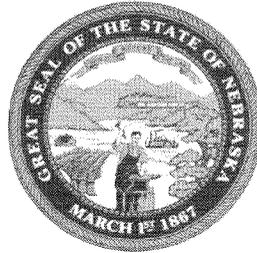


**Nebraska State  
Records Board**  
440 S 8<sup>th</sup> St Ste 210  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
(402) 471-2745

**John A. Gale**  
Chairman



## **APPLICATION FOR STATE RECORDS BOARD GRANT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION (State Agency)**

The Nebraska State Records Board is sponsoring a grant program for state agencies for the development of programs and technology to improve electronic access to state government information and services. Grants will be awarded for one time funding of small projects (not to exceed \$25,000). The grants may be used for the creation or enhancement of electronic access and delivery of government services and information, but not to fund ongoing operations. State agencies wishing to apply for these grants may want to first contact Nebraska.gov to establish feasibility and scope of the project.

### **Grant Criteria**

*Projects requesting funding must meet criteria #1-3. In addition, criteria #4-6 will be considered when reviewing funding requests:*

1. Enhance the delivery of state government agency services and improve access to those services.
2. Meet the state's technology access clause for providing equal access to services for persons with disabilities. A copy of the technology access clause is available at: <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/index.html> under 2. Accessibility Architecture.
3. If the project or service created or improved pursuant to the grant application involves the licensing, permitting or regulation of businesses, then the project or service must allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal at: <http://www.nebraska.gov/index.phtml?section=business> and the One-Stop Online Business Registration System at: <https://www.nebraska.gov/osbr/cgi/domestic.cgi?OSBRApplication/init/init/None>
4. Improve the efficiency of state agency operations.
5. Facilitate collaboration between local, state and federal agencies and other public institutions (if applicable).
6. Support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services through the Official State portal, Nebraska.gov.

Grant applications will be considered by the Board at their quarterly meetings. For application due dates, Board meeting dates and any other questions about the process, please contact Cathy Danahy, Executive Director, at [cathy.danahy@sos.ne.gov](mailto:cathy.danahy@sos.ne.gov) or (402) 471-2745.

State agencies desiring grants from the Nebraska State Records Board for projects to create or improve electronic access to government information must complete the following application and follow any procedures outlined.

**NOTE: All successful candidates will be required to submit a written project report to the State Records Board at the conclusion of their project.**

If you need additional space for your answers please attach any documentation necessary. *Applications not completed in full will be returned to the requesting agency for completion and resubmission.*

## **I. GRANT SUMMARY**

1. **Name of agency applying for grant:** University of Nebraska-Lincoln
2. **Title of project:** \_Nebraska Public Documents Digitization Project, Phase 2
3. **Brief description of project:** In 2005, the Nebraska State Records Board awarded the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries and its partners – the Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the University of Nebraska-Omaha - \$23,000 to produce digital versions of the state’s Public Documents and to create a public, freely accessible website linking to the digitized documents. Thus far *Nebraska Public Documents*, comprising reports from Nebraska’s constitutional officers and state agencies from 1891 to 1929, have been digitized and are available to the public at <http://cdrh.unl.edu/nebpubdocs/>. The additional funding being requested to enable the project to continue digitization of the Public Documents series. This will take three requests of roughly \$25,000 each, and each request will cover about 40,000 pages of text, including images, metadata, and OCR scanning.
4. **Grant request amount:** \$25,000
5. **Will there be a fee for accessing records associated with this project? If yes, provide any statutory reference or authorization for fee.** No

## **II. GRANT DETAIL**

1. **Please describe the project in detail (you may attach this description).**

Until this year, *Nebraska Public Documents*, a publication containing historical reports of Nebraska constitutional officers and state agencies, was not widely available. Housed in only a few libraries in Nebraska, researchers were required to visit one (or more) of those libraries to undertake any kind of in-depth and meaningful research requiring analysis of agency activities and record-keeping over time. Oftentimes a visit to more than one

repository was required, as no single institution held a complete set of the series, and none of the institutions was able to provide meaningful reference services as the series was not indexed.

In 2005 the major institutions holding substantial volumes of this series – the Nebraska State Historical Society, the Nebraska Library Commission, and the University of Nebraska-Omaha—discovered that the New York Public Library had microfilmed the *Nebraska Public Documents* series covering the years 1891-1956. After preliminary evaluation of the microfilm, the Nebraska Library Commission awarded a grant of \$10,000 to the Nebraska State Historical Society to purchase the 116 reels available from the New York Public Library. With \$23,000 provided by the State Records Board in 2005, supplemented with \$38,000 granted by the Nebraska Library Commission, and \$12,000 from the University of Nebraska at Omaha Library, the fourth partner in this project, the University of Nebraska—Lincoln Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, was able to contract with the OCLC Preservation Service Center to digitize the microfilm from 1891-1929. A keyword searchable collection of digitized historical reports of Nebraska constitutional officers and state agencies is now available as the Nebraska Public Documents Website – see <http://cdrh.unl.edu/nebpubdocs/>.

Thus far, the years 1891-1929 have been digitized—approximately 118,000 images—and these are accessible to the public without charge. There are additional reels covering the years 1930-1956 that remain to be digitized, estimated at 114,000 images. With the \$25,000 being requested, the partnering institutions anticipate that an additional 40,000 pages can be digitized and the metadata added to the Nebraska Public Documents website.

**2. Please describe who 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, students, and diverse entities. Access will be available to anyone around the world with access to the Internet. Over 15,000 “hits” to the Nebraska Public Documents Website during its first ten months of activity indicate widespread use of its resources. The partnering institutions are aware of these specific uses of the online documents in these projects:

- Department of Roads annual reports to trace the construction of highways in the state for the Nebraska State Historical Society’s Historic Preservation Division’s county surveys.
- Prof. Mark Ellis of the University of Nebraska-Kearney used the annual reports of the Nebraska State Penitentiary to research and write his forthcoming history of the early years of that institution.
- Other researchers have used the 1914 annual to document the 90 baseball games played by penitentiary inmates against local Lincoln teams and other early reports to prove that an integrated baseball team at the penitentiary was likely the first integrated team in Nebraska.
- Employees of the Lincoln Regional Center have used that facility’s annual reports to compile background information for an oral history project on the institution’s history.
- Auditor’s reports were used by a researcher tracing annual appropriations to the Nebraska Military Department from 1870-1916.

- A genealogist seeking information on her ancestor who had worked in the Secretary of State's office found salary figures for him.
- A researcher studying communicable diseases used statistics reported on polio cases from the Department of Health reports.

It is clear that a wide-ranging and varied use of these reports has been made and will continue.

**3. Timeline for implementation (*a specific completion date (MM/YYYY) must be provided*). *Grant funds lapse if not expended prior to completion date.***

The initial funds (\$23,000) provided by the State Records Board and matched by the Nebraska Library Commission (\$38,000) and the University of Nebraska at Omaha Library (12,000) enabled the Nebraska Public Documents Project to digitize slightly more than one-half of the microfilmed reports. UNL provided servers and disc space, staffing for quality control checks of the metadata and images, and staff to inventory the microfilm. Since we are asking for an additional \$25,000 to continue the digitization, the earlier work plan can be duplicated with these new dates:

Digitization services RFP developed for scanning and OCR by Walter and UNL Purchasing Department – December 2008/January 2009

Decision made regarding successful bid in February 2009. Begin sending reels for digitization immediately.

Begin receiving digital files back from contractor in May 2009 and begin quality control checks and encoding of files, continuing through 2009.

**4. State agency contribution to project (labor, equipment etc.).**

UNL agrees to host the online content, to conduct quality control checks on the metadata, to enhance metadata as needed, and to update and maintain the search interface as part of its Electronic Text Center and Center for Digital Research in the Humanities responsibilities, and to sustain the digitized content.

**5. Is other funding available for this project (explain)?**

In-kind funding in terms of staff time is being provided by the Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society, UNO and UNL. In the earlier phase of this project, the Nebraska Library Commission provided seed monies to the Nebraska State Historical Society and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln totaling \$38,000, and UNO provided \$12,000. Although such additional funding will not be available, it will not be necessary to purchase any microfilm for digitization in this phase of the project, as all of the microfilm is on hand. The search interface has been developed, and UNL continues to preserve the data.

**6. Does the project require additional statutory authority (explain)? No.**

**7. Specify (in detail) what the grant money will be used for. Include a complete cost breakdown of the project. Please attach bids from vendors (if applicable).**

The grant money will be used to contract with a vendor to produce digitized images of the Nebraska Public Documents series currently on microfilm beginning with 1930 and covering about 20 reels of microfilm or an estimated 40,000 pages. We will seek TIFF images, appropriate derivatives, and associated metadata. UNL will enhance metadata as needed and conduct quality control checks.

**8. Why is the grant money needed for the project, and, if applicable, how will the service be sustained once the grant money is expended?**

None of the partnering institutions has money in its budget to cover the cost of this digitizing project. Once these documents have been digitized, the online text will be sustained by UNL, as that institution is sustaining the text of the already-digitized documents.

**9. Please describe how this project will enhance the delivery of state agency services or access to those services.**

As described above, numerous researchers have made use of the already-digitized Nebraska Public Documents Website. Easy access to these documents to users not just in Nebraska, but anywhere in the world, has improved customer service provided by all of the partner institutions. By expanding the website to include additional documents, the audience for these materials will likely increase as well.

**10. Please describe how this project will improve the efficiency of state agency operations.**

Access to the digital version of the Nebraska Public Documents has already improved reference services to Nebraska citizens served by the Nebraska Library Commission, the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the University of Nebraska. This project will increase efficiency by adding additional years of Nebraska public documents to the Nebraska Public Documents website.

**11. Please describe how this project will facilitate collaboration among other local, state and federal agencies and other public institutions.**

The partnering organizations—the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the Nebraska Library Commission, and the Nebraska State Historical Society— have collaborated to complete the first phase of this digitization project. All of the partners are committed to continuing their involvement in the project. In a sense, these four agencies are collaborating with many other Nebraska agencies by making the annual reports of a large number of Nebraska state agencies available online and available to all citizens of Nebraska with access to the internet and to researchers all over the world.

**12. Please describe how this project will support public/private partnerships in the delivery of public services through the Official State portal, Nebraska.gov? Not applicable.**

**13. Does the project involve the licensing, permitting or regulation of business? If yes, explain how the project or service will allow integration with the State of Nebraska's Business Portal and the One-Stop Online Business registration system. No.**

### **III. TECHNICAL INFORMATION**

**1. Describe the hardware, software, and communications needed for this project and explain why these choices were made.**

The University of Nebraska—Lincoln Libraries is providing the servers and disks for storing the data from the last phase and will serve up the new data; student employees and staff will be using existing desktop computers to conduct quality control checks of the images and the metadata. Metadata standards being required are: eXtensible Markup Language, Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), METS/ALTO, and eXtensible Stylesheet Transformation Language (XSLT). These are international standards supported by the National Institute of Standards Organization and the Library of Congress. The metadata standards are open source, non-proprietary, and will enable us to continuously migrate data over time. The company will ship the data on external hard drives provided by the Center.

See <http://cdrh.unl.edu/nebpubdocs> to see the relevancy ranking search developed by the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at UNL.

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

- **Conformity with general accepted industry standards. Projects which interface with other state systems (such as distance learning systems) must meet NITC technical standards and guidelines (NITC standards and guidelines are located at: <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/>).**
- **Compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.**
- **Reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation).**

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln followed the Research Libraries Group Guidelines and Tools and the NINCH Guide to Good Practice in Digital Representation and Management of Cultural Resources in development of the original RFP, and will use the same requirements in the upcoming project. These are in compliance with State of Nebraska guidelines. As noted in the previous section, the standards being used are international standards, ensuring the ability to migrate data over time. XML is infinitely extensible. Using Cocoon and Lucene's Solr/equiv, there is now a relevancy ranking search. UNL's Center for Digital Research in the Humanities and the Electronic Text

Center use these standards for many of its projects, and finds the metadata to be reliable and scalable. For examples of other projects, see <http://cdrh.unl.edu> and <http://etc.unl.edu>.

Data in the center is stored on servers with RAID 5. Files are backed up to tapes or external drives and are stored off site for disaster prevention purposes at a secure location managed by Iron Mountain.

**3. Describe how the project will comply with the State's Technology Access Clause: <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/index.html> under 2. Accessibility Architecture.**

The web interface is easy to navigate on any computer and does not depend upon frames, audio, animation, flash, or other distracting elements. No special stylesheets are required in order to view the site, and visually impaired users can control the color selections.

**4. 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 was responsible for creation of the public interface, and will continue to be responsible for creating and/or correcting metadata, for specifying file naming conventions, and for working with the UNL Purchasing Department. CORS will be responsible for data storage and for back up.

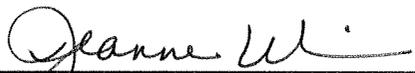
**IV. CONTACT INFORMATION & SIGNATURE**

**Contact person for any questions regarding this application: Katherine Walter**

**Phone #: 472-3939**

**E-mail: [kwalter1@unl.edu](mailto:kwalter1@unl.edu)**

**Signed this 1<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2008**

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**Jeanne Wicks, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs**

**Please return to:**

**Cathy Danahy  
Nebraska State Records Board  
440 S 8<sup>th</sup> St. Suite 210  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
(402) 471-2745**

*(Last updated 04/29/2008)*