To: Micheal Opsteegh
From: Kayla Humphrey
Date: October 19, 2022
RE: RPF Analysis

Current Situation

The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) was created from a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Library of Congress. While the NEH initiated the program, the extensive database produced from the program will be maintained by the Library of Congress. They are soliciting different states and institutions to participate in the program. The program's goal is to digitize historically significant newspapers from 1690 to 1963 and gather them in a searchable national internet resource. Its long-term goal is for all states and jurisdictions to participate in the program ("NEH/AHRC Notice…" p.1). The selection for the newspapers chosen for the database meet the following criteria:

1. Titles should reflect the political, economic, and cultural history of the state or jurisdiction.

2. Preference to titles recognized as "papers of record" at the state or county level and that contain published legal notices, news of state and regional governmental affairs, and community news and events announcements.

3. Selected titles should provide state, or at least multi-county, coverage of the majority of the population areas.

4. You should prefer newspapers with a broad chronological span over those with short runs or published sporadically ("NEH/AHRC Notice…" p.2).

The program offers up to 10 awards for different successful proposals. The max amount for each is $350,000("NEH/AHRC Notice…" p.4). Even though participants may only apply once during this period of applications, The program encourages the states to apply for a second and third time. Any successful applicant can request the maximum amount of funds without cash sharing for this opportunity ("NEH/ AHRC Notice…" p.4).

Background

The foundations of the NEH began in the National Commission on the Humanities in 1963. The Commission conducted a study to determine "the state of the humanities in America." At the study's conclusion, the Commission's findings showed schools heavily emphasized studying science rather than the study of the Humanities. After the report was brought to the current President and Congress, they took steps to ensure the study of the Humanities was preserved in schools. In 1965, the White House proposed a bill establishing the National Foundation of

The Arts and Humanities. It was later signed into Law by President Johnson, which led to the creation of two separate agencies: The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment of the Humanities ("How the NEH got Its start").

Presently the NEH operates as one of the largest funders for the Humanities in the United States("Grants"). The NEH determines eligibility for their grants if the applicant is from one of the following organizations:

- Private nonprofit organizations

- Institutions of higher education

- A state or local government

- A federally recognized Indian tribal governments. ("NEH/AHRC notice…" index.i)

The National Digital Newspaper Program began as something else as well. The NDNP's roots started in the United States Newspaper Program, which ran from 1982 to 2011 to preserve American Newspapers published from the 18th to the present onto microfilm ("US Newspaper…"). Other notable achievements by the NEH include the following:

- Seven thousand books, 16 which won Pulitzer Prizes, and 20 that received the Bancroft Prize.

- The Civil War, the landmark documentary by Ken Burns, viewed by 38 million Americans

- The Library of America editions of novels, essays, and poems celebrating America's literary heritage

- Annual support for 56 states and territories to help support some 56,000 lectures, discussions, exhibitions, and other programs each year. ("How the NEH got Its start")

Meanwhile, The Library of Congress, the NEH's partner in the program, is an institution founded in 1800. Its creation was approved by President John Adams, who granted $5000 in funding for books to be used by congress. It is the oldest Federal Cultural institution in the nation. The original Library was destroyed during the war of 1812 when the British troops burned the US capitol. The Library of Congress was later rebuilt after Thomas Jefferson sold his personal library to congress to mitigate the impact of losing the original collection ("History"). In present times, the Library of Congress is the largest in the world, with over 173 million items ranging from books, rare manuscripts, and different types of media ("Fascinating Facts").

Course of Action

Before deciding our course of action, I would like to address the motivations of the NEH and the Library of Congress regarding this project. In present times, the National Digital Newspaper Program is a response to a desire for continued preservation of our history in a changing world.

In the present day, it is now common for people to seek information through a digital medium. History is part of our culture, but it must be constantly preserved in a new medium, or it risks being lost altogether. These organizations not only seek to do that but highlight that stories from all states are important in this effort.

If our university accepts this RFP, we should begin by holding a meeting with the Dean of the Liberal Arts department and choice faculty members. The application of the RFP must include a narrative that will describe our school's proposed project ("NEH/AHRC notice…p.9). The application must also include a work plan, which will provide an overview of each stage of our proposed project (p.11). The meeting should bring clarity and focus on project aspects as we address how to proceed and whether it is feasible for our school.

First, it would be best to decide on who wishes to take part in the project. Key personnel identified will have to submit a two-page resume for the application ("NEH/AHRC notice…p.9). Any supporting staff will also need to be listed. The opportunity allows for students interested in the project to participate, but they do not need to be listed. In addition to selecting staff for the project, we will also need an advisory board. The board can include teachers, librarians, or other experts that are familiar with the history of print journalism (p.11). They will be important when it comes to selecting the newspapers for the project as they would apply the selection criteria mentioned in the funding opportunity and compile a list (p.2).

Furthermore, the application must include a budget along with the previous items mentioned. Since the application requires filling out a budget justification for all expected cost, it would be best if the budget was Itemized ("NEH/AHRC notice…p.12). Therefore, a meeting with the universities Accounting department would be a good course of action. The faculty can assist in helping our team break down and explain all costs they will expect over the entire span of the project.

The final proposal deadline is January 12th, 2023 and must be submitted on grants.gov. All contact will be though the Division of Preservation and Access ("National Digital Newspaper…"). From there, a peer review panel with go over each application sorting them by potential merit. Staff at the NEH the take the reviewed applications and provides recommendation based on funding ("NEH's Application Review…"). Afterwards, the counsel at the NEH will hold a meeting and over the recommended applications. However, the chairman of the NEH will be the one to make the final decision on all funding opportunities ("NEH's Application Review…"). The grant recipients are expected to start the project on September 1st, 2023, and it will be conducted over the next two years ("National Digital Newspaper…").

Attached: National Digital Newspaper Program RFP

Works Cited

"Fascinating Facts about the Library of Congress." *The Library of Congress*,
    www.loc.gov/about/fascinating-facts/.

"Grants." *The National Endowment for the Humanities*, 2 Nov. 2022, www.neh.gov/grants.

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    www.loc.gov/about/history-of-the-library/.

"How The NEH Got Its Start*." The National Endowment for the Humanities*,
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    www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/national-digital-newspaper-program.

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    of Preservation and Access, www.neh.gov/sites/default/files/inline-files/NEH-
    AHRC%20New%20Directions%20for%20Digital%20Scholarship%20NOFO.pdf.

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    www.neh.gov/us-newspaper-program.