

## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

### **MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY EDUCATING ARCHIVISTS AND THEIR CONSTITUENCIES**

#### **1. PURPOSE AND GOALS OF PROJECT**

This project will address a critical responsibility that archives have discovered in their work with electronic records: the persistent need to educate a variety of constituencies about the principles, products and resources necessary to implement archival considerations in the application of information technology to governmental functions. It will focus on two issues: XML and metadata. By focusing on these, the project will accomplish several goals. It will:

- raise the level of knowledge and understanding of essential electronic records skills and tools among archivists
- help archivists to reach the electronic records creators who are their key constituencies
- provide the means to form with those constituencies the communities of learning that will support and sustain collaboration
- raise the profile of archivists in their organizations and promote their involvement in the design and analysis of record keeping systems

#### **2. SIGNIFICANCE AND RELATIONSHIP TO NHPRC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

This project is aimed specifically at addressing one of the NHPRC's top-priority goals:

The NHPRC will enable the nation's archivists, records managers, and documentary editors to overcome the obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities posed by electronic technologies by continuing to provide leadership in funding research and development on appraising, preserving, disseminating and providing access to important documentary sources in electronic form.

In addition, it directly responds to the call for proposals issued by the Commission in November 1999 "to address the need to broaden the base and increase the level of archival expertise in the area of electronic records." Most importantly, the proposal builds on the work of several ongoing electronic records programs. This effort will maximize the returns from work already supported by the NHPRC and insure that there will be a practical cross-fertilization between federal and state government projects.

#### **3. PLAN OF WORK FOR GRANT PERIOD**

The overall goal of the work plan is to enhance and complement existing opportunities. The project partners represent ongoing electronic records programs with a base-line of knowledge and expertise. Products will be tested in environments where they can be critically analyzed and evaluated. Final work products will be demonstrated at professional meetings and conferences which attract significant numbers of archivists. The work plan includes these phases:

1. meet with project partners to analyze their needs and their constituencies' needs
2. develop the educational prototypes for archivists
3. test and refine prototypes for archivists
4. develop educational workshops for archivists' constituencies
5. meet with project partners to "train the trainers"
6. test workshops for constituencies
7. disseminate the products and the knowledge gained

The project will work specifically with the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC). As the SDSC develops the tools for the Archivists' Workbench through its project, *Methodologies for Preservation and Access of Software-dependent Electronic Records*, this effort will prepare the way for the tools' evaluation and implementation by instructing archivists in the skills necessary to use them. The goal is to make implementation feasible and attractive by determining the best means to reach and convince the various audiences that have to cooperate in the management of electronic records. The products of this project will be designed for use in a variety of electronic records programs and tested in a number of different environments.

#### **4. PRODUCTS/PUBLICATIONS TO BE COMPLETED DURING THE GRANT PERIOD**

The project is designed to create a number of educational resources. The most important are two workshops, one each on XML and metadata. The workshops will be supplemented with more detailed information, readily available for further research and application, including basic introductions to XML and metadata. The full curricula for the workshops will be available for use and adaptation. In addition, as the available knowledge about metadata and XML will continue to expand, an annotated list of resources will allow for independent research and development. Finally, case studies of implementation within the partners' organizations will demonstrate the practicality of the efforts and their potential for adaptation. The Minnesota Historical Society will maintain a project web site that will provide online access to all these products, as well as ongoing reports on the project.

#### **5. KEY PERSONNEL**

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