



Museums for America Grants

Sample Application MA-245387-OMS-20
Project Category: Collections Stewardship and Public Access

Presidents & Fellows of Harvard College (Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology)

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$250,000
Amount of cost share:	\$250,166

The project description can be viewed in the IMLS Awarded Grants Search:
<https://www.ims.gov/grants/awarded/ma-245387-oms-20>

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2021 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2020 applications. Be sure to use the instructions in the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

1. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology requests funding of \$250,000 to support digitizing the Marshall Family Archives, as part of our commitment to share our vast collections with scholars, educators and the communities from whom our objects and images originate. The Marshall collection is one of the Peabody's largest and most comprehensive archival collections, comprising unique photographic and related paper records created from 1950-1961 in Namibia (then South-West Africa) with Kalahari Desert San people. The materials document a period of radical cultural transition, as the San moved from living as independent, seasonally migrant hunter-gatherers to living on a reservation, and participating in a cash and welfare economy. It is a timely project. Many of the photographic subjects are still living and making our entire archive digitally available to them, their families and scholars, will allow for cultural recuperation, and give the community and us the chance to collect additional information about their lives. Making these materials accessible using digital tools and platforms not only offers the promise of new research but will also allow the Peabody Museum to aggregate and synthesize the new information for use in education, exhibitions, public programs and community engagement initiatives.

This project aligns with the IMLS goal to **increase public awareness** by

- Supporting ethically responsible stewardship of this unique collection;
- Making it more widely accessible in the United States and world-wide through digitization;
- Affirming our fundamental aim to enable partnerships across the globe, including Southern Africa;
- Increasing access to knowledge through cross-continental communication about the existence of this collection and to gather further information about events depicted in the images.

This proposal outlines a 24-month project to catalog and digitize 35,252 photographs and ~16,000 pages of ethnographic journals, diaries, genealogical data, correspondence, and financial records documenting the long-term research of Lorna, Laurence Marshall and their teenage children, John and Elizabeth (Marshall Thomas.) The archive is a unique in its thorough record of the lives of some of the world's last surviving hunter-gathers, the G/wi and Ju/'hoansi (earlier known as "Bushmen" and later as the !Kung and the San).

The experiences of the Marshall family in the Kalahari Desert are widely recognized as one of the most significant American anthropological field projects of the twentieth century. Sponsored by the Peabody and eventually also the Smithsonian Institution, the Marshalls traveled to South West Africa with additional photographers, filmmakers, sound recordists, ethnomusicologists, linguists, and biologists. Together they produced numerous scholarly publications, general audience books, and films that received and continue to receive enormous national and international recognition. Their work has been taught in anthropology, archival, and photography classes throughout the United States, and formed the basis for numerous student projects. For example, the Peabody's Education Department has launched a secondary school pilot program on visual literacy with Somerville Public High School photography students using the Marshall photographs (see Supporting Document 1: Letter from Tom Linville) that would be greatly enhanced if the collections could be viewed in-school. For these, and other American students, the Marshall Family Collection offers a unique opportunity to view raw data, as collected by anthropologists.

The Marshalls' project was revolutionary compared with earlier work about the San, which focused primarily on racial classification. Instead, the Marshalls showed the G/wi and Ju/'hoansi at work and play in their own communities, rather than as anthropological specimens to be examined, measured, and compared. Moreover, the

variety of situations in which the Marshalls depicted their photographic subjects as individuals, with names and personalities—hunting, gathering, food preparation, child rearing, religious activities, leisure, and a deep focus on women’s daily lives—reveal an ethnographic depth and emotional richness unprecedented at that time. The Marshalls had a close rapport with the Ju/’hoansi, characterized by fictive kinship relations and which blossomed into longstanding friendships lasting over sixty years. In a foreword to the single publication about this important collection, Paul Theroux lauded “the wealth of Marshall imagery, in which a people formerly so obscured by contradictory representations were at last photographed in a natural way.”¹ While many of these individuals are known to beginning anthropology students, through John Marshall’s large body of films, the still photographs provide an in-depth window into their lives well beyond the cinematic record.

Throughout the 1950s, as the Ju/’hoansi and G/wi shifted from hunting and gathering to agriculture, the Marshalls continued to document peoples’ lives, including taking photographs of the forces that propelled them toward Westernization, such as contact with other indigenous ethnic groups, interactions with missionaries and social scientists (such as the Marshalls themselves), coerced labor by European settlers, and, eventually, mandatory relocation onto government-established posts or reservations. This visual record of the process of cultural change has been unexplored in written texts. Through the digitization of such images and their worldwide availability online, a more accurate portrait will likely emerge and provide anthropologists, other scholars, students and the descendant community insights into the nature of cultural change. (See Supporting Document 2: Cultural Change.)

The Marshall Family Archives includes one of the largest photographic collections at the Peabody Museum, with 28,049 transparencies (35mm slides, of which over 9000 are in color—which was unusual in the day—rare stereoscopic transparencies, black and white negative film), and 7,204 black and white prints, including some of the first Polaroid images ever taken (See Supporting Document 3: Polaroids.) The collection also encompasses 16,000 pages of paper archives including bound notebooks, loose pages, and 4”x 6” genealogical index cards. Remarkably this archive includes meticulous paper logs for every single image, as recorded by Lorna Marshall. These logs describe each activity photographed and individual pictured in unprecedented detail. The logbooks also include information about expedition members, equipment, expedition itineraries, and a complete index.

Supplementing these photographs, the Peabody’s collection also includes Museum and expedition receipts, correspondence, logistical notes and the personal diaries of Laurence, Lorna, and Elizabeth Marshall, Peabody Museum Director J. Otis Brew, and photographers Daniel Blitz and Robert Gesteland. The papers and images together provide biographies of specific Ju/’hoansi people, as well as a general history of the population. Because these are not digitized, researchers must handle pages of delicate documents, some of them on light weight typing paper, many of them handwritten. The digitization of all resources would facilitate key word cross-referencing for researchers. For example, now it would take at least a full day to start with a photograph of a young musician, to identify her and her instrument through the log books, to determine her band and family members through the genealogies, to discern when and what she was singing through diary notes, to locate the songs through published audio recordings, and to translate this song, and its significance through notes made by the ethnomusicologist. After digitization and cross-referencing, this could be accomplished with a couple of strokes of the keyboard.

¹ “Families in the Field” foreword to Ilisa Barbash, *Where the Roads all End: Photography and Anthropology in the Kalahari*, Peabody Museum Press: Cambridge 2016.

Despite intense interest in the collection we have only been able to make available online less than 10% of the Marshall Family photographs. The overall collection is thus largely restricted from public viewing and research. Moreover, it is prohibitively difficult for on-site researchers and even Museum staff to navigate through all of the images and attendant materials in their current state of accessibility. While now carefully stored in a temperature controlled cool room, most of the 28,049 transparencies are visible only by putting the slides on a light box and using a magnifying glass. Many of the black and white prints were mounted by the Marshalls on slowly deteriorating black construction paper, making handling difficult and messy. Because so little material has been digitized, the same images and quotes are published repeatedly.

Since their accession in 2001, the Marshall Family Archives has been one of the most-requested archival collection by researchers, with enormous potential for broad research application and use from hunter gatherers studies, to human behavior to early fieldwork methodology, and more. (See Supporting Documents 4 – 6 for letters). For this reason, it has been chosen as the next of the Museum’s large, cohesive archival collections to receive comprehensive, item-level cataloging and digitization. The Archive has become increasingly valuable as the forces of globalization and climate change continue to erase traditional practices. While published books and articles articulate the point of an author at a particular time, the raw data (i.e., unpublished images and manuscripts) offer the possibility for collaborative insights from a worldwide audience, including active information-gathering and participation from Ju/’hoansi and neighboring communities today.

Despite the lack of complete access, we have embarked on a number of efforts to share the archive in Southern Africa. We are working with Jeremy Silvester, Director of Museums of Namibia to identify the few already scanned Marshall images of material culture Museums of Namibia might use for a mobile 2019 exhibition and catalogue they are developing “in response to a request from young members of Namibia's San communities ... to help give young people a pride in their history and culture” (email from Jeremy Silvester to Ilisa Barbash, October 17, 2019). As part of additional dissemination projects, we propose in this grant a modest cost share for a permanent exhibition of Marshall Family photographs at !Khwattu San Heritage Center (<https://www.khwattu.org>), and a component in Tsumkwe—where the Marshalls worked, and where some of the Ju/’hoansi they photographed are still living. This project will be run by Chris Low of !Khwattu, an education, training, and cultural center, jointly directed by the Swiss non-profit Ubuntu Foundation and the San community (see Supporting Document 7: Exhibition at !Khwattu). We plan to partner with Dr. Low to connect the newly digitized Marshall Family collection with the San Global Digital Archive, a web portal to link major San archives from around the world, modelled on other indigenous archives sites such as the Australian Ara Irititja and the platform Mukurtu, which allow for community feedback. We are also working with Pippa Skotnes, Director of Centre for Curating the Archive, University of Cape Town (South Africa) to link with her San digital project and with Maitseo M.M. Bolaane at the San Research Centre at the University of Botswana to link with their efforts. Expanding access to the Marshall Family Archive will enable us to do far more.

Project in Support of Strategic Planning and Mission

An AAM-accredited institution, the Peabody Museum holds collections care and accessibility as one of its highest priorities. As such, this project fulfills a core aspect of the Museum’s mission to make collections accessible to the scholarly and teaching community, source communities, and the general public. This project will also ensure that the images and documents, now over 50 years old and vulnerable to color changes and fading, will be preserved digitally in their most pristine form for future research. Therefore, the project will expand collections accessibility both physically and intellectually. Specifically, it provides robust support for the first key area of the

Museum’s Strategic Plan as outlined in the Strategic Plan Summary: “Improve control of and access to collections via the documentation and digitization of object, photographic, and paper collections.” The Marshall collection was identified as part of the first 5-year plan to digitize priority collections, and “to improve associated database information, create new knowledge, and integrate results in publications, databases and archives.” The project will also provide the basis to foster the use of the collection for “teaching and research activities centered on the Peabody’s collections,” the second key area of the Strategic Plan.

More specifically, this project addresses the following activities of the IMLS Collections Stewardship category:

- Developing and enhancing collections databases to improve collections management and/or to facilitate access and discovery: Cataloging item-level photographs and file folder-level archival papers and attaching digital images will greatly expand record descriptions for researchers accessing the Museum’s public access database.
- Expanding access to and use of the museum’s collections: Digitizing both the photographs and related paper records will provide a much broader record of this society than formerly available. Access that is currently limited to on-site visits will be expanded worldwide, becoming accessible to African communities.
- Conservation care: 12,456 slides will be professionally cleaned at the Northeast Document Conservation Center. Dust will be removed using soft brushes or hand blowers, followed by surface cleaning with ethanol or water ethanol using cotton tipped applicators.
- Fragile paper-based unbound documents will be rehoused in archival folders and interleaved with acid free paper. Readily available digital images will protect the original photographs and documents from repeated handling. (See Treatment.pdf: NEDCC Conservation Proposal.)

2. PROJECT WORK PLAN

The Project is planned for 24 months from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2022 comprising two months for preparation and 22 months for cataloging, scanning and processing. During the final six months, dissemination initiatives will be launched. While the time proposed to catalog, digitize and process approximately 47,000 photographs and paper documents may seem aggressive, this schedule reflects the real production rates achieved by the Peabody Museum’s current archival digitization team. Since 2002, the Peabody has digitized over 250,000 historic photographs and we continually improve and modernize our process. To ensure that our procedures and this rate apply to the Marshall Collection, a pilot project was done in 2018 and 2019 on an initial group of 3,879 2.25” black and white negatives, and those rates are reflected in this grant.

The Peabody Museum has scanning policies and procedures that confirm to industry standards recommended by FADGI (Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative) and NARA (National Archives and Records Administration). FADGI uses a 4-star metric, with four being the highest quality. The metrics used by the Peabody allow the museum to create digital files at the 4-star level, in accordance with the highest professional standards and best practices. (See Supporting Document 8: Scanning Policies and Procedures.)

Overview of Project:

- Project Archivist, Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians create database records and digitize paper and photographic objects, adding technical and descriptive metadata to images and prepare the images for descriptive cataloging and batch loading to the database and image server.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records. The dates and times that photographs were taken are reconciled using the scanned paper photography logs and diaries.

- Project Archivist prepares batches of digital images to be linked to the Peabody Museum's database (TMS) on a weekly basis. At this stage, digital files are checked visually for image quality, correct resolution, and to make sure the file metadata includes original photographer, scanner, copyright information, the object's Peabody Museum identification number, digital file number, date of digital creation, and original scan settings.
- Images and records are then proofed and linked by the Database Administrator.
- Project Archivist spot checks to ensure that images are attached to the correct database record.
- Throughout the project, the Curator of Visual Anthropology (Project Manager) and Senior Archivist review database records and digital images for accuracy, standardization, and quality control.
- Senior Archivist and Project Archivist meet daily to address any procedural issues immediately.
- Senior Archivist and Project Archivist meet with the Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians weekly to ensure timely progress;
- Curator of Visual Anthropology (Project Manager) meets with grant team monthly to review progress.

Schedule of Activities:

Preliminary Activities: September 1 – October 31, 2020

- Restructuring existing Archives Department Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians job assignment and/or hire new Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians, if needed.
- Curator of Visual Anthropology (Project Manager) meets with all project staff to review upcoming project in order to ensure that all staff and equipment resources are allocated and ready to begin.
- Senior Archivist and Project Archivist review and confirm specific criteria for record creation and descriptive cataloging. They also work with the Database Administrator to ensure that database templates, controlled vocabularies, and image server space are ready.
- Contractor (Northeast Document Conservation Center) is notified of grant award and Senior Archivist prepares and arranges shipment of slides to NEDCC for conservation cleaning.

Paper Document Catalog & Scanning: November 1, 2020 to May 15, 2021

- Project Archivist, Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians prepare paper material for scanning and create database records for documents.
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians digitize paper archival materials (approx. 16,000 pages).
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians process individual TIF images of documents into multiple-page PDF/A when necessary.
- Both individual TIF and PDF/A files are permanently stored on the Image Server.
- Only PDF/A are uploaded to the museum's database and web-based Collections Online.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records, adds descriptive cataloging data, and batch processes the images to the Database Administrator.
- Database Administrator attaches PDF/A files to individual records in TMS and processes TIF images to museum server.
- Senior Archivist arranges for return of slides that have been cleaned by NEDCC.

Black and White Print Catalog & Scanning: May 16 – Aug 15, 2021

- Project Archivist, Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians create database records for photographs.
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians digitize 7,205 black and white prints.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records and prepare batches of images for linking to TMS by the Database Administrator.
- Database Administrator links digital files to their associated TMS records and processes TIF images to museum server.

Black and White Negative Catalog & Scanning: August 16 – February 28, 2022

- Project Archivist, Scanning Asst and Scanning Techs continue to create database records for photographs.
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians digitize 7,812 35mm, and 3,386 2.25”, and 514 miscellaneous-sized negatives.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records and prepare batches of images for linking to TMS by the Database Administrator.
- Database Administrator links digital files to their associated TMS records and processes TIF images to museum server.

Slide Catalog & Scanning: March 1 – June 30, 2022

- Project Archivist, Scanning Asst and Scanning Techs continue to create database records for photographs.
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians digitize 9,127 35mm and 1,008 2.25” color slides.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records and prepare batches of images for linking to TMS by the Database Administrator.
- Database Administrator links digital files to their associated TMS records and processes TIF images to museum server.

Stereoscopic Transparency Catalog, Scanning & Anaglyph Processing: July 1 – August 31, 2022

- Project Archivist, Scanning Asst and Scanning Techs continue to create database records for photographs.
- Scanning Assistant and Scanning Technicians digitize 2,321 stereoscopic transparencies and performs anaglyph processing to enable 3D viewing of stereoscopic images.
- Project Archivist reconciles scanned images to database records and prepare batches of images for linking to TMS by the Database Administrator.
- Database Administrator links both original TIF and 3D files to their associated TMS records and processes files to museum server.

Dissemination and Reporting: March 1 – August 31, 2022

- Curator of Visual Anthropology (Project Manager) will work with Museum education staff and to launch dissemination initiatives including publicizing project on relevant websites, working on the !Khwatla exhibition, planning for future linking project to existing San data bases in Namibia, Botswana and South Africa.
- Upon project completion, the Museum will issue a press release, create a project page on its website, and publicize the availability of the Marshall Collection to scholars worldwide.
- Curator of Visual Anthropology (Project Manager) will complete final report and submit to IMLS.

3. PROJECT RESULTS

The completion of this project will result in the following tangible products:

- 12,456 Slides cleaned by NEDCC Conservators
- 31,373 Total photographs digitized:
 - 7,205 B&W prints
 - 7,812 35 mm black and white negatives
 - 3,386 2.25” black and white negatives
 - 216 2.25” x 3.25” black and white negatives
 - 298 4” x 5” black and white negatives
 - 9,127 35 mm color slides
 - 1,008 2.25” color slides
 - 2,321 stereoscopic transparencies

16,000 Estimated individual pages of paper

47,373 Total new digital files

Not only will the above digital products be added to the Peabody Museum's internal collections management database, they will also be accessible beyond the Museum's walls through Collections Online [<https://pmem.unix.fas.harvard.edu:8443/peabody/>]. (See Supporting Document 9: Databases.) In addition, MARC records for the collection will also be available at Harvard's library catalogs as well as the world-wide WorldCat catalog. Searchable Encoded Archival Descriptions (EAD) finding aids for the paper archives will list all related materials and resources for the Marshall Family Expedition Archives, and will be accessible via Harvard's university-wide library, catalogs and ArchivesSpace. Researchers throughout the world will be able to read first-hand accounts of the Marshalls' expeditions while viewing the vast photographic documentation. This increased accessibility will address the current issue of presenting a skewed portrayal of the Ju/'hoansi due to the limited range of photographs currently available online. It will result in one of the most extensive and multi-faceted digital ethnographic record of an historically important population.

The funding of this application will also improve the physical care of the collection. As a direct result of this project, 12,456 will be cleaned by a professional photographic conservator contracted by the Museum. Prior to their acquisition by the Peabody, the collection was stored in unstable conditions. Although the Museum has stabilized the condition of these slides by housing them in a controlled cool environment, most of the color slides have dust, finger prints, and surface dirt. (See Supporting Document 10: Slides.) Additionally, before the black and white prints are digitized, they will be examined by one of the Museum's professional conservators, cleaned as needed and rehoused to ensure more protective storage. Based on a preliminary condition review of the black and white prints, we estimate approximately 2% will need in-house conservation. Digitization of fragile field notebooks and papers as well as photographic prints will contribute to the Museum's preservation efforts by minimizing repeated handling of the collection.

Dissemination of the resources created during this project is a Museum priority and essential for ensuring the increased access to and use of the Archives, thus sustaining these benefits beyond the conclusion of the project. As outlined earlier, we will collaborate with Dr. Chris Low on a small permanent exhibition of Marshall Family photographs at !Khwatya San Heritage Center. We have recently established a web page outlining our Marshall collections, accessible on a search engine under the following terms: San, !Kung, Ju/'hoansi, Gwi. Announcement of project results will be made via the Museum's website, social media, and in a press release that will be circulated to targeted professional and academic groups and listservs. Notice of the availability will be disseminated via websites such as the following:

- The World Digital Library which makes available on the Internet, free of charge and in multilingual format, significant primary materials from countries and cultures around the world. <https://www.wdl.org/en/>
- The Smithsonian's National Anthropological Archives and Human Studies Film Archives, which holds film materials shot by John Marshall during the same period. <http://anthropology.si.edu/naa/home/naahome.html>
- The National Council of Social Studies representing K-12 classroom teachers, college and university faculty members and curriculum designers from 50 states and 69 foreign countries. <https://www.socialstudies.org/>
- The Harvard University Center for African Studies (CAS), recognized as a National Resource Center from the U.S. Department of Education. <https://africa.harvard.edu/history>
- The Digital Public Library of America, a scholarly portal available worldwide. <https://dp.la/>
- Websites and printed publications of The American Anthropological Association, The Society for Visual Anthropology, The African Studies Association.

Schedule of Completion

Year 2	2021				2022							
Activities	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Black and White Negative Catalog & Scanning:												
- Create database records							Project Archivist					
- "							Scanning Assistant & Technicians					
- Digitize materials												
- Reconcile images & database records												
- Process image files to database							Database Administrator					
Slide Catalog & Scanning:												
- Create database records												
- "												
- Digitize materials												
- Reconcile images & database records												
- Process image files to database												
Stereoscopic Transparency Catalog & Scanning:												
- Create database records												
- "												
- Digitize materials												
- Reconcile images & database records												
- Process image files to database												
Dissemination:												
							Curator /Project Manager					
Reporting:												
Daily / Weekly / Monthly Meetings												