

May 17, 2005

State Records Board  
Suite 2300, State Capitol  
PO Box 94608  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4608

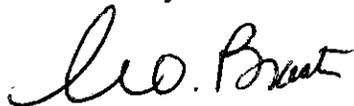
Dear Madame or Sir,

On behalf of the Katherine L. Walter, the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska is pleased to submit a proposal to your agency for the Nebraska Public Documents Digitalization Project.

The proposal has been administratively approved on behalf of the Board of Regents by the appropriate University officials as evidenced by my signature on this letter of transmittal.

Questions regarding the technical aspects of this project should be directed to Ms. Walter at 402/472-3939. Administrative or fiscal questions should be directed to me at 402/472-3780. We look forward to the response from the State Records Board.

Sincerely,



Norman O. Braaten  
Director, Pre-Award Development and  
Authorized Official

Enc.

cc: Ms. Walter

**Title: Nebraska Public Documents Digitalization Project**  
**Applicant: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries**  
**Date: 13 May 2005**

**Granting Agency: Nebraska State Records Board**

## **I. Grant summary:**

1. **Name of agency:** University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries
2. **Brief description of project:** The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries requests funds to complete digitization of *Nebraska Public Documents* from 1891-1956. This set includes agency annual reports and other documents critical to the information needs of the citizenry. The *Nebraska Public Documents* are not widely available, not indexed, and in fragile condition.
3. **Grant request amount:** \$23,000
4. **Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project:** No.
5. **If yes, provide statutory reference or authorization:** Not applicable.

## **II. Grant detail:**

1. **Please describe the project in detail.**

*Nebraska Public Documents*, a publication comparable to the federal U.S. *Serial Set* but for the State of Nebraska, is a publication that is not widely available, often in fragile condition, and not indexed. Despite its historical nature, it is a publication used for research on various topics of interest to the citizenry.

In the mid-1990s, the New York Public Library received funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities to microfilm 1891-1956 as part of a larger project to preserve documents of various states. The material is still not indexed, and the reels cannot be borrowed. Recently, the Nebraska Library Commission, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the Nebraska State Historical Society met to discuss problems in providing access to the *Nebraska Public Documents*. None of our institutions has a complete set, and none of the institutions is able to provide meaningful reference services associated with the materials because of the lack of indexing.

Based on this situation, the Nebraska Library Commission has granted the Nebraska State Historical Society \$10,000 to purchase copies of the 116 reels of microfilm from the New York Public Library, and granted the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries \$23,000 towards half of the digitization efforts, which are estimated to cost \$56,000, based on an average price of \$0.40 per image for 116,000 images. Upon digitization of the microfilm, UNL will produce a free searchable, public interface for the digitized images, will host the digitized content on a server in the University Libraries, and commits to backing up and migrating data on a regular basis.

This grant proposal will match the Nebraska Library Commission's commitment to UNL, thus allowing UNL to complete the digitization of the microfilm.

**2. Please describe whom the beneficiary or recipient of this service will be and projected activity for access or use of the proposed service.**

Digitization of the *Nebraska Public Documents* will benefit the citizenry of the state, corporations, governments, and other entities. Access will be available to anyone around the world with access to the Internet. Examples of the uses abound, however. One example is the ability to track data on polio outbreaks in Nebraska, which is reported in inconsistent ways. Sometimes information is in tables and other times it is buried in narrative accounts. A researcher for a law firm recently used the documents to identify issues relating to water law. Another researcher was able to confirm the existence of early baseball teams at the State Penitentiary. A number of the early reports demonstrate that the Governor's speeches were translated into Czech. To expound further, state agencies will benefit from digital versions of their historic annual reports. Some do not have copies of older reports inhouse, and this project will make such documents easily accessible. The uses, as evident from these few examples, are varied and wide.

**3. Timeline for implementation.** The initial project, funded by the Nebraska Library Commission, will be completed by June 2006. We anticipate that the project funded by the Nebraska State Records Board will be completed by December 2006. Incrementally, implementation is expected to progress as follows:

Digitization services RFP developed for scanning and OCR by Walter and UNL Purchasing Dept. July/August 2005.

Decision made regarding successful bid in August 2005. Begin sending existing reels sent for digitization immediately.

Purchase of remaining reels from NYPL in late August/early Sept. 2005.

Ship remaining reels to digitization services provider in November 2005. (Assumes that NYPL will take around 60 days to create remaining reels).

Begin receiving digital files back from contractor in December 2005, and begin quality control checks and encoding of files.

Quality control checks and file encoding will continue throughout 2006.

**4. Agency contribution to project.** As noted above, the Nebraska Library Commission has provided seed monies for the project to both the Nebraska State

Historical Society and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, totaling \$33,000. In addition, UNL agrees to host the online content, to develop metadata and a search interface as part of its Electronic Text Center responsibilities, and to sustain the digitized content. The University of Nebraska at Omaha is leading efforts to identify public documents that may have been missed during New York Public Library's microfilming efforts to ensure that there are no gaps in state holdings. In the event paper materials are found that supplement the microfilm, a preservation microfilming project will be planned.

5. **Has this project ever been submitted as a budget request.** No.

6. **Does the project require additional statutory authority.** No.

7. **Why is grant money needed for the project, and if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?** The cost of providing online access to the *Nebraska Public Documents* is significant, but worthwhile. UNL commits to sustain the online text for the long-term as described later in this proposal.

8. **Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.** Citizens of the state cannot now easily access information found in the *Nebraska Public Documents*. Information used by citizens ranges from genealogical evidence to significant longitudinal data on issues pertinent to the State of Nebraska. By digitizing the microfilm, creating a digital site for the data, developing a user-friendly interface with a sophisticated XML searching capability, and developing a migration plan for sustaining the data long-term, the project will provide significant access to the public—both in Nebraska and around the world.

9. **Please describe how this project will**

- **Improve the efficiency of agency operations:** Access to a digital version of the *Nebraska Public Documents* will help the Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the University of Nebraska system provide reference services to citizens. None of our agencies currently has a complete run of the documents, and so providing reference is difficult at best. In addition, the fact that the set is not indexed creates significant difficulties in tracking needed information.

- **Facilitate collaboration among state agencies:** Two state agencies are among the group collaborating on the project. As noted, the Nebraska Library Commission has pledged funds for the Nebraska State Historical Society to purchase the preservation microfilm for digitization, and the Nebraska State Historical Society has agreed to loan the film to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for digitization.

- **Facilitate collaboration between state agencies and other public institutions:** The Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical

Society, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha have taken this opportunity to begin an inventory to determine which institutions hold various years of the set and how complete the sets are. So far, it is clear that no institution holds all of the set. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not own the set at all, but is able to contribute thanks to its significant investment in digital scholarship. The UNL Libraries already owns XML search engine software, has the ability to store large amounts of online data, and has committed to long-term digital storage of the *Nebraska Public Documents*.

- **Support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services:**  
Not applicable.

### **III. Technical information**

1. **Describe the hardware, software, and communications needed for this project and explain why these choices were made.** UNL Libraries has the server storage capacity, XML search engine software, and the staff to maintain the data digitally for the long-term. The digitization of the microfilm will be outsourced to a reliable vendor, such as Crowley Micrographics, First BPO, Heritage Microfilms, or OCLC Digital and Preservation Services, based on the University's state bid process. Once the data files are received, the UNL Libraries' Electronic Text Center staff will ensure that the files are complete; develop a web site for presentation of the data; work with other UNL Libraries' departments to prepare the data for searching; and will maintain the data on a fast server and associated software for searching and data manipulation, such as a SunFire V240, Tamino 4.211, Apache 2.054 (64-bit), Tomcat 4.1.3; and/or a SunFire 880, Tamino 4.2.11, Apache 2.043 (64-bit for Tamino) and Apache 2.050 (32-bit), Tomcat 4.1.3, PHP 4.3.7, my SQL 4.0.2.

2. **Address any technical issues with the proposed technology, including:**

**Conformity with generally accepted industry standards. Project which interface with other state systems (such as distance learning systems) should also address NITC technical standards and guidelines.** The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries will bid for the digitization services, following the Research Libraries Group's (RLG's) *Guidelines and Tools* developed in concert with the Digital Library Federation, and the *NINCH Guide to Good Practice in the Digital Representation and Management of Cultural Resources and Management of Cultural Heritage Materials*. See [http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page\\_ID=555](http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=555) and <http://www.ninch.org/programs/practice>. These are in compliance with State of Nebraska guidelines.

The set will be cataloged on OCLC using MARC or Dublin Core records, and the documents will be marked up in eXtensible Markup Language (XML) to permit sophisticated searching. Documents will be presented on the web using XSLT stylesheets. For examples of similar sites, see the UNL Libraries Electronic Text Center pages at <http://etc.unl.edu>. See the section on Digital Projects.

**Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.** The digital product will meet international standards. By following standards, and by encoding data in eXtensible Markup Language (XML), we will be contributing to the development of a state digital library that can be used through any state agency, public library, or internet connection in citizens' homes or businesses.

**Reliability, security, and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation).** The data will be presented in a non-proprietary format. UNL Libraries regularly backs up its data, and performs security checks. Sites created in the UNL Libraries are scalable to ensure that any future needs are anticipated.

3. **Describe how technical support will be provided.** The University Libraries' Electronic Text Center and Computing Operations & Research Services (CORS) will collaborate to provide technical support. The Electronic Text Center is responsible for creation of the public interface, for creating and/or correcting metadata, for specifying file naming conventions, and for working with UNL Purchasing Dept. on creation of the bid document. CORS will be responsible for data storage, back-up, and for developing the search engine using existing Tamino software.

#### **IV. CONTACT INFORMATION, SIGNATURE**

**Contact person for any questions regarding this application:** Katherine L. Walter, Chair, Digital Initiatives & Special Collections (DISC), University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 29 Love Library, Lincoln, NE 68588-4100  
**Phone #:** (402) 472-3939 **Email:** kwalter1@unl.edu

Signed this 17<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2005

Agency Director *N. O. Braaten*  
Norman O. Braaten, Director, Pre-Award Development.  
Please return to:

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Suite 2300, State Capitol  
PO Box 94608  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4608