Building Capacity for Research and Teaching with Comics

Abstract

San Diego State University (SDSU) proposes a two-year (2021-23) National Leadership Grant to develop and convene a National Forum designed to: 1) establish a robust network of research libraries using comics to promote innovations in learning, scholarship, and community engagement; 2) facilitate sustainable campus and community partnerships around the use of comics; 3) explore opportunities to promote the teaching of social justice issues through comics and the ways in which research libraries can support those efforts; and, 4) suggest a model for research-based engagement with comics and community partners that can be adapted for use in other regions of the country.

A. Statement of National Need

More than 75 years ago, Gruenberg (1944) described comic books as an emergent medium in U.S. culture and a "social force" that could be employed to support education. In the decades since, comics have become deeply embedded in popular culture, and are read and shared (in print and digital form) among a wide range of people, from all age groups. As demonstrated recently in the Emmy-winning *Watchmen* series on HBO, comics and their re-telling in other media can also be an essential tool for promoting discussions of racial equity and social justice (Nussbaum, 2019). The comic medium, precisely because it requires readers to pause and think about what they are viewing, is particularly effective at promoting empathy with respect to social justice issues (Garrison and Gavigan, 2019). As Yang (2003) documented, comics have found an increasingly significant role in K-12 and higher education and have also proven to be a locus for students organizing around intellectual freedom (Borrelli, 2013). There are nascent efforts to establish greater collaboration among libraries in the collection of comics, e.g., ALA's Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table. Yet, there is an unmet need to coordinate and promote the use of comics in teaching at all levels, and to support development and use of research collections in libraries. Additionally, traditional categorizing of comics as leisure reading spotlights the unmet need for a national dialogue about the collection and use of comics in programs (and especially, the libraries that support them).

San Diego State University (SDSU) has established Comics @ SDSU, a Comic Studies Collaborative that brings together an interdisciplinary group of faculty who teach using comics. Conversations have identified varying levels of preparedness to teach comics studies, the need for robust library collections and a collections role not always seen in academic librarianship that is akin to reader's advisory services in public libraries. SDSU team members who will lead this National Forum proposal also participated in a nationwide "Under the Baobab"[1] for the World History Association that brought together K-20 history educators with an interest in including comics in their teaching and research. Not only did that constituency demonstrate needs similar to those of the SDSU faculty, but the K-12 educators in attendance shared a desire to include more comics in their classrooms, while also noting some of the challenges in working comics into a standards-based curriculum. While K-12 teaching and learning is not

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[1] An online gathering of educators, instituted as a response to COVID-19 and designed to spark curiosity, develop debate, and deepen engagement with world history. See https://www.thewha.org/conferences/under-the-baobab/

the primary focus of this National Forum proposal, we expect to uncover and document issues in librarianship and teaching comics at that level, particularly issues pertaining to collection-building and teaching social issues through comics, where comics, in their gutsy challenge to allegedly "divisive concepts" unite their readership in empathy for social ills and imagining solutions.

Comics librarianship is a rapidly developing field. Libraries are adding collections and increasing outreach efforts on the use of comics in educational settings. In 2018, the American Library Association formalized the Graphic Novels & Comics Round Table, demonstrating a desire to build community surrounding comics and librarianship. In 2021, an informal poll of academic librarians who work with comics was conducted on behalf of the Comics Studies Society to determine the desire to create a Librarian Caucus. Enthusiastic response from over 30 librarians demonstrates further desire to create community. This National Forum proposal aims to complement both of these efforts by bringing together a community of librarians and comics scholars to help answer questions, such as:
- *Where are accessible and robust comics collections located nationwide?*
- *Where there are robust collections, what are the specialties of each?*
- *What type of work (especially with regard to social justice) is currently being accomplished in libraries with comic arts collections and what work could be accomplished with more coordinated effort and resources?*
- *Where might partnerships exist between libraries of different types and between teachers and libraries?*
- *What projects and products are needed to make libraries more successful in these efforts, and what are areas for future research?*

The four forum meetings this National Leadership Grant proposes will identify and articulate the needs of libraries and the scholars who use them, as pertains to comics research and teaching, especially with respect to social justice issues.

B. Project Design

This National Forum project aims to foster productive partnerships to promote innovative practices in learning, scholarship, and engagement through comics. The goals of our proposal are to develop and convene a National Forum designed to: 1) establish a robust network of research libraries using comics to promote innovations in learning, scholarship, and community engagement; 2) facilitate sustainable campus and community partnerships around the use of comics; 3) explore opportunities to promote the teaching of social justice issues through comics and the ways in which research libraries can support those efforts; and, 4) suggest a model for research-based engagement with comics and community partners that can be adapted for use in other regions of the country.

Assembling librarians from leading research library collections, teaching faculty, public libraries and select partners from K-12 schools, our project will extend existing discussions of the use of primary source materials in education. Shaped as they are by their historical moment and circumstance, comics provide a valuable tool for understanding the period and place that produced them. From racial stereotypes and political views to expectations with respect to gender and class, comics provide primary source material for discussing social justice over time (McGurk, 2019). With our Forum's additional focus

on racial equity and social justice education, participants in our proposed National Forum will explore the use of comics and related materials in support of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives.

As the lead institution for this project, San Diego State University is uniquely situated to provide an array of scholarly infrastructure and opportunities for regional community engagement. Located in San Diego, California, home to the Comic-Con International Convention, SDSU faculty and librarians have already presented on panels at Comic-Con and the soon-to-reopen Comic Con Museum, as well as at the local Comic Fest gathering. SDSU librarians and faculty have used these opportunities to establish partnerships with local K-12 schools, public libraries, and the publisher, creator, and fan communities. Moreover, Comics @ SDSU, the university's vibrant [Comics Studies Collaborative](#) has demonstrated the potential for multi-disciplinary teaching and scholarship using comics, and the library's central role in those efforts.

The National Forum will be conducted by participants in four meetings, facilitated by SDSU's Pamela Jackson, Popular Culture Librarian and Comic Arts Curator, and Dr. Elizabeth Pollard, Professor of History at SDSU. Progress will be shared throughout the library and education communities through the development of a forum website, a network analysis of resources (libraries and collections), social media channels and conference presentations. Formal dissemination of results will include a White Paper to be shared through the website, conference presentations to be developed for the library community (e.g., ALA Graphic Novel and Comics Round Table) and scholarly community (e.g., Comics Studies Society) and the draft of an article summarizing our findings (e.g *New Academic Review of Librarianship* or *Inks*).

B.1. Project Team and Grant Advisors

The SDSU Project Team (Jackson and Pollard) will collaborate with two grant advisors for meetings 2 and 3: Jenny Robb (Curator, Billy Ireland Cartoon Library, Ohio State) and Maryanne Rhett (Comics Scholar; Professor of History and Anthropology, Monmouth University).

Pamela Jackson has been a library faculty member in the California State University system for 18 years. She is the Popular Culture Librarian and Comic Arts Curator in Special Collections and University Archives at San Diego State University. She manages a comic arts collection of approximately 100K published, archival and ephemeral items. She co-created and co-leads the Comics Studies Collaborative at SDSU where she works to include comics in the curriculum and foster the next generation of comics scholars. She is particularly interested in diverse representation in comics and in using the medium to raise awareness of social justice issues. She has written numerous articles about comics and pop culture for academic publications, and has presented at Comic-Con International, the Comic Arts Conference, San Diego Comic Fest, and the Popular Culture Association. Her works include a grant-funded humanities website, *The Comic-Con Kids: Finding and Defining Fandom*, which explores the emergence of comics, science fiction and fantasy in the youth counterculture movements of the 1970s. An active member of her local comic arts community, Pam serves as the Archivist and on the organizing committee for San Diego Comic Fest, as Secretary for the International Popular and Comics Arts Education League, and as a member of Educators Unite for Creators Assemble!, all San Diego-based nonprofit organizations. She holds master's degrees in English from Sonoma State University and Library Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Dr. Elizabeth Pollard is Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence at San Diego State University, where she has been teaching courses in Roman History, World History, and witchcraft studies since 2002. She co-leads the Comics @ SDSU collaborative (2019-present) and is co-Champion of *Comics and Social Justice* for the SDSU President's Big Ideas Initiative (2020-present). Pollard recently debuted a new Comics and History course that explores sequential art from the paleolithic to the present day. Her research investigates women accused of witchcraft in the Roman world and explores the exchange of goods and ideas between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean in the early centuries of the Common Era. She is currently working on a graphic history exploring the influence of classical understandings of witchcraft on modern pop-culture representations of witches (from comics to film). Apart from her work on magic and comics, Pollard is co-author of *Worlds Together Worlds Apart* Concise*, WTWA* Full 6th edition*,* and the *Worlds Together Worlds Apart, Companion Reader* (W.W. Norton). In Summer 2020, she co-facilitated the SDSU Flexible Course Design Institute, which undertook the training of more than 1,000 SDSU faculty as they made the shift to online instruction in the face of COVID-19. She has also published on various pedagogical and digital history topics, including writing about witchcraft on wikipedia, tweeting on the backchannel of the large lecture, and digital humanities approaches to visualizing Roman History.

Jenny Robb is Curator and Associate Professor of The Ohio State University Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum, the largest academic research institution dedicated to cartoons and comics. Before coming to Ohio State in 2005, she served as Curator of the Cartoon Art Museum in San Francisco for 5 years. She holds masters degrees in History and Museum Studies from Syracuse University. Robb has curated numerous cartoon and comics exhibitions, including, most recently, *Exploring Calvin and Hobbes and Dedini: The Art of Humor*. She is the author of several comics-related articles including "Bill Blackbeard: the Collector Who Rescued the Comics" in the *Journal of American Culture* and "From the Periodical Archives: Winsor McCay, George Randolph Chester and the Tale of the Jungle Imps" published in *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, & Bibliography*.

Dr. Maryanne A. Rhett, Associate Professor of Middle Eastern and World History at Monmouth University, works on topics related to modern Middle Eastern and Islamic history at the intersections of popular culture, nationalism, and world history. Her teaching duties, too, reflect these interests. Some of her classes include Islamic history, Modern Middle Eastern history, Popular Culture and the Middle East, and the history of Militant Nationalism. Additionally, she teaches the Perspectives class: A Graphic World: World History and Sequential Art. Dr. Rhett is Secretary for the World History Association as well as the WHA's program committee chairman. She has arranged programs for the Mid-Atlantic World History Association, the World History Association, and the Monmouth University Biennial Conference on Race. In 2019, Rhett authored *Representations of Islam in United States Comics, 1880-1922*

Grant Advisors will help identify participants to invite to Meetings 2 and 3, and will collaborate on the structure of the meetings. They will review discussion questions, activities, and meeting materials (including the pre-meeting needs-assessment and post-meeting survey) and serve as facilitators/recorders in virtual break-out rooms. Additionally, Grant Advisors will participate as part of the White Paper

Working Group in Meeting 4.

B.2 White-Paper Working Group
In Meeting 2 (academic librarians nationwide), we will identify 4 librarians to form the White-Paper Working Group (Meeting 4). The White-Paper Working Group will be composed of librarians who are in the best position to help document the needs and opportunities for the library community and comics scholars. Criteria for selection will include knowledge of comics librarianship, responsibility for library comics collections, demonstrated work to include comics in the curriculum and/or advanced knowledge of comics scholarship, and a willingness to serve in this capacity. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team in consultation with Grant Advisors.

B.3. National Forum Meetings
Four facilitated work meetings will be held, in a combination of face-to-face and virtual formats. This hybrid approach to forum development will increase accessibility to the forum discussion and ensure project resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings will be recorded and transcribed in Zoom.

Meetings 1, 2 and 3 will utilize a similar format with a different segment of community participants at each meeting: San Diego Area Librarians (Meeting 1), Academic Librarians who work with comics nationwide (Meeting 2), and Comics Studies Scholars nationwide (Meeting 3). Twenty (20) participants are anticipated for Meetings 1-3 and eight (8) participants are expected for Meeting 4 to complete the White Paper.

For all meetings, invitations will be based on potential contributions to project goals and will include participants from various institutional types and varying educational levels. Special attention will be paid to include participants who represent diverse patron communities. Where possible, diverse representation in terms of participant identity will be included. Criteria for selecting participants will vary slightly by meeting:

Meeting 1 (San Diego Area Librarians) Participant Criteria will include knowledge of or interest in using comics in education and in the local San Diego community. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team (Jackson and Pollard).

Meeting 2 (Academic Librarians who work with comics nationwide) Participant Criteria will include knowledge of comics librarianship; responsibility for library comics collections; demonstrated work to include comics in the curriculum and/or knowledge of comics scholarship. Librarians from both Special Collections and subject librarians will be selected. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team in consultation with Grant Advisors (Jackson and Pollard, joined by Robb and Rhett).

Meeting 3 (Comics Studies Scholars nationwide) Participant Criteria will include demonstrated work to include comics in the classroom; published research on comics; recent conference and convention

presentations. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team in consultation with Grant Advisors (Jackson and Pollard, joined by Robb and Rhett).

Meeting 4 (White-Paper Working Group) Participant Criteria will include knowledge of comics librarianship, responsibility for library comics collections, demonstrated work to include comics in the curriculum and/or advanced knowledge of comics scholarship, and a willingness to serve in this capacity. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team in consultation with Grant Advisors (Jackson and Pollard, joined by Robb and Rhett).

Prior to each meeting, participants will be asked to complete a pre-meeting needs-assessment that will enable us to gather information about their institution type and experience with comics (for the Project Team to use at the start of the meeting to lay the groundwork for the conversation) and they will contribute to a slide deck to share baseline information about themselves and their institution (for participants to refer to after-the-fact, to build community). This information will be captured for use in creating a network analysis (via Onodo, or similar free software) and for developing a national network.

Meeting 1 [San Diego Area Librarians] will be held at San Diego State University* in conjunction with San Diego Comic Fest (TBA; Spring 2022) and will include San Diego-area librarians from Universities, Community Colleges, Public Libraries and K-12 schools who work with comics. The goal of this meeting is to determine the kinds of work currently being accomplished in the local community, the needs of these librarians and their constituencies, and what they dream of doing with the comic arts in their respective environments for which a national network of comics librarians might prove useful. With this meeting, we will use the San Diego library community as a microcosm to conduct a community needs assessment and model how to bring together a local community of librarians of all types.

*If feasible, this meeting may be held in-person at San Diego Comic Fest (Spring 2022), however, due to COVID, this meeting may also be held virtually.

Participants for Meeting 1 will include the SDSU Project Team (Jackson and Pollard) and draw on invited librarians from the following categories and institutions:

Universities:	Community Colleges:
● University of California, San Diego ● University of San Diego ● California State University San Marcos ● Point Loma Nazarene University	● Grossmont Community College ● San Diego City College ● San Diego Mesa College ● San Diego Miramar College ● Southwestern College ● Cuyamaca College
Public Libraries (both city and county public libraries): ● San Diego Public Library	K-12 participants will be selected from school districts located in close proximity to comics collections and public libraries known for their

● San Diego County Library ● Chula Vista Public Library ● Escondido Public Library ● Oceanside Public Library	work with comics with the intention of enhancing community collaboration. ● San Diego Unified School District ● Poway Unified School District ● Escondido Unified School District ● La Mesa Unified School District ● Chula Vista Unified School District ● San Marcos Unified School District ● Carlsbad Unified School District ● Oceanside Unified School District

Meeting 2 [Academic Librarians who work with comics nationwide] will be held virtually during Summer 2022, and will include librarians at academic libraries nationwide as well as LIS educators with an interest in comics librarianship. Meeting 2 will be similar in format to Meeting 1, on a scaled-up national level. The goal of this meeting will be to determine the kinds of work currently being accomplished in each local community, the needs of these librarians and their constituencies, and what they dream of doing with the comic arts in their respective environments for which a national network of comics librarians might prove useful. Additionally, this meeting will outline opportunities for collaboration among libraries with a focus on the use of comics in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives and social justice education.

Participants for Meeting 2 will include the SDSU Project Team (Jackson and Pollard), Grant Advisors (Robb and Rhett) and draw on participants from geographically diverse academic libraries who collect comics, as well as LIS faculty with an interest in comics in libraries. Additional representation will be invited from the ALA Graphic Novels Round Table. Preliminary research by the Project Team has identified viable participants from colleges and universities located in all geographic regions of the United States and from varying academic institutional types and levels.

Upon funding of this IMLS forum, Jackson and Pollard will immediately contact individuals they have identified at these institutions. Their work gathering professors and librarians in the California State University (CSU) system has suggested quick assembly of participants is possible. On April 19, 2021, Jackson and Pollard will convene a CSU-wide virtual gathering of professors and librarians who work with comics at the CSUs. Within less than a month they were able to get buy-in from more than half of the campuses.

In Meeting 2, we will identify 4 librarians to form the White-Paper Working Group (Meeting 4). The White-Paper Working Group will be composed of librarians who are in the best position to help document the needs and opportunities for the library community and comics scholars. Criteria for selection will include knowledge of comics librarianship, responsibility for library comics collections, demonstrated work to include comics in the curriculum and/or advanced knowledge of comics scholarship, and a

willingness to serve in this capacity. Selection decisions will be made by the Project Team in consultation with Grant Advisors.

Meeting 3 [Comics Studies Scholars nationwide] will be held virtually and designed to complement the annual meeting of the Comics Studies Society (TBA; Fall 2022), and will include comics studies scholars in higher education. San Diego State University will have beta-tested a model for such a meeting in spring 2021 with comics scholars from within the California State University system. At Meeting 3, we will engage with scholars to discover how they use comics for learning, scholarship, and engagement with an additional focus on the use of comics in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives and social justice education, how they are (or are not) supported by libraries in their efforts, and what they need from libraries.

Participants for Meeting 3 will include the SDSU Project Team (Jackson and Pollard), Grant Advisors (Robb and Rhett) and draw on invited comics scholars who have demonstrated a dedication to teaching and learning with comics, published research on comics, and/or have presented at recent conferences or fan conventions. Representation in Meeting 3 will be less focused on geographic diversity. We will include a mix of active comics scholars who are best suited to engage with the questions posed for the National Forum proposal from institutions with formalized comics studies programs and those working in environments where support for comics may not be as strong. Special consideration will be given to inviting scholars who study the intersection between comics and social justice issues.

Meeting 4 [White-Paper Working Group] will be a working meeting of the White-Paper Working Group (Robb and Rhett, along with 4 librarians identified in Meeting 2), facilitated by members of the SDSU project team, Jackson and Pollard, held in conjunction with the ACRL National Meeting (Spring 2023) at The Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum at Ohio State University,* which is in close proximity to the conference site in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At this meeting, Jackson and Pollard will share the findings (including the information from the Pre- and Post-Meeting Assessments, shared slide decks, and nascent network analysis) and best practices gleaned from Meetings 1-3. The focus of the final meeting will be the development of a White Paper that defines a sustainable network for collaboration among comics collections in research libraries, defines the needs of comics scholars, explores how comics are used to teach social issues, and identifies a concrete, actionable plan for how libraries can support those efforts.

*This meeting can be held virtually if COVID persists.

B.4 Deliverables and Dissemination

The primary audience for this National Forum is academic and public librarians with an interest in comics studies. However, we believe our deliverables may have broader appeal to K-12 teachers and librarians as well as comics scholars in a variety of educational settings. Deliverables will be shared via a forum website, social media channels, conference presentations, and at least one article (at draft stage by the end of the grant period). The expected outcomes of this project are the following:

White Paper. Dissemination of a White Paper and other media (e.g., website, presentations) drawn from the National Forum meetings to foster the adoption of best practices identified through the project and to identify areas of need for future projects and scholarship. This will be authored by the White-Paper Working Group as described in section B.2.

Network Analysis. Drawing on the information collected from Meetings 1-3 and supplemental research spurred by suggestions from our meeting participants, the completion of a network analysis of Comics Studies scholarship and collections that can be employed in academic program planning and sharing of expertise at the national level. Digital Humanities software, such as Onodo, will enable us to develop a visualization of what work is being done where, what connections exist, and what connections still need to be made.

Comics Librarians Support Network. Establishment of a network of research libraries supporting Comics Studies through their collections. The tangible manifestation of this network (apart from the Onodo visualization) is a searchable list of libraries, librarians, and collection strengths.

Community Collaboration Model. A replicable framework, including a reflection on best (and worst) practices, for community-based collaboration among libraries of all types, modeled on Meeting 1.

Literature Reviews/Bibliographies. On our forum website, a bibliography of relevant research about the ways in which libraries are supporting comics scholarship will be provided, along with a review of the relevant research on the use of comics to teach social justice issues.

Publication. At least one article (in draft form) for submission to a major journal focused on librarianship or comics in which we chronicle the work of our National Forum.

B.5 Indicators of Success
Several measures will enable us to track the success of our project:

Meeting Attendance and Participation: Actively participating attendees are an essential part of the success of our model. Attendance and participation will be measured by contributions to collaborative Google slide decks. Target: > 20 active participants at Meetings 1-3.

Pre- and Post-Meeting Assessment: Each meeting will include a pre-meeting needs-assessment and a post-meeting survey. These pre- and post-meeting interactions via Google-form will enable us to gather information that will: 1) form the starting point for conversations at each meeting, to be adaptive to participants' needs; 2) assess participants' experience of each meeting; and 3) adapt subsequent meetings based on participant feedback on surveys.

Concrete deliverables: Another clear measure of success will be the dissemination of the Forum's findings, in the form of our concrete deliverables: forum website, social media presence via micro-blogging about in-process findings, White Paper (highlighting best practices in fostering/replicating scholar-librarian networks focused on comics and social justice), network analysis (via Onodo) of

collections and scholars/librarians across the nation engaged in comics & social justice work, bibliography of the same, conference presentations and draft article (at least one) that bring visibility to the network we've established and share the replicable collaboration model we've developed.

Follow-Up Action Plan: A successful collaboration begets future collaborations. A final measure of our success will be the formation of a follow-up action plan in consultation with the advisory board, including robust brainstorming of grant proposals to continue the work and formation of future partnerships.

C. Diversity Plan (if applicable)

Historically, the comics medium has presented a way to engage with timely social issues, including racial injustice, wealth inequality, immigration, food insecurity, climate justice, health care, and equality for all. The study of comics can bring transformational experiences that advocate for social justice. Comics collections in libraries provide campuses and the public with valuable primary sources to bring communities together and discuss relevant social issues.

Our proposal addresses diversity, equity and inclusion in a number of ways. The National Forum will draw participants from a diverse variety of libraries, educational institutions and scholars who can share varying regional views and experiences. For all meetings, invitations will be based on potential contributions to project goals and will include participants from various institutional types and varying educational levels. For Meeting 2, special attention will be paid to include participants who represent diverse patron communities. Where possible, diverse representation in terms of participant identity will be included.

For Meeting 3, we will include a mix of active comics scholars who are best suited to engage with the questions posed for the National Forum proposal from institutions with formalized comics studies programs and those working in environments where support for comics may not be as strong. Special consideration will be given to inviting scholars who study the intersection between comics and social justice issues.

D. National Impact

With the broad appeal of comics as educational materials, research subjects, and centerpieces for public programming in libraries of all types, this project will jumpstart a critically important conversation around research library strategies for collecting comics and employing them as a distinctive component of library support for innovation in teaching and scholarship. Given the opportunities to employ comics as components in discussions of racial equity and social justice, research library investment in comics collections and services promises opportunity to contribute to broader strategic goals of host universities and facilitate community-centered education and engagement with urgent social issues. This project will foster sustainable partnerships among library types in a shared educational and outreach mission to include, among others, intellectual freedom, information literacy and visual literacy, and will also provide models for emergent best practices that can be applied to support innovative programming at local and regional levels. Finally, this National Forum proposal aims to help identify opportunities for regional and national collaboration amongst librarians, and inform potential future research projects surrounding both comics in libraries and the role comics can play in teaching social justice issues.

Task	2021					2022												2023							
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
Create Forum Website	X	X	X	X	X																				
Develop questions and activities for Meeting 1					X	X	X																		
Idenitfy participants for Meeting 1		X																							
Send invitations and reminders for Meeting 1					X	X	X																		
Create pre-meeting needs-assessment and post-meeting survey for Meeting 1		X	X	X																					
Meeting 1								X																	
Develop questions and activities for Meeting 2								X	X	X															
Idenitfy participants for Meeting 2						X																			
Send invitations and reminders for Meeting 2								X	X	X															
Create pre-meeting needs-assessment and post-meeting survey for Meeting 2				X	X	X	X																		
Bibliography: Libraries and Comics Scholarship	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X															
Bibliography: Comics and Social Justice										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Meeting 2 (June or July)											X	X													
Idenitfy White Paper Working Group Membership													X												
Develop questions and activities for Meeting 3													X	X											
Idenitfy participants for Meeting 3										X															
Send invitations and reminders for Meeting 3													X	X	X										
Create pre-meeting needs-assessment and post-meeting survey for Meeting 3										X	X	X													
Meeting 3 (Exact date TBD)														X	X	X									
Create Network Analysis																X	X	X	X	X					
Develop Community Collaboration Model and publish to website										X	X	X	X	X	X	X									
Create presentation for Meeting 4																		X	X	X					
Develop questions and activities for Meeting 4																		X	X	X					
Create pre-meeting needs-assessment and post-meeting survey for Meeting 4															X	X	X								
Send invitations for Meeting 4																		X	X	X					
Meeting 4																					X				
Create White Paper with WP Working Group																			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Publish White Paper and Bibliographies to webpage																									X
Write Draft Journal Article																						X	X	X	X
Create a searchable list of libraries, librarians, and collection strengths pertaining to comics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to digital products that are created using federal funds. This includes (1) digitized and born-digital content, resources, or assets; (2) software; and (3) research data (see below for more specific examples). Excluded are preliminary analyses, drafts of papers, plans for future research, peer-review assessments, and communications with colleagues.

The digital products you create with IMLS funding require effective stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and reuse by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

INSTRUCTIONS

If you propose to create digital products in the course of your IMLS-funded project, you must first provide answers to the questions in **SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS.** Then consider which of the following types of digital products you will create in your project, and complete each section of the form that is applicable.

> ### SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS
> Complete this section if your project will create digital content, resources, or assets. These include both digitized and born-digital products created by individuals, project teams, or through community gatherings during your project. Examples include, but are not limited to, still images, audio files, moving images, microfilm, object inventories, object catalogs, artworks, books, posters, curricula, field books, maps, notebooks, scientific labels, metadata schema, charts, tables, drawings, workflows, and teacher toolkits. Your project may involve making these materials available through public or access-controlled websites, kiosks, or live or recorded programs.
>
> ### SECTION III: SOFTWARE
> Complete this section if your project will create software, including any source code, algorithms, applications, and digital tools plus the accompanying documentation created by you during your project.
>
> ### SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA
> Complete this section if your project will create research data, including recorded factual information and supporting documentation, commonly accepted as relevant to validating research findings and to supporting scholarly publications.

SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS

A.1 We expect applicants seeking federal funds for developing or creating digital products to release these files under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, or assets; software; research data) you intend to create? What ownership rights will your organization assert over the files you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on their access and use? Who will hold the copyright(s)? Explain and justify your licensing selections. Identify and explain the license under which you will release the files (e.g., a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, Creative Commons licenses; RightsStatements.org statements). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

This National Forum grant will prepare a White Paper and a bibliography. These documents will be openly available on a public website. No conditions will be imposed on their access.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

Not applicable for this project

A.3 If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

Not applicable for this project

SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

A.1 Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.

> This National Forum grant will prepare a White Paper and a bibliography. These documents will be openly available on a public website. No conditions will be imposed on their access.

A.2 List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the digital content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

> The White Paper and Bibliography will be created as Google Documents that are then downloaded as PDFs and hosted on a public website.

A.3 List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG, OBJ, DOC, PDF) you plan to use. If digitizing content, describe the quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, pixel dimensions) you will use for the files you will create.

> DOC, PDF

Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

> Not applicable for this project

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period. Your plan should address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

Not applicable for this project

Metadata

C.1 Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata or linked data. Specify which standards or data models you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., RDF, BIBFRAME, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

Not applicable for this project

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

Not applicable for this project

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

Not applicable for this project

Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content, delivery enabled by IIIF specifications).

This National Forum grant will prepare a White Paper and a bibliography. These documents will be openly available on a public website.

D.2. Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Universal Resource Locator), DOI (Digital Object Identifier), or other persistent identifier for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

Not applicable for this project

SECTION III: SOFTWARE

General Information

A.1 Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

Not applicable for this project

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same or similar functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

Not applicable for this project

Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, frameworks, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

Not applicable for this project

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

Not applicable for this project

B.3 Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

Not applicable for this project

B.4 Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

Not applicable for this project

B.5 Provide the name(s), URL(s), and/or code repository locations for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

Not applicable for this project

Access and Use

C.1 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

> Not applicable for this project

C.2 Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

> Not applicable for this project

URL:

> Not applicable for this project

SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

As part of the federal government's commitment to increase access to federally funded research data, Section IV represents the Data Management Plan (DMP) for research proposals and should reflect data management, dissemination, and preservation best practices in the applicant's area of research appropriate to the data that the project will generate.

A.1 Identify the type(s) of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use(s) to which you expect them to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use, the proposed scope and scale, and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate data.

> This National Forum grant will prepare a White Paper and a bibliography. These documents will be openly available on a public website. The National Forum meetings will be conversations with librarians and scholars where we uncover the following: Where are accessible and robust comics collections nationwide? What type of work is currently being accomplished in libraries with comic arts collections and what work could be accomplished with more coordinated effort and resources? Where might partnerships exist? What projects and products are needed to make libraries more successful in these efforts, and what are areas for future research?

A.2 Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

No

A.3 Will you collect any sensitive information? This may include personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information. If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect the information while you prepare it for public release (e.g., anonymizing individual identifiers, data aggregation). If the data will not be released publicly, explain why the data cannot be shared due to the protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements.

Not applicable for this project

A.4 What technical (hardware and/or software) requirements or dependencies would be necessary for understanding retrieving, displaying, processing, or otherwise reusing the data?

Not applicable for this project

A.5 What documentation (e.g., consent agreements, data documentation, codebooks, metadata, and analytical and procedural information) will you capture or create along with the data? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the data it describes to enable future reuse?

Not applicable for this project

A.6 What is your plan for managing, disseminating, and preserving data after the completion of the award-funded project?

This National Forum grant will prepare a White Paper and a bibliography. These documents will be openly available on a public website.

A.7 Identify where you will deposit the data:

Name of repository:

Not applicable for this project

URL:

Not applicable for this project

A.8 When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?

Not applicable for this project