at the Libraries of Florida Atlantic University (Boca Raton); and the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington DC);**
- **Beta-launch of online catalogue and beta-re-launch of exhibition archive, through newly hired freelance web technician/programmer (see job description in “Project Staff” appendix);**
- **Beta testing, including surveying program through the Collections Committee, artist and teacher constituency, and the Center’s membership.**

*The following points of Phase II are **not** covered by the present application:*

- Construction of new Collections Room with installation of new high-density storage unit and flat files to ensure proper long-term storage (identified as Priority 3 in the MAP Collections review);
- Complete housing of all objects in new Collections Room;
- Launch of Capital Campaign which will, in part, establish endowment to support Collections Program.

Phase III (August 2010 – May 2011)

*Phase III is **not** covered by the present application*

- Official site launch of Online Catalogue and Exhibition Archive.
- Marketing and outreach efforts, including brochure publication, selective website redesign, special events, including a benefit party, and public programs with scholars and artists.
- Full integration of the Collections Program into the Center’s general operations, including coordinating class curricula with research opportunities, creating a retrospective exhibition of the Center’s collections,

building partnerships with sister organizations through loans of artwork, and augmenting the Center's education programs and public programs through the selected display of work from the collections.

- Creation of a printed catalogue of the collection for distribution.
- Restructuring of Collections Specialist role to include curatorial responsibilities.
- Completion of Capital Campaign to establish endowment for permanent support to Collections Program.

#### *Project Management*

The Collections Program will be directly managed by the Collections Specialist, currently a part-time position to be upgraded to full-time in August 2009 with the commencement of the IMLS Museum for America grant period. Currently, the Collections Specialist oversees all aspects of cataloguing, rehousing, and documentation, with direct supervisory responsibilities over the part-time Collections Tech Assistant, Gallery/Studio Coordinator, and work-study volunteers assisting with photography and scanning. Executive supervision will be provided by the Center's Executive Director, who will also oversee the Programs Manager and the External Affairs Manager. Additional supervision and evaluation will be provided by the Collections Committee.

#### *Evaluation Process*

- Regular evaluation of progress, methodology, and quality is provided by the Collections Committee, both through quarterly meetings with presentations by the Collections Specialist and through regular personal contact between the Collections Specialist, Executive Director, and the Committee Chairman.
- Wider evaluation will be performed through the beta testing process which will occur when the online catalogue is uploaded with limited accessibility. At this point, the catalogue will be evaluated for technical bugs, accessibility, usability, quality of multi-media aspect, flexibility in updating, and compatibility across computer systems.
- Specialized evaluation of the Exhibition Archive will proceed with the Center's Executive Director; Chairs of the Exhibition and Collections Committees; and Founder, Richard Minsky (Board Member emeritus); to oversee the project from a curatorial standpoint.
- Evaluation of the Reference Library's organization and usability will be conducted by Programs Manager Sarah Nicholls, who organizes the Center's education program and artist opportunities, in consultation with faculty members, artists, and the Education Committee.

#### *Reaching Audience*

The majority of outreach and publicity efforts that the Center will undertake for this project will take place in Phase III as outlined above; within Phase II, selective publicity will be done within the Center's existing community of 1,000 members, 200 artist-teachers, 50 studio renters, and over 3,000 recent and current students as part of initial awareness building and program testing.

#### *Scholarly and Community Involvement*

Since its founding in 1974, the Center for Book Arts has been an artist-driven organization with crucial member support. In fact, it is due to the generosity and involvement of the Center's artists and members that its collections have grown to its current size of 1,100 fine art and fine press objects and 440 volume reference library, all of which acquired through donations. This involvement will continue in the development of the Collections Program, particularly in the evaluation efforts, as outlined above. In addition, the Center will be looking outside of its existing constituency to scholars and professionals in the field for guidance and discussion as regards advancing this Book Arts collection. For example, the Collections Specialist will be conducting research trips to three book arts collections to build knowledge and encourage discussion and partnership.

#### *Digitization Processes*

The Center for Book Arts is digitizing its fine art collection only insofar as each object is being documented by digital photography and these photographs are then being uploaded to the catalogue, so that imagery is immediately available together with each catalogue entry. All photography and photo-fix procedures will be completed as part of Phase I (not covered by the present application). For the online Exhibition Archive, select exhibition catalogues and other documentation will be scanned for inclusion, as covered by the present application. For further information, see attachment "Digital Products".

## Project Resources

### *Time Allocated to Complete Project*

The three-phase, four-year structure of the project as outlined above was designed to allow the program to proceed upon available resources while creating new opportunities to secure further funding and expand in the latter two phases, in particular in raising the Collections Specialist from a part-time to a full-time position. In addition, the three phase structure also ensure that each portion of the project is allotted sufficient time to be completed and evaluated before proceeding. See attached “Schedule of Completion”.

### *Key Staff (resumes attached):*

#### Maggie Portis, Collections Specialist

- Direct management of cataloguing and rehousing processes

Maggie Portis has a BA in English from the University of Texas at Austin and an MSLIS, with a Special Collections Concentration, from Long Island University. She has also taken classes at the Center for Book Arts. She is currently a Librarian at the New York School for Interior Design and has worked at the Morgan Library and the Museum of Modern Art. At MoMA she took on special projects such as preparing the library’s section of a museum-wide Dada checklist by providing data as to provenance, condition, etc., for the just-released publication, *Dada in the Collection*. She has also completed an internship at the Rare Books Division of the New York Public Library where she catalogued both fine press books and a collection of dime novels.

#### Alexander Campos, Executive Director

- Programming and administrative oversight
- Responsible for implementing Board and Committee directives

Alexander Campos (Executive Director) has more than 20 years experience in Arts Management, with positions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, and the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning (JCAL). At the Bronx Museum he served on the Master Plan Committee and the Architectural Selection Committee. At JCAL, where he was Executive Director, he spearheaded the Master Plan for Facilities and worked directly with architects, designers, and planners in JCAL’s expansion. His education includes an MA in Arts Administration from New York University and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania, where he focused on the history of art and Romance languages. He is a member of the American Association of Museums and has served on several advisory commissions and grant review panels, including the “Percent for Art” Program of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. He has been Executive Director of the Center for Book Arts since 2004.

#### Fernando Peña, Chairman, Collections Committee

- Supervision and advisory capacity

J. Fernando Peña has been Librarian at the Grolier Club since 2001 where he manages all library services for America’s oldest and largest society of bibliophiles and graphic arts. Prior to the Grolier Club, Mr. Peña worked on various projects as both a cataloguer and archivist at Rutgers University and Harvard University. He received his MLS from Rutgers, MA in Hebrew Bible and Semitic Philology from Harvard, and BA in Linguistics from Stanford University. Mr. Peña is currently the Treasurer of the Center’s Board of Directors and Chair of the Center’s Collections Committee and Finance Committee.

#### Sarah Nicholls, Programs Manager

- Oversight of facilities
- Manager of education program, public programs, and work-study volunteers and interns
- Staff liaison for faculty, students, and artists, facilitating the evaluation process

Sarah Nicholls (Program Manager) has been with the Center for six years and has worked directly with the Education Committee to develop curricula for courses, workshops, and lectures; and has worked with master printers and binders in maintaining the Center’s facilities and equipment. She is an artist working with prints and books whose work is collected nationally. She received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College where she studied literature and painting.

James Copeland, External Affairs Manager

- Principal staff for development, membership, special events, marketing, and partnership projects
- Grants administrator
- Staff liaison for Board of Directors, Committees, members, funders, and outside stakeholders

James Copeland has overseen the expansion of the Center’s PR activities, including the creation of a new E-Newsletter that reaches more than 4,000 subscribers. In addition to marketing and publicity responsibilities, Mr. Copeland manages the administration of foundation grants. He received his BA in English from Stanford University and has worked as a development administrator at The New York Public Library.

Nicholas Crawford, Gallery/Studio Coordinator

- To perform Exhibition Archive research, assist with scanning, data management, and facilities issues
- Assists Programs Manager

Nicholas Crawford has been an artist and work-study assistant at the Center since 2007 and was hired as the Gallery/Studio Coordinator in March 2008. He oversees the handling of artwork, artist and curator relations, assists in public programs, and coordinates the general management of the Center’s facilities. He has a B.A. in English Literature from Bowdoin College, with professional background in Television production.

Corinna Zeltsman, Collections Tech Assistant / Administrator

- Provides general Collections organizational assistance
- Assists with all administrative and bookkeeping tasks

Corinna Zeltsman was hired as a part-time Administrator in March 2008. In July 2008, she expanded her duties in the capacity of Collections Tech Assistant (one day per week), constructing boxes and other housing structure for art objects. In Phase II of the Collections Initiative, she will continue to provide organizational and technical assistance to the Collections Specialist. Previously she was Programs Coordinator at the Bard Graduate Center, and she has a B.A. in Latin American Studies from Wesleyan University.

*Supervisory Committee:* For the Center’s Collections Committee, please see “Project Staff” appendix.

*Personnel to be Named:* Web Developer / Network Consultant, job description in “Project Staff” appendix.

**Secured Grant Funding for Phase I (*underway*) – Collections Initiative**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Date of Gift</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
IMLS / AAM / Museum Assessment Program	Nov 2007	n/a	Peer Review of Collections Program
Gladys Kriebel Delmas Fdn	Dec 2007	\$10,000	Collections Initiative – Phase I
NEA	May 2008	\$25,000	Collections Initiative – Phase I
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	June 2008	\$10,000	Collections Initiative – Phase I

**Anticipated Grant Funding for Phase II – Collections Initiative**

IMLS	\$45,000	Federal Funding – <i>Present Application</i>
NEA	\$17,000	Federal Funding
NEH	\$20,000	Federal Funding
Max & Victoria Dreyfus Fdn	\$15,000	Private Foundation – <i>Funds Pending</i>
Gladys Kriebel Delmas Fdn	\$15,000	Private Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	\$10,000	Private Foundation – <i>Funds Secured</i>
J.M. Kaplan Fund	\$5,000	Private Foundation
	\$127,000	Total Funding for Phase II
	\$45,000	Total Secured from Private Foundations (non-federal sources) for 1:1 Match with IMLS Grant

## Impact

Because of the comprehensive and multi-faceted nature of the Collections Initiative, it will have an impact on all aspects of the Center's operations and mission, and will directly support the work of the Center's current constituency while opening gateways for attracting new artists and scholars to learn more about the book arts and to benefit from the Center's programs.

### *Intended Products*

The principal product of Phase II of the Collections Initiative will be the following aspects of the Center's new web-portal (dedicated portion of web site) for the Collections Program:

- Online Catalogue of Fine Art and Fine Press Collection, including uploading of photographs of each object, together with catalogue data; to be hosted on [OpenCollection.org](http://OpenCollection.org) platform; please see Appendices for screen shot of database;
- Online Catalogue of Research Library, including thorough reorganization of volumes in the Center's library for ease of access; to be hosted on [OpenCollection.org](http://OpenCollection.org) platform;
- Online Exhibition Archive, including scanned images of artwork and exhibition catalogues, with hyperlink connectivity cross-sectioned by artist and exhibition, with ongoing updating of links with outside sites such as artist web pages; to be hosted on current web site structure, see Appendices for screen shot.

In addition, the Collections Specialist will compile thorough records and documentation pertaining to the collections (including documents not accessible to the public but of value to the organization), including:

- Comprehensive Documentation of Object Provenance;
- Archive of Accession Paperwork;
- Final Drafts of Collections Management Plan and Related Guidelines; see Appendices for current drafts.

### *Measurable Results*

The Center for Book Arts will be able to directly measure the ongoing impact of its online collections through the following means:

- Tracking traffic to online catalogues and exhibition archives
- On-site visitation to collections and reference library
- Use of or reference to objects in the collection by visiting curators and faculty
- Requests from other exhibiting organizations for object loans
- Tracking use of volumes from the reference library

### *Long-term Impact*

The full implementation of the Collections Program is crucial to the long-term growth of the Center for Book Arts. In the current five-year plan being developed through the Strategic Planning process, the Collections Program plays an essential role in operational planning, facilities planning, marketing and outreach efforts, and planning fundraising opportunities. The Center, which was the first organization of its kind in the country when it was founded in 1974, will be the first Book Arts collection to make its collection fully accessible and searchable online, as well as its extensive exhibition history. The Center anticipates the influence upon the international Book Arts community to be considerable, both as a demonstration of the depth and importance of book arts objects, which are too infrequently exhibited, and as a model for other organizations to build and disseminate their own collections.

Among the Center's existing constituency of artists, teachers, students, and visitors, an accessible collections program will be a central resource in the Center's continued efforts to create a dynamic and exploratory experience of the book arts. This has been advanced for decades through the Center's renowned educational offerings, exhibitions, and public programming. The implementation of the Collections Program is the best, most feasible, and most exciting next step in furthering the Center's mission.

**BUDGET FORM: Section B, Summary Budget**

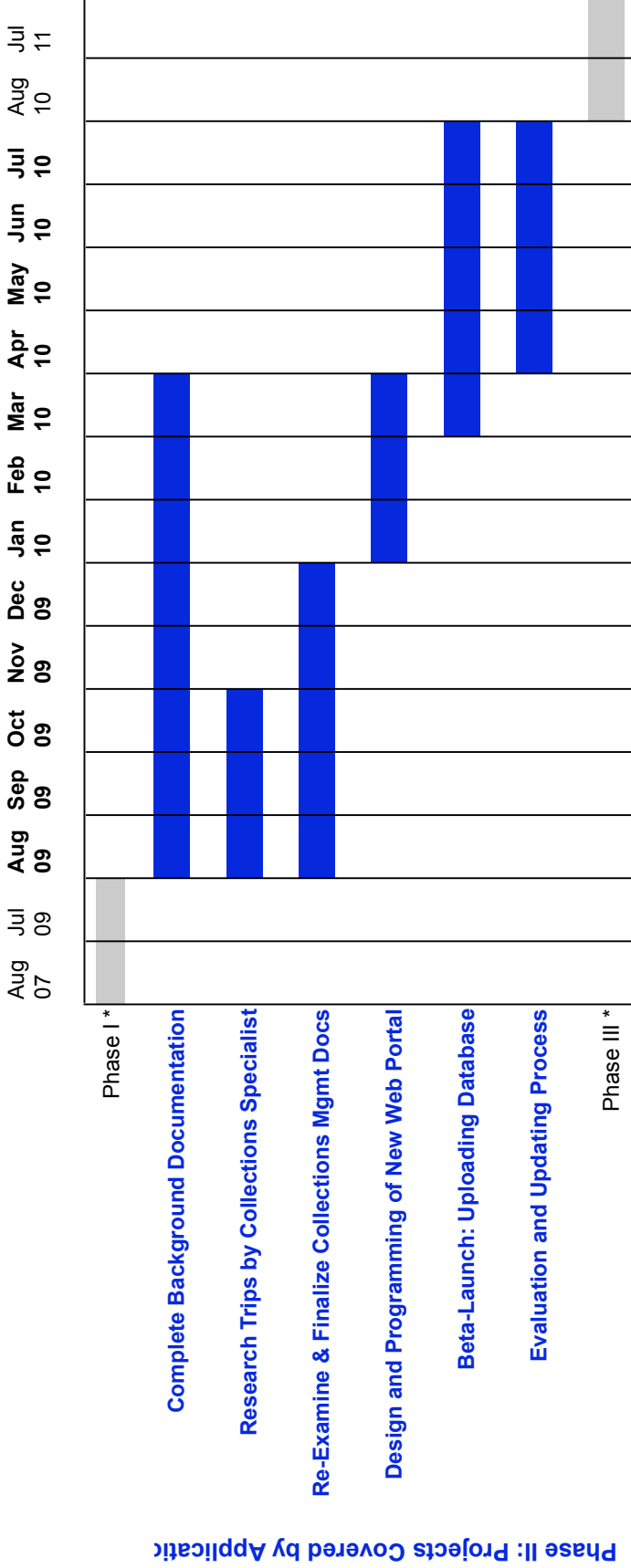
	\$ IMLS	\$ Cost Share	\$ TOTAL COSTS
1. Salaries and Wages	\$28,000.00	\$53,500.00	\$81,500.00
2. Fringe Benefits	\$6,000.00	\$10,300.00	\$16,300.00
3. Consultant Fees	\$3,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$7,500.00
4. Travel	\$1,500.00	\$1,600.00	\$3,100.00
5. Supplies and Materials	\$200.00	\$300.00	\$500.00
6. Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
7. Student Support	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other Costs	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$1,200.00
<b>TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (1-8)</b>	<b>\$39,300.00</b>	<b>\$70,800.00</b>	<b>\$110,100.00</b>
9. Indirect Costs	\$5,700.00	\$10,815.00	\$16,515.00
<b>TOTAL COSTS (Direct and Indirect)</b>	<b>\$45,000.00</b>	<b>\$81,615.00</b>	<b>\$126,615.00</b>

**Project Funding for the Entire Grant Period**

1. Grant Funds Requested from IMLS	<b>\$45,000.00</b>
2. Cost Sharing:	
a. Applicant's Contribution	<b>\$45,000.00</b>
b. Kind Contribution	
c. Other Federal Agencies*	<b>\$36,615.00</b>
d. TOTAL COST SHARING	<b>\$45,000.00</b>
3. TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING (1+2d)	\$126,615.00
Percentage of total project costs requested from IMLS	<b>35.5 %</b>

\*If funding has been requested from another federal agency, indicate the agency's name:  
National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities

**Schedule of Completion**  
 Grant Period: Aug 09 - Jul 10



\* Phases I and III are not covered by the current grant application; for details of activities performed in Phases I and III, see Narrative.