1. **Full name(s). Please list all members of your team separated by commas**

William Sheng Chen

1. **Email address(es). Please list all email addresses of your team separated by commas**

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1. **Which country are you or your team based in? If you're based in multiple locations then please add these in separated by commas. Applications are open to all, regardless of country of residence**

United States

1. **Product Name**

Blank Dictionary

1. **Pitch (In 200 words or less, describe your product, include the problem you are trying to solve and your proposed solution)**

With every year that passes, the list of over 2000 languages (UNESCO) that are high-risk or endangered continues to grow. Of these languages, many have already dwindled to only tens of fluent speakers. While reviving these languages is a complex issue, part of the challenge for researchers is a lack of dedicated software for language collection, preservation and study. A researcher in the social sciences has few options for creating a digital dictionary that is easily accessible and easy to use without investing substantial time and money.

To address this issue, our team proposes a software framework that streamlines the creation of digital dictionaries: Blank Dictionary. Blank Dictionary will exist as a website and a downloadable Android app. All dictionary creation processes would be accessible via the website, where administrative users can edit, add or remove dictionary content. That dictionary content can then be viewed by other researchers or the public through the public-facing section of the website and the Android app.

Our end goal with this software framework is a platform that contains a variety of dictionaries for at-risk or endangered languages.

1. **Why are you passionate about this tool? (100 words or less)**

I have a strong ethical motivation for preventing the extinction of languages, especially as I see language as intimately connected to culture. The world is a better place with diverse multicultural identities.

Additionally, the lack of existing dictionary creation frameworks is a huge missed opportunity for solving a fairly general software problem for language researchers. I would love to be able to fill in that gap and potentially help not just researchers, but also the general public that would benefit from this product.

1. **Select the discipline/s that your tool is best suited for**

Communication and Media Studies

Computational Social Science

Cultural Studies

Education

Linguistics

1. **Which of these techniques, approaches to research or tasks in the research process best describes what your tool is for:**

Data Collection and Data Capture

1. **Imagine the solution you propose failed, can you share the top 2 reasons why this would be? (100 words or less)**

One reason why the solution could fail is a lack of legitimacy for the product. We’ve learned that authors of dictionary content can be hesitant to pass on their curated data to unestablished websites/services out of fear of their data being stolen.

Another reason why the solution could fail would be if mass data entry is not carefully thought out. Bulk upload of data from existing files can be more convenient for language researchers than having to spend their time inputting each entry on the website.

1. **How do you plan to spend £2,000 grant money over the next 3-6 months? (100 words or less)**

We will use the SAGE funds to fund a pilot Lhokyed/Bhutia language dictionary with £800 to be spent on language consultants for content creation. This pilot dictionary will be used as marketing material to generate interest and help legitimize Blank Dictionary for use by researchers of other languages.

Additionally, £800 will be spent on a stipend for the software engineering involved in upgrading existing content creation tools and improving overall software reliability.

Finally, a portion of the remaining £400 will be spent on upgrading our hosting services for more uptime and lower latency.