

## Needs and Resources Survey, Executive Summary, November 2004

The Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries (PASCAL) in 2003 received a Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) grant through the South Carolina State Library. The grant was given to PASCAL to assist the state effort to create a statewide digital library. The funds were used for a statewide forum hosted by PASCAL's Digital Collections Committee, and a Needs and Resources survey to assess the condition of digitization efforts in South Carolina. This summary is an introduction to the results of the survey.

The Needs and Resources Survey was made available in both print and electronic formats. An announcement about the electronic survey was sent via email to South Carolina library, museum, and archives listservs. Print surveys were sent to libraries, museums and archives across the state. The survey was aimed at discovering the needs and resources of cultural repository institutions relating to the digitization of South Carolina culture and history.

Of the estimated 693 surveys sent, 69 responses were received, which represent about a 10% response rate. Responses were received from 65 separate institutions from across the state with all six Congressional Districts represented. Responses came primarily from academic libraries, but also from museums, public libraries, historical societies, religious institutions, and local governments. A sampling of respondents includes:

- The University of South Carolina—Aiken, Beaufort, Columbia, Lancaster and Upstate campuses
- Clemson University
- The Citadel
- South Carolina State Library
- South Carolina State Archives
- Historic Charleston Foundation
- Historic Columbia Foundation
- History Museum of Upcountry South Carolina
- Spartanburg County Public Libraries
- Darlington County Library System

Twelve of the responding institutions currently have existing digital collections. The subjects of these collections include agriculture, the arts, business, education, genealogy, history, politics, religion, women, and African American history and culture. Collections vary in size and include newspapers, photographs, video, film, letters, journals, and other historical documents from across the state.

In addition to the 12 responders who have existing digital collection(s), 46 responders have collections that they recommended for digitization. These collections represent a range of subjects and come in various sizes—from as few as 20 items, to as many as over 1,000 items. Interesting collections include photographs, newspaper clippings, state documents, and university documents. All depict various aspects of individual, local, and

state history—from the development of the University of South Carolina and Clemson University, to Strom Thurmond’s 1948 presidential campaign, as well as letters to Robert E. Lee, religious literature for children that pre-dates 1850, and historic postcards from several areas across the state.

Of the institutions with potential digital collections, several have collections that lend themselves to collaborative projects. Interested institutions with possible collaborative contributions are:

- Fairfield County Museum
- Circular Congregational Church
- Culture & Heritage Museums: Museum of York County, Historic Brattonsville and McCelvey Center
- Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University
- History Museum of Upcountry South Carolina

The subjects of these potential collaborative collections include art, business, education, labor, athletics, World War I, and African American history and culture.

In order to understand how PASCAL can best serve institutions statewide in their efforts to create digital collections, responders were asked to indicate the digitization services they would like assistance with. Responding institutions indicated they would like assistance with the following services:

- 52 responders would like training in digital processes
- 49 responders would like assistance in identifying funding resources, while 44 responders would like assistance in writing grants
- 47 responders would like information on digitization hardware and software
- 39 responders would like information about suitable vendors
- 44 responders would like PASCAL to digitize collections on their behalf
- 43 responders would like to receive consulting on digitization options and 36 responders would like assistance finding potential collaborators
- 43 responders would like PASCAL to review their collections for potential digitization
- 41 responders would like PASCAL to establish a regional digitization center and would like assistance with project management

In order to assess the readiness of institutions to begin digitizing collections, PASCAL asked responders to indicate what digitization policies, trained staff, and equipment were at their disposal. Most responders have some sort of digitization equipment, with 44 institutions having a flatbed scanner, 2 with automatic feeders, and 3 with overhead scanners. Less than 20 responders indicated that they had institutional policies on digital collections, with 9 having policies on copyright permissions, 5 with policies on selection criteria, 4 with policies on technical standards, metadata standards, project planning, condition of materials, and other digitization policies. Only 2 responders have policies on migration. Institutions have staff trained in selecting materials for digitization (14),

project management (11), conducting digitization projects (9), selecting hardware/software (8), identifying funding sources (8), and selecting digitization vendors (4). Some of these institutions would be willing to share their staff and help train others.

The survey results met the Digital Collection Committee's expectations. Most institutions express an interest in creating digital collections, while some have collections already available. The results of the survey will help direct future collaborative efforts as well as the creation of state-wide digital resources.