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Chair & Professor, Justin D. Stover  
Idaho State University  
Department of History  
921 S 8th Ave, LA  
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Warm Greetings Chair Stover and Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic interest in the Assistant Professor of History position specializing in the American West at Idaho State University. With a Ph.D. in History from the University of Missouri (2024), alongside graduate certifications in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Museum Studies, I bring an interdisciplinary and research-driven approach to both the study and teaching of history. My expertise in environmental and economic history, particularly within the context of early American transatlantic scientific exchanges, aligns well with the department's priorities and commitment to innovative historical inquiry.

My research focuses on the transformation of socio-economic and scientific networks in the 18th century, as reflected in my book project, *Reciprocities Market: John Bartram and the Economics of Cultural Ecology*. Using digital humanities tools like ArcGIS, NVivo, and Gephi, I analyze the cultural and environmental impact of John Bartram's botanical exchanges and their role in the commercialization of natural knowledge and materia across the Atlantic. This research, which intersects ecological history and the rise of early American market economies, contributes to a growing body of scholarship on the commodification of natural resources and reflects Idaho State University's commitment to high-caliber, interdisciplinary research. I am eager to continue this work at ISU, expanding my analysis of 18th-century knowledge economies and their environmental implications for the American West.

My commitment to teaching excellence is equally robust, with nearly a decade of experience instructing a diverse range of courses from U.S. and European history surveys to upper-division capstone projects at institutions like McKendree University and the University of Missouri. In my environmental history course, *Nature's Nation*, I engage students with hands-on projects, through varied methods of source analysis and multimedia presentations, to foster critical thinking about environmental change and its socio-political ramifications. I have also designed and taught interdisciplinary courses such as *Between the Borderlands*, where students create

digital story maps exploring complex relationships between intellectualism, ecology, economy, and politics. My approach prioritizes experiential learning and historical inquiry, encouraging students to build valuable research skills and an appreciation for history that extends beyond the classroom. My experience teaching in multiple formats—including in-person, online, and hybrid courses—will enable me to meet ISU's diverse student needs, particularly first-generation college students whom I am committed to mentoring and supporting.

Beyond the classroom, my work in public history and archival management underscores my dedication to community engagement and applied historical research. As project lead for Madison Historical, a digital archive initiative, I directed a team of students in collecting, processing, and curating oral histories and local museum collections. This work culminated in publicly accessible digital archives and exhibitions, fostering a connection between academic research and community heritage. My experience as an executive member of the O'Fallon Historic Preservation Commission further highlights my commitment to public history and community outreach, where I have worked on historical landmark designations and public programming. I look forward to bringing this experience to Idaho State University, collaborating with faculty and students on projects that integrate history with public engagement and community service.

I am also committed to service within the academic community. At the University of Missouri, I serve on both the Undergraduate Studies and Speaking and Lecture Series Committees, where I collaborate with faculty to revise program objectives and create inclusive academic programming. My record of securing external research funding, including fellowships from the Huntington Library, Winterthur Museum, and American Philosophical Society, reflects my dedication to sustained scholarly development and my ability to support ambitious, self-funded research agendas. I am confident that my skills in securing grants and managing research projects will contribute to Idaho State University's goals of advancing research and enhancing student involvement in scholarly activities.

The opportunity to join the Department of History at Idaho State University is tremendously exciting. I am inspired by ISU's dedication to fostering student success within a collaborative and supportive environment and look forward to discussing how my research, teaching, and public history experience will contribute to the department's objectives. Thank you for considering my application.

Warm regards,  
Shannan Catherine Mason, Ph.D.