Proposal for Digital Scholarship Incubator, 2015
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Abstract
This proposal seeks $15,000 in funding to support the second year of the Digital Scholarship Incubator in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities/University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries. Funding will support the creation of three 12-week paid fellowships, hardware and software for the Incubator, and professional development opportunities, such as educational institutes and participation in conferences.

Background and Significance
In 2014, University Libraries' Research and Innovation funding supported the development of the Digital Scholarship Incubator (DSI) in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities. The DSI was designed to meet a need in the digital humanities infrastructure at UNL—support for student-led digital research and scholarship. Four students were selected by competitive application as 2014 DSI Fellows: Rebecca Ankenbrand (M.A. student, Modern Languages and Literatures); Geraldine Dobos (M.A. student Art & Art History); Kevin McMullen (Ph.D. student, English); and Brian Sarnacki (Ph.D. candidate, History).

During the fellowship period, students developed original contributions to humanities scholarship that relied on digital methodologies for research and/or publication. In addition to developing their own scholarship, Fellows supported one another's research through thoughtful dialogue, critical engagement, and knowledge exchange. They presented their work to public audiences and participated in training opportunities.

The 2014 DSI Fellows tackled ambitious projects employing a range of methods and technologies. Ankenbrand's project is a digital edition of the writings of Marie-André Duplessis de Sainte-Hélène (1687-1760), a nun who wrote the first published book by a French-Canadian woman, and Marie-Catherine Homassel Hecquet (1686-1764), who shared a childhood with Duplessis in Paris. In addition to recovering the voices of these women, Ankenbrand's work sets the stage for a larger project dealing with women writers in the colonial French world.

Dobos's project is the 3-d reconstruction of the newly excavated Northeast Temple at Antiochia ad Cragum. Dobos's virtual 3-d models of the Northeast Temple complement the textual description of the temple she completed for her master's thesis. Through the Incubator period, Dobos digitized existing drawings and illustrations and created new virtual models that offer a variety of possibilities for

visualizing the restored temple. In addition, her project participates in larger conversations in her field about how scholars share and publish their work.

Like Ankenbrand, McMullen's Incubator project is an electronic scholarly edition. McMullen's work aims to change fundamentally how scholars of American literature have viewed the nineteenth-century author Fanny Fern. Fern was the highest-paid newspaper columnist in the country with her weekly column in the *New York Ledger*. Even so, her journalism has never been comprehensively edited, and selections of her work in print paint a distorted picture of Fern's journalistic persona. McMullen's project will change scholarly perception of Fern by making more of her work available and by offering new analyses.

Sarnacki's Incubator project has grown out of and contributes to his dissertation, "The Rise and Fall of the American Small City: Industrialization and Urbanization in Cities Outside the Metropolis, 1870-1930." Sarnacki 's work develops digital mapping, social network analysis, and textual analysis resources to bring to life everyday records, including shipping orders, letter books, payrolls, and membership rosters, of the businesses and cities he studies. For Sarnacki, this engagement with digital methodologies is both foundational to his dissertation and central to his developing professional identity. Indeed, all Fellows' projects have shaped the students' career and professional development, whether they plan to pursue the more traditional academic track or alternative academic careers.

Local, national, and international audiences learned about the DSI Fellows' projects in 2014. In April, McMullen and Sarnacki shared their early efforts at a UNL student projects showcase sponsored by the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities. Ankenbrand attended a TEI customization workshop at Northeastern University in May and discussed her work with colleagues at the Digital Humanities 2014 conference in Lausanne, Switzerland. Also in the summer, McMullen talked about his project with attendees at the International Whitman Week in Hamburg, Germany, and Dobos discussed her work with colleagues onsite in Turkey, while continuing her archeological fieldwork. She will present on her Incubator work and the larger methodological issues it raises in January 2015 at the meeting of the Archeological Institute of America. Reaching perhaps the largest audience of all, one of Sarnacki's blog posts about his project was picked up by the major aggregator of digital humanities content, DHNow.

In addition to sharing about their work with a variety of audiences, DSI Fellows have become student leaders within the local digital humanities community. Sarnacki co-led a Digital Humanities Bootcamp in Spring 2014, which preceded the 2014 Nebraska Forum on Digital Humanities, and McMullen chaired a session at the 2014 Forum. All of the Incubator students are an important presence at the range of digital humanities events at UNL, including presentations and workshops.

The proposal submitted for Research and Innovation funds last year noted, "students pursuing digital humanities research and scholarship at UNL must be

much more entrepreneurial than their faculty advisers, who have significantly more resources at their disposal, whether professional networks, financial resources, or computing resources. Because students have few resources at hand for their digital scholarship, they may choose not to pursue an important research question simply because they cannot afford to undertake a project or lack knowledge to get off the ground." The 2014 DSI fellows demonstrated just how real this need is among the community of students engaged with digital humanities research and scholarship at UNL: without the DSI, two of the four projects would never have gotten off the ground. The others would be significantly less developed and certainly would not be hallmarks of the students' graduate work. With the DSI, CDRH and the UNL Libraries demonstrated a commitment to student-led research and scholarship. The Incubator aligns with strategic focus statements of the UNL Libraries, including brokering access to knowledge resources; fostering a transformative environment for scholarship; creating new scholarly resources for research; and developing inspiring and functional spaces to encourage creativity, collaboration, and knowledge.

Plan for 2015
The first year of the DSI provided an opportunity to evaluate what is most useful in the Incubator and to consider what model(s) will be the most successful going forward. While many aspects of the Incubator worked well in the first cycle, some changes will enable the students', their projects, and the Incubator to be even more successful.

For 2015, I propose three twelve-week paid DSI fellowships to be taken up concurrently in summer 2015 (roughly May 18-August 7). Selection as a DSI Fellow will again be determined by competitive application. In addition to the application materials requested last year—a letter of application and cv—each candidate will also be required to submit a letter of recommendation and commitment from a faculty member in the candidate's disciplinary area.

Holding the Incubator period in the summer and awarding the students a stipend as part of the fellowship is crucial for the long-term viability of the Incubator and for our ability to attract the best students—not only to the Incubator but to graduate study in digital humanities at UNL. In the first year of the DSI, Fellows had the challenge of adding their Incubator time and projects onto already full workloads, including coursework (or dissertation hours), teaching, research assistantships, and other employment—to say nothing of non-school and non-work commitments. While the 2014 Fellows demonstrated tremendous dedication to their projects, their Incubator work was an additional responsibility on top of already full schedules. Therefore, when some part of their schedule needed to be flexible, it was students' Incubator time/schedule/projects. Students did exceptional work considering this arrangement, but in all cases the students and their projects have far more potential than the Fellows were able to realize, since they juggled the Incubator alongside other commitments. Having the Incubator period in the summer eliminates many of

these conflicts. Likewise, as the Incubator director, I will be able to dedicate more time to the DSI Fellows in the summer than during the academic year, when the academic schedule is more chaotic.

Further, offering the students a stipend as part of the fellowship will allow them to devote significant attention to the Incubator in the summer. As part of the Fellowship, students will commit to working on their projects for a minimum of 15 hours each week and to do this work in the Incubator space (as compared to 2014, when students committed to a minimum of 3-5 hours each week on their projects). The paid fellowships will allow students to triple the amount of time they spend on their DSI projects.

This revised summer fellowship model fits the design employed by other accelerators and incubators, such as Lincoln's own NMotion, which emphasize intense development over a compressed period of time. Such a model allows project leaders to encounter the range of issues they are likely to face over the life of their project and to learn how to respond to them.

In developing their project over the fellowship period, Fellows will follow the checklist for digital humanities scholarship created by Kathy Johnson and myself (forthcoming in *Digital Humanities in the Library: Challenges and Opportunities for Subject Specialists*, published by Association of College & Research Libraries). The checklist will provide the Fellows with a roadmap, and their use of the checklist will provide an opportunity for Johnson and me to reflect on and further refine the checklist as tool for project development.

In addition to the increased productivity and focused time a funded summer fellowship model provides, the stipend makes the fellowship even more competitive and it sets a responsible precedent for UNL's, the University Libraries', and CDRH's values in support of student-led research and scholarship. A funded fellowship also means that expectations for the Incubator can be even higher, and in future years the DSI can be used for recruiting top talent to UNL.

Budget
This proposal seeks $15,000 in Incubator funding for the second year of the Digital
Scholarship Incubator.

Cost	How Calculated	Amount	Notes
Stipend for Incubator Fellow	12 weeks x 15 hours/week x $20/hour	$3,600	$20/hour is comparable to the calculated per/hour rate of a monthly GRAship stipend
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lynda.com membership	½ of $1,750	$875	Richie Graham has expressed willingness to split the cost of a 5-person membership ($1,750 in 2014), so his staff also has access to lynda.com resources
hardware and software		$2,000	Funds for 2014 purchased the only dedicated computer for the DSI.
conference and/or training expenses		$1,325	Support to defray cost of conference and training travel (such as to DH2015 or to the Digital Humanities Summer Institute)
Total		**$15,000**	