



## Social & Administrative Sciences Division

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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### **Cannabis Museum Grant – Letter of Support**

I unreservedly endorse the Cannabis Museum's application for CLIR funds to digitize elements of its unique collection. As the George Urdang Chair in the History of Pharmacy (at UW-Madison) and the Historical Director of the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP), I am dedicated to widening access to and fostering greater multidisciplinary understanding of medicine, pharmacy, and drugs.

The recently established Cannabis Museum, led by Don Wirtshafter, holds an impressive and carefully curated collection of artifacts, catalogs, and ephemera, that sheds light on drug regulation, science, advertising, and popular culture, among other potential research areas. I have not seen a collection with such wide breadth, and it is still growing. The CLIR funding scheme, Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives: Enabling New Scholarship through Increasing Access to Unique Materials, will enable the Cannabis Museum to better facilitate novel research projects as well connect the public with complex histories of cannabis.

Digitization of the Cannabis Museum's materials would serve a growing educational and curricular focus on the endocannabinoid system. Schools of pharmacy across the country, including at the University of Wisconsin, are developing new classes to prepare students for their pharmacy practice. UW-Madison's SoP is also in the process of creating a new master's degree in Psychoactive Pharmaceutical Studies. I could easily use digital materials in my suite of courses. In addition, as the editor of the forthcoming book entitled *Cannabis: Global Histories* (The MIT Press, 2021), I can confirm that fundamental gaps in existing scholarship still remain; and the Cannabis Museum's sources, with wider circulation, have the potential to underpin new analyses (in multiple fields of study) that further build upon the existing historiography.

### **School of Pharmacy**

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The American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP), founded in 1941, is an independent member-based non-profit organization dedicated to “advancing knowledge and understanding of the history of pharmacy and medicines.” It is based in the UW-Madison SoP. A working archive and research center, AIHP maintains numerous historical collections and, for nearly eighty years, has collected, documented, and preserved the history of pharmacy, pharmaceuticals, and medicines. Since 1959, AIHP has published the quarterly academic journal, *Pharmacy in History*, and the Institute fosters humanistic research into the history of pharmacy, pharmaceuticals, and medicines with conferences, grants, awards, and prizes. The Institute sponsors public talks and lectures, designs historical exhibits, encourages the inclusion of history in pharmacy education, and seeks to make the history of pharmacy, pharmaceuticals, and medicines accessible to the general public.

AIHP seeks to encourage all levels of humanistic research into the history of pharmacy, pharmaceuticals, and medicines. As the Historical Director of AIHP, I welcome forward-thinking and sustainable collaborations with groups such as the Cannabis Museum. To this end, AIHP and Cannabis Museum personnel have consulted about promoting new scholarly initiatives and the value of increasing access to historical materials. After discussion with Mr. Wirtshafter, the AIHP would gladly host the digital data from the CLIR project, which would in turn fully embed the Cannabis Museum in a larger network of researchers and organizations, including the American Association of the History of Medicine, Alcohol and Drugs History Society, and Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email or telephone (608-890-3676).

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