

PRESERVATION OF ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT INFORMATION NATIONAL FORUMS

ABSTRACT

The University of North Texas (lead applicant), in collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of Missouri, the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University, Yale University, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), the Educopia Institute, and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) propose a one year project to hold national forums in 2018 to address national concerns regarding the preservation of electronic government information (PEGI) by cultural memory organizations for long term access by the citizens of the United States. The PEGI National Forums project proposal has been informed by apprehensions highlighted in a series of meetings from 2016-2017 between university librarians, information professionals, and representatives of federal agencies, including the Government Publishing Office (GPO) and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

By convening the proposed series of qualified groups of experts and key stakeholders (including those from fields adjacent to that of librarians, such as subject domain researchers) we will identify and surface a broadly shared national consensus and agenda on specific future steps needed to preserve and provide long term access to electronic government information in the United States. Forum activities will include facilitated discussions that will document the relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior needed to advance this agenda, and engage disparate stakeholders in planning for aligned activities in the future. Beyond the forums held, a key project outcome will be a published report articulating the shared national consensus and agenda on these issues.

This project will take the form of a one year National Forum Grant in the IMLS category of curating collections. The amount of IMLS funds requested for this project is \$87,000. This project will take place during a twelve-month period from 12/1/17 to 11/30/18. The project will include collaborating participants from the named partner institutions serving as members of a steering committee, as well as project staff hired specifically for the period of project activity, to serve in the roles of facilitators and analysts. The project partners putting forward this proposal include experts from several university libraries and nonprofit organizations, all of which are deeply concerned about and committed to ensuring the long term preservation and access to electronic government information of a critically important and lasting historical value to the citizens of the United States. The University of North Texas, the project lead applicant, has for years sought to preserve at-risk electronic government information, and regularly participates in the national EOT web archiving effort.

Outcomes

The PEGI National Forums project will result in the following outcomes:

- Six Mini-Forums will be held, each designed to surface knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral perspectives from the relevant stakeholder groups represented in each meeting, and to document points of shared alignment with the other stakeholder groups engaged in the course of the project. Each event will result in a brief report of findings that will be publicly disseminated.
- Two Webinar Forums will be held, designed to broadly engage distributed groups of stakeholders that cannot be physically assembled for in-person events. These will again surface and document stakeholder priorities, perspectives, and points of collaborative alignment going forward.
- A concluding PEGI National Forum will convene a strongly qualified group of experts and key stakeholders to engage with the issues involved in preservation of electronic government information as surfaced in the preparatory forums. The project Steering Committee and National Forum Attendees will write a final project report setting forth a national agenda for collaborative action.

INTRODUCTION

The University of North Texas (lead applicant), in collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of Missouri, the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University, Yale University, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), the Educopia Institute, and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) propose a one year project to hold national forums in 2018 to address national concerns regarding the preservation of electronic government information (PEGI) by cultural memory organizations for long term access by the citizens of the United States. The PEGI National Forums project proposal has been informed by apprehensions highlighted in a series of meetings from 2016-2017 between university librarians, information professionals, and representatives of federal agencies, including the Government Publishing Office (GPO) and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

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STATEMENT OF NATIONAL NEED

There is a growing awareness nationally of the need to mitigate the risks of serious and ongoing loss of government information that is electronic in nature. This issue has loomed larger in recent years, reaching a point of criticality that has driven intense discussions by information management thought leaders from many sectors across the United States, as well as the general public.

This project proposal builds on a broad range of preparatory activities undertaken by the project participants to assess national needs in this area as well as opportunities for improving the current situation. This range of activities and preparatory projects have comprised what the participants term the PEGI Initiative, a loosely coupled effort that has been building to this grant application. The following is a brief recap of the PEGI Initiative to date, how it has connected with other synergistic efforts, and how these activities have informed this application.

Beginning in 2015, the project co-PIs (Sittel and Halbert) began noting the many ways that long-term preservation of electronic government information could be improved through broader discussion between community members. Many activities to preserve electronic government information benefit from multi-

* Note that all references are endnotes detailed in Appendix A.

institutional collaboration. An example is the End of Term (EOT) Web Archive efforts,² which are undertaken by coordinating work between several large institutions with a particular interest in preserving government web pages. Informal conversations with government information specialists at other institutions demonstrated that there was a shared sense of anxiety and urgency in the community concerning persistent access to electronic forms of government information. Consequently, two meetings were held in April and December of 2016, seeking to better understand and explore ways of addressing what was increasingly being articulated among members of the community as urgently needed cross-sector activities to preserve and provide access to electronic government information.³ These two meetings further built on extensive prior discussions of these issues that had been conducted at *CRL's 2014 Global Resources Collections Forum*, which ultimately resulted in the *Leviathan Report*⁴ summarizing serious threats to the long-term integrity and accessibility of electronic government information. This proposal will not attempt to recapitulate the details of these various prior studies, which we feel extensively document the national need for preservation of electronic government information. But the core problem discussed in these reports and addressed in this project can be summarized as follows:

The relatively well-understood workflow of the pre-digital era of government information production, dissemination, and preservation has been disrupted in fundamental ways by the rapidly changing landscape of digital information. Previously, federal agencies created content and when that content was ready to be disseminated or archived, appropriate print material was sent to NARA, GPO, and the institutions that make up the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). The workflows of these three entities were effective in the print era. However, today, most government information is produced and disseminated digitally. Digital workflows are neither as predictable nor systematic as print workflows; further, the amount of digital information has exploded.⁵ Also, there are now grave concerns that federal agencies may be either defunded or discouraged from taking effective steps for long term preservation and access to the information they produce. While NARA, GPO, and FDLP institutions continue to perform their received functions, their limitations in funding, mandates, and historical origins and orientation to print (rather than digital) information workflows all contribute to constraining their abilities to respond to the current scale of demand for preservation and access services for electronic government information. There is an urgent need to hold national forums that will bring together the three historical partners (NARA, GPO, and FDLP) with many additional new stakeholders to develop a shared consensus that can better address these issues.

Scope of Electronic Government Information and Threats

The PEGI Initiative has embraced a broad, inclusive, and evolving understanding of what constitutes electronic government information. Throughout PEGI discussions (as well as this proposal) the adjectives “digital” and “electronic” have been applied interchangeably to government information in an attempt to expand our thinking about what is at stake. The following is a brief discussion concerning PEGI scope.

There are many descriptions and interpretations of what can potentially constitute government information, whether print or digital in form. We believe that the most authoritative (and most inclusive) statements come from the 2016 revision of OMB Circular A-130⁶ (in turn cited by GPO policy⁷) which provides the following basic definitions:

- *‘Information’ means any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts, data, or opinions in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, electronic, or audiovisual forms.*
- *‘Federal information’ means information created, collected, processed, maintained, disseminated, disclosed, or disposed of by or for the Federal Government, in any medium or form.*
- *‘Information dissemination product’ means any recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, disseminated by an agency, or contractor thereof, to the public.*

We are focusing in this project on federal (government) information that is electronic in form, rather than print, because of the findings from the many preparatory project activities described above. Having said this, electronic government information obviously includes an enormous and relatively amorphous mass of content. Identifying the range of stakeholder perspectives on this vast and loosely associated body of information, as well as the range of threats that it is vulnerable to, is a challenging task that will be addressed in the course of this project. While there is now a robust literature on general threats to successful preservation of digital content⁸, there are many contexts and threats that are particular to electronic government information. During the project forums we intend to query various stakeholder groups about their perceptions of priorities and the relevant categories whereby they conceptualize electronic government information, and associated issues of preservation and access. For example, one categorical lens through which several federal agencies understand electronic government information is that of legislative categories: the Federal Records Act of 1950 and Presidential Records Act of 1978 each establish distinct legal contexts, mandates, and expectations for managing different types of electronic government information. These and other laws also determine responsibilities, obligations, and ultimately funding for different entities regarding such information. Different forms of media through which electronic information is transmitted or recorded is another type of categorical lens through which information can be sorted and (because of vulnerabilities associated with persistence of different media types) prioritized in terms of preservation.

While our preparatory meetings and reports have identified *some* of the threats to long term preservation and access to electronic government information, we have not identified *all* such threats. The project final report will include a discussion of relevant categories and taxonomies by which the vast range of electronic government information, as well as threats and opportunities for preservation and access, can be understood.

Stakeholder Groups

National needs regarding electronic government information may best be understood in terms of differentiated needs associated with various stakeholders. The preparatory activities and meetings undertaken by members of the PEGI Initiative have established a basic and over-arching need for this National Forum project, we intend to more specifically and analytically engage with stakeholder groups as follows.

We will engage with various stakeholders through PEGI Mini-Forums (see section on Project Design below) held in conjunction with relevant professional meetings. These Mini-Forums will each represent both a mechanism for gathering information from the relevant stakeholder group directly, as well as an opportunity to recruit individuals to attend the primary PEGI National Forum as experts representing the perspective of their stakeholder group. While all citizens of the United States are ultimately stakeholders in the electronic information provided by their government, the PEGI National Forums project will seek to engage several targeted categories of stakeholders, especially in fields adjacent to (and sometimes overlapping with) librarianship, as follows:

- *Disciplinary Researchers:* Scholars that use government information in their research efforts are of particular interest to us. There are too many particular disciplines to connect with all of them in this limited project, so we have chosen one particular discipline to focus on (History) and several cross-sectional groups of scientists, including: the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA), and the International Council for Science World Data System (ICSU WDS) alliance. Each of these groups hold annual professional meetings at which we will host PEGI Mini-Forums.
- *Archivists:* While archives and libraries are often closely affiliated, we believe that archivists have particular priorities, perspectives, and disciplinary skills that should be identified in this context. The PEGI Mini-Forum at SAA will be targeted at engaging archivists in this topic.

- *Repository and Digital Preservation Professionals:* This cross-sector stakeholder group includes a wide range of professionals that maintain various kinds of subject domain and genre focused repositories. Examples include repositories for groups such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), the International Virtual Observatory Alliance (IVOA), and the data professionals of administrative agencies like NARA. All of these groups and their component organizations maintain corpora of digital information created, produced, or maintained by the government or government funded programs. These groups tend to be very diverse in their orientation and backgrounds, ranging from faculty researchers to digital librarians; these professionals have uniquely strong practical observations about acquiring and maintaining electronic government information. PEGI Mini-Forums will be held at several cross-sector events in order to engage a variety of these professional perspectives.
- *Public Scholars and Citizens:* Government information is utilized in countless ways by private citizens. The enormously varying interests of citizens in preserving electronic government information has been evident for institutions that have hosted DataRescue events⁹, which have noted the wide variety in backgrounds of private citizens that show up in demonstrably direct support of the need to preserve electronic government information. Because concerned citizens are diffuse and widely distributed, PEGI Webinar Forums will be held to engage this category of stakeholders.
- *Federal Agency Professionals:* Another overlapping stakeholder group, professionals employed in government agencies are obviously also centrally concerned with this topic and need to be engaged in the course of PEGI discussions. The PEGI Initiative has to date sought to actively and directly engage professionals from various federal agencies in consultation, advisory, and planning capacities, especially from GPO, NARA, and LC. These individuals have been circumspect in their participation to date so as to not overstep their roles as public servants. However, individuals from these and other specific federal agencies that either administer or produce electronic government information will continue to be engaged in this effort, especially in the course of any PEGI forums that are held in Washington, D.C.
- *Elected Officials and their Staff:* Elected officials of the government are another stakeholder group that is obviously important in this discussion. We do not anticipate being able to attract such officials to our forums, but we do hope to engage them through their staffers, who will be contacted.
- *Aligned Nonprofit Organizations:* There are many nonprofit organizations with missions that align them with the broad purposes of this project. We have included several representatives of such organizations on the project Steering Committee, with an expectation that they will assist in reaching out to and engaging as many similarly aligned nonprofits as possible in the Mini-Forums.
- *Librarians:* Finally, librarians are themselves a stakeholder group, although it should be noted that librarians who are strongly motivated and active in preserving electronic government information are a subset of all librarians. This subset of librarians have roots in both the FDLP community and the overlapping community of digital librarians that engage in Web archiving activities, especially the EOT crawl project. The PEGI Mini-Forum held at ALA Annual 2018 will seek to broadly engage librarians from a wider range of backgrounds in this discussion.

The preparatory meetings and reports that led to this project have identified many threats to the long-term persistence of electronic government information. We believe that further progress in addressing such threats must directly engage the wide range of stakeholders concerned with this issue.

PROJECT DESIGN

The PEGI National Forums project will collaboratively identify and articulate the shared elements of a national action agenda and plan for distributed preservation and access to government information. To this end, the PEGI project will convene a series of national planning forums to identify aligned priorities by stakeholders with relevant capabilities and an interest in preserving and ensuring access to electronic government information. This series of public forums will be held in conjunction with relevant national meetings throughout the project period to analyze, develop, vet, and ultimately set forth a plan for aligned collaborative work to implement this goal. These planning forums will be facilitated by project staff hired to collate community input, write up results of discussions, publish and disseminate report outs.

The planning forums will have several goals: 1) to broadly engage with the different stakeholder groups identified previously, 2) to examine and document strategies for better orchestration of digital collection, preservation, and access mechanisms by collaborating organizations, identifying priorities, opportunities, and barriers, 3) to identify alignment between stakeholder priorities, collaborative possibilities, and effective capabilities for cooperation on aims furthering the preservation and access of electronic government information, 4) to inform the final project report that will propose aligned national actions by cooperating institutions. Consideration of strategies for cooperative action will be informed by successful examples to date of such collaborative efforts such as the EOT Web Archive, although many other digital preservation technologies beyond web archiving will also be considered.

Framework for Collaborative Action

The conceptual framework that will be used for examining collaborative possibilities in this project is the Collective Impact model for coordination of nonprofit social organizations first documented by Kania and Kramer¹⁰ and now generally recognized by many philanthropic agencies as one of the most successful strategies for mobilizing disparate organizations around targeted socially beneficial efforts. The Collective Impact Framework and its application to multi-stakeholder group collaborative efforts has been extensively documented¹¹ and we will utilize this framework in developing the final project report proposing aligned national actions by cooperating institutions (see section below on final project report).

Steering Committee Project Meetings

The project will be coordinated through periodic meetings of the Steering Committee members (these meetings will also be attended by project staff members). There will be a minimum of four scheduled full SC Project Meetings with all project participants, although we anticipate holding a number of additional meetings with subsets of the project participants during each month of the project. These meetings will be held via videoconference as follows, with the following specified meeting outcomes:

- December 2017: Project kickoff meeting, initial mini-forum and webinar scoping and design, as well as other preparations. Key outcomes of this meeting will include plans for the first quarter 2018 Mini-Forums, and SC assignments for work on the webinar forums.
- February 2018: Preparations for all remaining mini-forums and webinars, as well as PR, recruiting, and communication efforts in preparation for primary PEGI National Forum in October. Key outcomes of this meeting will include plans and SC assignments for conducting the remaining Mini-Forums and both Webinars.
- July 2018: Discussion and analysis of findings from webinars and initial project mini-forums, together with initial outlining and writing assignments for project final report.
- November 2018: Completion and review of all remaining editing of project report, publication of report, and preparations for project wrap-up activities.

Mini-Forums

To reach the broadest possible variety of potential collaborators and stakeholders, a progression of small public forums will be held in conjunction with several professional conferences. Each of these meetings, while national in scope, will constitute a “Mini-Forum” designed to gather information from the relevant stakeholder groups represented in the meeting, and to document points of shared alignment with the other stakeholder groups engaged in the course of the project. The project team does not envision these mini-forums as a mechanism for driving the development of an over-arching PEGI agenda among these extremely diverse groups; rather, our expectation is that there are in fact many shared points of alignment between these different stakeholder groups that can be surfaced through such mini-forums.

Because of its success in hosting the two preparatory PEGI meetings in 2016, the Educopia Institute will be responsible for managing logistics and organizing travel for the Mini-Forums. Each Mini-Forum will be facilitated on site by at least two members of the project Steering Committee, who will produce a brief report summarizing findings which will be reviewed and discussed by the entire SC, and then shared publicly in the project website. In facilitating the Mini-Forums the two SC member teams will work closely with Educopia on preparations for the meeting, including tasks such as identifying space at the conference venue, conducting preparatory PR, recruiting and confirming commitments of participants for the meeting, facilitating and conducting the mini-forum itself, and then documenting the findings. Mini-Forums will likely take the form of working lunches or dinners so as to not conflict with other conference events. All feedback from participants in Mini-Forums will be recorded anonymously. If individuals who attend the Mini-Forums choose to participate in the PEGI National Forum they will be listed as contributing authors of the final project report. A set of consistent facilitation materials to use at the Mini-Forums will be developed by the Educopia Institute in consultation with the full project Steering Committee at the December 2017 meeting. These facilitation materials will be designed to elicit feedback useful for a) understanding the particular perspectives of the relevant stakeholder groups and b) informing the different sections of the project final report.

The following is a list of the professional meetings at which we will aim to host PEGI mini-forums and a summary of the relevant stakeholder groups and rationale for reaching out to these groups for purposes of the PEGI project:

1. *American Historical Association Annual Meeting* from January 4-7, 2018 in Washington, D.C. Co-PI Halbert is already signed up to present on a conference panel in which he can discuss this project and publicly recruit additional participants in the Mini-Forum. This Mini-Forum will allow us to garner input from historians and ideally identify one or more scholars to participate in the concluding PEGI National Forum in October. Historians constitute both a core category of humanities scholars as well as a core group of stakeholders with long-term research interests in government information.
2. *American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Annual Meeting* from February 15-19, 2018 in Austin, TX. As one of the largest and most prestigious cross-sector associations of scientists, holding a Mini-Forum in conjunction with the AAAS meeting provides an opportunity to engage a variety of different types of scientific researchers. Wiggin is scheduled to present at this event and will participate in the Mini-Forum.
3. *American Library Association Annual Conference* from June 21-26, 2018 in New Orleans, LA. Several members of the SC will be attending ALA Annual, and will jointly be hosting this Mini-Forum. Librarians are obviously a key stakeholder in this discussion. We will cast a wide net for this Mini-Forum and be inclusive of different types of librarians. Laster is the incoming chair of ALA GODORT, and we may make this Mini-Forum a GODORT event.

4. *Society of American Archivists (SAA) Annual Meeting* from August 12-18, 2018 in Washington, D.C. Archivists, both traditional and digitally oriented, are a key perspective and voice to include.
5. *International Conference on Digital Preservation (iPRES)* from September 24 - 28, 2018 in Boston, MA. The community which attends the iPRES conference is a cross-sector assemblage of different stakeholders (researchers, librarians, technologists) with a particular focus on preservation. We believe that this Mini-Forum should yield useful insights concerning strategies for collaborative preservation efforts.
6. *IDW2 (joint CODATA, RDA, and WDS) Conference*, planned to be held in either September or October 2018 at the time of writing.¹² This is a unique joint conference of several different groups concerned with data management. The Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA) was established decades ago as an interdisciplinary committee of the International Council for Science in order to mobilize scientific consensus on data standards and practices. The Research Data Alliance (RDA) is an international community-driven organization that promotes open sharing of data. Finally, the World Data System (WDS) of the International Council for Science (ICSU) promotes long-term stewardship of, and universal and equitable access to, quality-assured scientific data. All of these organizations not only focus on the issue of preservation and access to scientific government-produced/funded information that is digital, but are also all international in scope. We hope that this Mini-Forum will provide at least one opportunity to garner outlooks from not only the U.S. but also other countries on the issues of the PEGI National Forums project, something we feel is important for perspective on the issue. Because this meeting may be held outside the U.S., we are seeking permission to send two of the project SC members to the conference.

Webinar Forums

Two webinars will be held in the course of the project to provide a means of gathering information and informing people which does not require physical travel. Our hope is to reach stakeholder groups that are more dispersed through this mechanism. Members of the project steering committee in conjunction with the project staff will conduct these two Webinar Forums. These Webinar Forums will take place in March and May of 2018. We will use either WebEx or another similar webinar tool for conducting these meetings, allowing dynamic anonymous polling of attendees on particular questions. Because these will be virtual forums, we will make every effort to broaden and maximize the range of attendees through the social media strategies described below. These strategies have been very successful in engaging public scholars and citizens in various DataRescue events, leaving us hopeful that we will realize far-reaching attendance in these events. Findings from these two Webinar Forums will also be documented in brief reports which will be reviewed and discussed by the entire SC, and shared publicly in the project website.

PEGI National Forum

The PEGI National Forum will convene a strongly qualified group of experts and key stakeholders to engage with the issues involved in preservation of electronic government information. The Educopia Institute will again provide overall organizational support for the Steering Committee in preparing for this event. The PEGI National Forum will be the largest event held as part of this project, a day-long meeting held in mid-October 2018 in Washington, D.C., close to the date of the 2018 Depository Library Council (DLC) meeting. Between one and two dozen individuals will be recruited to attend the PEGI National Forum from the various stakeholder communities engaged in the Mini-Forums and Webinar Forums. They will be selected on the basis of both their ability to represent the perspectives of their stakeholder groups and their willingness to actively participate in the National Forum. The PEGI National Forum Attendees will include both these stakeholder representative and the members of the project Steering Committee. In the lead-up to the National Forum, a

variety of preparatory information will be shared with the Attendees for review and commentary. The brief reports from all of the Mini-Forums and Webinar Forums will be shared. An outline of the final project report will be developed by the Steering Committee and publicly distributed after the July SC meeting to all Attendees and the wider community through the project website, together with a solicitation for early feedback. The brief reports and early feedback will inform the content of the draft project final report as it is written. Particularly engaged Attendees will be encouraged to assist in writing the draft of the project final report. The draft of the project final report will be made public through the project website and listserv announcements one month in advance of the National Forum. The structure of the draft report and its purposes are described below in the section on the final project report. In the final month before the National Forum, we will encourage as much engagement and debate by the Attendees as possible on the project listserv so that major issues with the recommendations can be surfaced early on.

The PEGI National Forum itself will be comprised of a structured progression of presentations and discussions, culminating in a session to confirm the Collective Impact next steps going forward. The Attendees who are the most articulate concerning the issues and broadly representative of their stakeholder groups will be invited to speak during the first half of the meeting, followed by discussions to resolve any remaining issues in characterizing various stakeholder groups in the final report, and to then explore interconnections and synergies between the different stakeholder groups. At least one session in the day will be devoted to a final review and signoff on the remaining work to be done on the final project report, which will be the blueprint for mobilization and coordination of PEGI efforts in the future.

Forum PR, Outreach, and Marketing

The events of the PEGI National Forums project will be promoted throughout the year of the project, especially by means of a variety of social media tools. The PEGI Initiative and the aligned projects it has worked with (such as DataRescue) have successfully used social media tools to build awareness and reach different constituencies. At the most basic level, the project will have a listserv and project websites for coordinating activities, and these tools will have some utility for outreach efforts. For more specific communications (RSVPs to events, etc.) we will of course use more traditional mechanisms like email and phone calls. However, the majority of outreach, PR, and Marketing for the PEGI National Forums project will be conducted via an integrated social media strategy integrating several subsidiary tools, including Wordpress, Reddit, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. This strategy will be coordinated and implemented using an automated social media dissemination tool; most likely one of the following: 1) Jetpack Publicize, 2) NextScripts Social Networks, or 3) DLVR.IT. All of these are automated tools to distribute coordinated messaging to multiple social media platforms simultaneously. We will select one of these tools at or before the December 2017 SC project kickoff meeting. Our aim in deploying this distributed social media mechanism is to be able to generate interest and awareness of the project by reaching out in a consistent manner to the diverse stakeholder groups we have identified. Members of the Steering Committee will take responsibility for periodic posts using this coordinating strategy and technology. Through this concerted social media push we hope to generate a buzz and broader community awareness of the issues during the year of the PEGI National Forums project.

Steering Committee

These project Steering Committee are all experts in various aspects of electronic government information and/or digital preservation and access (C.V.'s are provided elsewhere in this submission, together with letters of commitment). The Steering Committee will include: *Roberta Sittel* (UNT, chair, PI), *Martin Halbert* (Co-PI) and *Lynda Kellam* (both from UNC Greensboro, *Katherine Skinner* (Educopia Institute), *Bethany Wiggin* (Pennsylvania), *Heather Joseph* (SPARC), *Bernard Reilly* and *Marie Waltz* (both from CRL),

James Jacobs (Stanford University), *Shari Laster* (UC Santa Barbara), *Marie Concannon* (University of Missouri), and *Scott Matheson* (Yale University). Members of several relevant federal agencies (GPO, NARA, and the Library of Congress) have been involved in planning efforts, and will attend steering committee meetings as time allows, but will not serve as named SC members.

Project Staff

The project staff will include a part-time graduate researcher at the University of North Texas and a modest commitment of time from Educopia Institute administrative assistants. The graduate assistant will be a Library and Information Science graduate researcher well versed in government information.

Connections with Other Aligned Projects

The PEGI Initiative has many connections with other projects that are aligned in purposes. The core issue that began prompting PEGI Initiative conversations more than a year ago has continued to be highlighted in ever more pressing ways since the 2014-2015 meetings in other discussions that many of the individuals associated with this grant proposal have participated in, notably the Libraries+ Network Meeting that was held May 8-9, 2017 in Washington, D.C.¹³ This meeting further articulated the need to act, and to act in a way that would broaden the discussion beyond the three historical partners to begin to identify a consensus agenda for new ways of collaboratively addressing widely shared national needs for preservation and access to digital government information.

The Steering Committee assembled for this project includes individuals who will serve as liaisons with other projects that are synergistic and aligned in aims. James Jacobs is the co-founder of both the Free Government Information (<http://freegovinfo.info>) and the LOCKSS-USDOCS preservation network for GPO electronic documents. Bethany Wiggin is one of the principals of the Libraries+ Network. Shari Laster is the Assistant Chair/Chair-Elect for the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association, and is a past chair of the Depository Library Council. Bernie Reilly is President of CRL, and oversees all CRL programs, including the TRAIL archive of U.S. government agency technical reports. Katherine Skinner is Executive Director of the Educopia Institute, including the MetaArchive Cooperative for distributed digital preservation. Heather Joseph is the executive director of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), and regularly engages on these issues with groups at the national level.

Final Project Report

The PEGI National Forums project will produce a number of outputs in the form of brief reports associated with the smaller forums conducted in the course of the project, but the most prominent document produced will be the final project report. The final project report will summarize all findings from the different stakeholders engaged in the project, and use them to articulate an agenda for coordinated national action.

As mentioned, this national agenda will be structured according to best practices in the previously cited Collective Impact model for social sector collaboration. In the social sector, initiatives geared toward system-level transformations are increasingly turning to methodologies that cultivate multi-sector stakeholder alliances in order to create and sustain transformative change (e.g., environmental improvement, reductions in homelessness, lowering teen pregnancy rates). In these approaches, system-wide change is encouraged through the work of cross-stakeholder networks, gathered purposefully to develop a shared vision and to engage in iterative development (with regular check-ins and refinements along the way) over an arc of years to achieve that goal. The Collective Impact Framework¹⁴ is the distillation of best practices for this approach.

Using the five elements of the Collective Impact Framework, the final project report will include the following sections: a) documentation of the priorities surfaced in the project which comprise a common agenda shared by all stakeholder groups engaged in the project, b) metrics for measuring progress toward achieving this common agenda, c) a plan of collaborative action for stakeholders that will advance the common agenda and

produce mutually reinforcing activities, d) mechanisms for open and continuous communication between the stakeholders to continue to inform, build a common motivation, and advance mutually desirable objectives, and e) identify which entities can serve as backbone organizations to continue coordinating the entire initiative going forward.

The final project report by all experts assembled for this project will set forth the collective recommendations for action to address the key challenges identified in this proposal. We anticipate that this agenda will include a variety of related but discrete subsequent programs that will be well-aligned through the structure of the Collective Impact Framework. The final project report will be published in November 2018 and will be widely disseminated through the project social media strategy.

NATIONAL IMPACT

The PEGI National Forums project will engage a broad group of experts, institutional leaders, and stakeholders to develop a cooperative national action agenda for preserving and providing access to at-risk government digital information of long term historical significance. By bringing together a wide variety of motivated stakeholders to develop a plan for collaborative action, this project will address the needs identified in the preparatory meetings and reports that led up to this proposal, which we feel have continued to assume a larger and larger shadow of concern in the national consciousness.

The PEGI National Forums project will produce a number of catalytic outcomes. The project will host six Mini-Forums with different stakeholder groups, two Webinar Forums with more distributed stakeholder groups, and a concluding National Forum that assembles motivated experts to directly address this critically important national issue. All of these events will produce individual reports that will be widely disseminated, with the major culminating report synthesizing all findings and setting for a national action agenda for collaboration between stakeholder groups.

Our country is now at serious risk of permanently losing access to a great deal of our shared national information. Holding the PEGI National Forums is a way of actively addressing fears shared by scientists, librarians, and citizens alike now concerned with “the ease with which electronic records can be altered, encrypted, or destroyed.”¹⁵ Ensuring the distributed survival of the official information of the nation in this critical period of increasing information loss should be a major priority for cultural memory organizations as well as citizenry alike. The PEGI National Forums will convene a broad range of stakeholders to respond actively and in a structured manner to this challenge.

PEGI National Forums Project Proposal - Schedule of Completion

ID	Task Name	Start	2018											
			Q4 Nov	Dec	Jan	Q1 Feb	Mar	Apr	Q2 May	Jun	Jul	Q3 Aug	Sep	Oct
1	1 Planning and Initial Forums Phase	Fri 12/1/17												
2	1.1 December Project Kickoff SC Meeting	Fri 12/15/17	◆ 12/15											
3	1.2 AHA Mini-Forum	Sat 1/6/18	◆ 1/6											
4	1.3 AAAS Mini-Forum	Sat 2/17/18	◆ 2/17											
5	1.4 March Webinar	Fri 3/2/18	◆ 3/2											
6	1.5 March SC Meeting	Fri 3/23/18	◆ 3/23											
7	1.6 May Webinar	Fri 5/18/18	◆ 5/18											
8	1.7 ALA Mini-Forum	Sat 6/23/18	◆ 6/23											
9	2 Primary Forum Phase	Mon 7/2/18												
10	2.1 July SC Meeting	Fri 7/20/18	◆ 7/20											
11	2.2 SAA Mini-Forum	Tue 8/14/18	◆ 8/14											
12	2.3 iPRES Mini-Forum	Wed 9/26/18	◆ 9/26											
13	2.4 IDW2 Mini-Forum	Fri 10/12/18	◆ 10/12											
14	2.5 PEGI National Forum	Sun 10/14/18												
15	2.6 November SC Meeting	Fri 11/16/18	◆ 11/16											

DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, assets, software, and datasets). The products you create with IMLS funding require careful stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and re-use by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. However, applying these principles to the development and management of digital products can be challenging. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

Instructions

You must provide answers to the questions in Part I. In addition, you must also complete at least one of the subsequent sections. If you intend to create or collect digital content, resources, or assets, complete Part II. If you intend to develop software, complete Part III. If you intend to create a dataset, complete Part IV.

PART I: Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

A.1 What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (content, resources, assets, software, or datasets) you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright(s)? How will you explain property rights and permissions to potential users (for example, by assigning a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, or Creative Commons to the product)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.

6 Mini-Forum reports, 2 Webinar Forum Reports, and 1 final project report, all as PDFs. All will be creative commons 3.0 license. Preserved in both UNT repository and Educopia Publications websites.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

We will not assert copyright beyond the CC 3.0 license.

A.3 If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

We do not anticipate any products with privacy concerns.

Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A. Creating or Collecting New Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A.1 Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and format you will use.

6 Mini-Forum reports, 2 Webinar Forum Reports, and 1 final project report, all as PDFs. All will be creative commons 3.0 license. Preserved in both UNT repository and Educopia Publications websites.

A.2 List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

MS Office Word

A.3 List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG) you plan to use, along with the relevant information about the appropriate quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, or pixel dimensions).

PDF

B. Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan (i.e., how you will monitor and evaluate your workflow and products).

Standard office practices for review.

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period of performance. Your plan may address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

Reports from the project activities will be saved in the UNT institutional repository.

C. Metadata

C.1 Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata. Specify which standards you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., MARC, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

Metadata is modeled on Dublin Core

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

We will use UNT and Educopia repository infrastructure

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

Through UNT's repository and Google search exposure

D. Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content).

Openly available online

D.2 Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

Part III. Projects Developing Software

A. General Information

A.1 Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

n/a

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

n/a

B. Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

n/a

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

n/a

B.3 Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

n/a

B.4 Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

n/a

B.5 Provide the name(s) and URL(s) for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

n/a

C. Access and Use

C.1 We expect applicants seeking federal funds for software to develop and release these products under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on its access and use? Identify and explain the license under which you will release source code for the software you develop (e.g., BSD, GNU, or MIT software licenses). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

n/a

C.2 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

n/a

C.3 Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:n/a

URL:

Part IV: Projects Creating Datasets

A.1 Identify the type of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use to which you expect it to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate it.

n/a

A.2 Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

n/a

A.3 Will you collect any personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information? If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect such information while you prepare the data files for public release (e.g., data anonymization, data suppression PII, or synthetic data).

n/a

A.4 If you will collect additional documentation, such as consent agreements, along with the data, describe plans for preserving the documentation and ensuring that its relationship to the collected data is maintained.

n/a

A.5 What methods will you use to collect or generate the data? Provide details about any technical requirements or dependencies that would be necessary for understanding, retrieving, displaying, or processing the dataset(s).

n/a

A.6 What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks) will you capture or create along with the dataset(s)? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the dataset(s) it describes?

n/a

A.7 What is your plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?

UNT and Educopia repositories

A.8 Identify where you will deposit the dataset(s):

Name of repository:

URL:

A.9 When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?