January 9, 2013

To the members of the LAUC Research & Professional Development Committee:

Please consider my application for a LAUC Presentation Grant as described below.

I will present in a session called *Who, What, Where: Gathering and Interpreting User Data,* which has been accepted for the Society of California Archivists annual general meeting in April 2013. The panel will include three other colleagues: Sherri Berger from the California Digital Library, Clay Stalls from Loyola Marymount University, and Ellen Ast from OCLC Research. The purpose of the session is twofold: 1) to demonstrate techniques that archivists can use in their repositories to gather and employ user information and 2) to share research findings and therefore contribute to the archival community's knowledge of users and their behaviors. Panelists will describe our respective methodologies, findings, and lessons learned, and will draw out connections between our projects, noting how they complement and/or differ from each other. The intended audience for the session is anyone interested in how to gather information about users to improve archival services--with an emphasis on, but not limited to, digital services.

A. Summary and current status of the research project/activity

Last year, the UC San Diego Digital Library Program encountered a challenge commonly faced by many institutions -- how to conduct user assessment of their digital collections website with limited time and resources. The UCSD Digital Library Collections website was first launched in July of 2009. By 2011, functional testing of the site internally determined the need to redesign the digital object viewer to better accommodate for audio and video. I was a part of the group charged with this task. Afterwards, we wanted to do user testing to evaluate the redesign. With the given constraints, we decided to conduct in-depth personal interviews of a small representative sample of users.

The goals and objectives of the user testing were to assess or gauge:
- The visibility, usability, and clarity of the function icons (zoom, download, etc.)
- The ease of navigation for all types of objects (image, text, audio, video, mixed)
- The functionality associated with playing audio & video clips, including any barriers to use or other problems encountered
- Whether the user can understand when an object has multiple parts (complex object) and also easily locate and navigate between the parts
- The ease of navigation between items in a collection and in the search results list
- Whether information is easy to find in the metadata details, whether all of the desired information appears there, and whether the tab labels are clear
- The value of the bookmark/share feature and the likelihood of its use
- The frequency with which the printing function might be used for still images and text objects

User assessment was conducted and completed in the Summer of 2012 by Decision Support Analyst Kymberly Goodson. Two undergraduate students, two graduate students, and one faculty member were given four sets of tasks with corresponding questions and the opportunity to provide feedback.

The testing resulted in ten specific recommendations for change along with a few recommended guiding principles to employ in the redesign of the digital object viewer. Since then, we have been evaluating and implementing the changes in regards to the terminology, functionality, navigation, and layout. Some of the feedback was straightforward and easy to implement. However, other feedback required further consideration. As it can often be the case with small sample sets of data, it was hard to generalize some of the feedback and apply it considering cost and practicality. I will present the process and findings in this session.

B. Description of and timetable for the activities to be funded by the Mini-Grant or Presentation Grant. If release time is required, please provide a simple signed memo or email from your department head or supervisor.

The activities to be funded by the presentation grant would include travel from April 11-13, 2013 to Berkeley, California to present in the session, *Who, What, Where: Gathering and Interpreting User Data*, at the Society of California Archivists annual general meeting in April 2013. Release time is not required.

C. Summary of the budget

Registration:	$180
Airfare (estimated):	$250
Lodging (2 nights, estimated):	$400
Total:	$830

Amount of funding requested: $500

D. Indicate whether the applicant is a member of the bargaining unit represented by the UC-AFT or a non-represented librarian.

Represented librarian

E. Abstract of the paper or poster accepted for presentation

Who, What, Where: Gathering and Interpreting User Data
This session will explore processes for gathering and interpreting information about archival users, for the purpose of better understanding and, ultimately, serving them. Each speaker will present a unique project undertaken to uncover data about users--data on who they are, what their needs are, and how they discover and use archival resources, both online and in the reading room. In so doing, the panelists will touch on a range of data gathering techniques, including user studies, surveys, online polls, web analytics, and citation analysis. The session will focus on the methodologies employed, findings gleaned, and the implications of the data for each respective repository/organization and the archival community generally. The panel will leave a full half hour for discussion, with the aims of both answering audience questions and engaging attendees with key issues involved with user assessment, such as: balancing information gathering and user privacy, generalizing sample data for a broader audience, and translating findings into actionable tasks to improve user experience and engagement.

F. Name and sponsoring organization (if applicable) of the conference

Society of California Archivists

G. Description(s) of any funds that have been requested from other sources

No other funding has been requested. Professional development funds allocated to me by the
UC San Diego Library were used to participate in the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in
San Diego, CA in August 2012 and the Digital Library Federation forum in Denver, CO in September 2012.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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