To: The Utah Humanities Council

From: Greg Anderson, Jackson Murphy, and Meher Samineni of “Tweet the Fifth”

Date: November 23, 2014

Subject: Application for a UHC general competitive grant

**Executive Summary**

**Abstract**

We’re three University of Utah Computer Science students who are proposing to start an online journal that examines the impact of technology laws on the Utah community. The journal is geared toward a general audience of Utahns; anyone who sends emails or shops online should find this a valuable publication. Our goal is to increase community awareness and participation in the legislation of our technology laws.

**Who is our Community?**

Nearly every Utahn. The vast majority of us interact with technology on a daily basis. We believe that the people of Utah—young and old, regardless of their level of technical knowledge—would like to learn more about their online privacy and freedoms. Armed with the knowledge that our journal provides, our readers will be better equipped to engage in the legislative process and help shape our future technology laws. To attract an initial readership, we will buy targeted Google ads to Utah residents.

**What are the issues/concerns facing your community?**

The Computer Science (CS) community faces arising legal issues that didn’t exist within the past decade. With these new changes, not only will the CS community be affected, but the users of technology as well. Some legal issues include computer privacy—specifically Internet browsing privacy—, legal protection of software, anti-piracy and copyright laws, net neutrality, and much more.

**What improvements and changes do you seek as a result of your project?**

We hope to bring awareness to our community. Computer software is a huge component of modern society. Both software developers and general users will be affected by the legalities imposed on computer technology. Therefore, all citizens should understand the implications of these legal decisions and give their educated input on technology legislation.

**How will you use the humanities to bring about this result?**

Literature and Jurisprudence are at the heart of this project. Our aim is to use literature—a journal—as a means to educate our community, and to encourage everyone to engage in the legislative process on matters critical to the future of our society.

**Who are your humanities scholars and/or experts?**

Dr. Lee A. Hollaar, emeritus professor at the University of Utah. Dr. Hollaar taught at the U’s School of Computing for 34 years, teaching a variety of courses including Computer Law. Having retired from teaching, Dr. Hollaar is now an active consultant in a variety of computer-related court cases, as well as a Special Master assisting judges in software discovery, determination of copyright infringement, and the construction of patent claims.

**Why is UHC funding vital to the success of your program?**

To publish this journal and make it successful, we will need the help of UHC in funding

our project. We will need to pay for advertising to get the word out about our journal,

for both people who would like to contribute articles to our journal and for the rest of the

community to read it. Also, if we are to do surveys or certain types of research for our

journal that will cost money as well.

**Narrative Proposal**

**Project Description**

Who is this project geared toward? Well, all of us. Nearly every Utahn interacts with technology on a daily basis. Sending an email or text message, buying a product online—behind these seemingly innocent actions lie murky legal issues. We believe that the people of Utah—young and old, regardless of their level of technical knowledge—would like to learn more about their online privacy and freedoms. However, the community doesn’t have a concise and reliable resource for this information. Our investigation of the literature landscape found that this is a gap not currently being addressed.

Our proposed project, “Tweet the Fifth,” is primed to become a quarterly online journal that explores consumer technology laws and issues. The focus will be primarily on local Utah laws, but as technology tends to blur borders, the scope will inevitably include some national and global policies too. We’ll feature informative articles authored by local and national experts on subjects such as privacy, social media, cyber crimes, and Artificial Intelligence. The writing is geared toward a general audience— no technical expertise required. We’ll also solicit opinion pieces from our non-expert readers for balance and to encourage more people to take up literature composition.

Today it is critical that we all understand our rights and risks when using technology. Utah, along with everywhere else, faces arising legal issues surrounding technology-use that didn’t exist within the past decade. With these new changes, not only will the Computer Science community be affected, but the general users of technology as well. Legal issues in the computer science field include computer privacy—specifically Internet browsing privacy—legal protection of software, anti-piracy and copyright laws, net neutrality, and much more. Computer Science issues intersect with many areas of the law including criminal law in which identity theft and online piracy is a large concern. Additionally, corporate law is also engaged in the field when copyright laws are broken or software isn’t legally protected economically or through trademark.

As a result of our project, we hope to bring awareness to the general public. Computer software is a huge component of modern society. Both developers of software technology and users of computers will be affected by the legalities imposed on computer technology. Therefore, all citizens should understand the impact of legal decisions and have the opportunity to weigh in their opinion. The first objective is to bring an education and common terminology for citizens to understand the intersection between jurisprudence and Computer Science. After gaining knowledge of current legal concerns, constituents should exercise their voting rights to voice their opinions to their local political entities.

First and foremost, we are using the humanities to bring about this awareness and engagement in the political process. Literature and Jurisprudence are at the heart of this project. Our aim is to use literature (an online journal) as a means to educate our community, and to encourage everyone to engage in the legislative process on matters critical to the future of our society.

Why are we applying for a UHC grant? Even though we will significantly reduce our costs by distributing this journal online rather than in print, we still need funds to make this project successful. We will need to pay for advertising to get the word out. We would like to pay our expert contributors a token amount for their contributions. Also, if we are to do surveys or certain types of research for our journal that will cost money as well.

The following is our tentative schedule:

* + Release our first journal issue on May 31st, 2015.
  + Begin to solicit content from our network of experts beginning in March.
  + Obtain enough content for this first issue by May 1st.
  + Have a functioning website by May 1st.
  + Buy targeted Google ads throughout the month of May. These ads will link to our website, where folks will be able to subscribe to an email list to receive the first issue.

**Evaluation Plan**

[Still to be written]

**Key Personnel**

Our humanities scholar is Dr. Lee A. Hollaar, emeritus professor at the University of Utah. Dr. Hollaar received his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering in 1969, and attended two years of law school. He taught as a professor in the School of

Computing at the U for 34 years, teaching a variety of courses including computer law. Now retired, Dr. Hollaar is an active consultant in a variety of computer-related court cases, as well as a Special Master assisting judges in software discovery, determination of

copyright infringement, and the construction of patent claims. With Dr. Hollaard’s vast

experience in the spheres of law and technology, he will be very well qualified to

assist us in preparing this journal. He will be able to contribute by giving us information

on the laws involved with the cyber world, helping us write informative articles on

these topics, and connected us with other experts in the Utah community.

Greg Anderson will be the journal’s technical lead, maintaining the website and managing online advertising. Greg has nearly finished a Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science at the University of Utah.

Jackson Murphy will serve as the journal’s chief editor. Jackson is working toward a Computer Science degree at the University of Utah, and immensely enjoys reading in his free time.

Meher Samineni will be the head of operations. She will work with Dr. Hollaar and other local experts to generate content for the journal and will help determine which issues we focus on. Meher is completing double majors at the U in Computer Science and Mathematics, and she plans to attend law school afterward.

**Audience**

**Publicity**

**Contributing Organizations**