



Inspire! Grants for Small Museums

Sample Application IGSM-256140-OMS-24
Project Category: Collections Stewardship and Access
Project Type: Large Project (\$25,001-\$75,000)

La Jolla Historical Society

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$52,778
Amount of cost share:	\$53,526

The La Jolla Historical Society will digitize nearly 1,800 photographs, postcards, and oral history recordings in its collection. The project will support the hiring and training of two paid interns. Under the supervision of the collections manager, the interns will digitize and accession the collections, research and draft descriptions for the catalog records, and upload all materials to the society's collections management system. Cataloging and digitizing the collection will address the urgent need to preserve fidelity of the deteriorating items in the collection. This project will also increase the accessibility of the collections for guest curators, researchers, genealogists, the public, and staff members, who will use the collections to inform future exhibitions and to respond to the estimated 325 research requests the society receives annually.

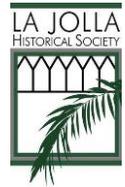
Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- Digital Product Plan
- Performance Measurement Plan

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

NARRATIVE
Collections Digitization, Access, and
Interpretation Project (Project)

La Jolla Historical Society
IMLS IGSM-FY24



I) Project Justification

La Jolla Historical Society (LJHS) proposes to increase public access and engagement in its archival collections through this **Collections Digitization, Access, and Interpretation Project (Project)**. The Project will digitize compelling components of LJHS’s significant collections of photographs, postcards, and oral histories (and transcriptions), upload them for public online access, and interpret them for incorporation into new educational and public engagement programming.

This Project advances collections stewardship, including several goals in LJHS’s strategic plan to engage in historic preservation, further develop archival management and access, and provide lifelong learning opportunities. This Project specifically addresses LJHS’s objectives around archival digitization and providing internships. (See *Strategic Plan*.) It also builds on LJHS’s recent and ongoing success in cataloging its collections by creating detailed container lists that are available through LJHS’s on-site PastPerfect database and virtually accessible Online Archive of California (OAC). The Project aligns with IMLS’s *Collections Stewardship and Access* project category, the goal “to build the capacity of small museums to provide museum services to their communities,” and the objective to “support the management and care of collections in small museums.”

LJHS’s collections encompass over 80 years of collected books, newspapers, magazines, manuscripts, maps, scrapbooks, printed ephemera, artworks, architectural drawings, and more. Volunteers in the Historical Committee of the Library Association of La Jolla started gathering photographs and documentation in the late 1930s, including items that dated back to the previous century. These became the nucleus of LJHS’s archives today. Of particular importance are LJHS’s visual collections, which include over 20,000 photographs. LJHS staff/volunteers listed, cataloged, and cross-referenced its archives using a traditional card-catalog filing system and detailed spreadsheet lists. The different collections came together physically in 2010 after the renovation of LJHS’s campus in central La Jolla. In 2016, LJHS started using a software program called PastPerfect 5.0 (PP5) to begin to better manage and catalog its collections. (See *Organizational Profile* and *Supporting Document 1*.)

LJHS’s Donor Based Collection includes more than 90 individual collections in nearly 180 boxes measuring approximately 288 linear feet. It includes three “large item” architectural collections along with research documents. LJHS better understands and can efficiently search its holdings, thanks to three years dedicated to creating searchable container lists and collection guides for these materials donated by specific local community organizations, individuals, and early families. LJHS deeply appreciates the *IMLS Inspire! Grants* that have made this possible. (See LJHS article in its Winter 2023 *Timekeeper Magazine* about the cataloging project and interns in *Supporting Document 2*.)

LJHS has also begun to identify what it doesn’t have and the “archival silences” it needs to address in order to better serve and reflect the broader San Diego community. For instance, queer residents/visitors were known to frequent Black’s Beach in La Jolla, yet the archives have no record of this cultural presence.

Planned exhibitions at LJHS through 2027 will focus on the underrepresented histories of African Americans and Indigenous communities in La Jolla. To develop these exhibitions, commissioned guest curators and independent researchers will rely on original source materials and newly recorded oral histories in LJHS’s archive. Digitization of these materials will be invaluable in supporting this research.

Progress on cataloging the Donor Based Collection has amplified the urgent need to address deteriorating source materials, especially the photographs, postcards, and oral history recordings. The expanded database, made possible through past support of IMLS, has greatly reduced LJHS’s response times to the

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estimated 325 formal research/archive inquiries it receives annually. This increased efficiency will likely be offset by increasing inquiries and in-person visits that are expected. Researchers and the public will want to go beyond the written descriptions of LJHS's holdings that can be found in its PastPerfect database and through LJHS's webpage on the OAC and see the images, hear the recordings, and search the transcripts for themselves. The increased quantity and diversity of researchers seeking in-person and online access to LJHS's archive demonstrates the need to make more materials accessible online.

This proposed Project begins to address these needs. It will preserve fidelity by digitizing more than 1,800 photographs, postcards, and oral history recordings from the Large Subject Files Collection, the Visual Materials Collection, and the Oral History Collection while improving the efficiency of public access by having them available through LJHS's own website. The collections that will be digitized in this Project include:

- Scripps Family Collection (13 linear feet; 350 estimated photographs (184 identified photographs plus additional from uncataloged scrapbooks))
- The Green Dragon Colony Collection (2.5 linear feet; 326 photographs)
- The General Postcard Collection (781 postcards)
- The Edythe Scripps Postcard Collection (80 postcards)
- Leopold Hugo Postcard Collection (74 postcards)
- Oral History Collection (200 recordings in various media including audio cassette tapes, reel-to-reels audio tapes, video/VHS tapes, and more)

These collections focus on La Jolla's artistic and philanthropic roots and its extended—even global—impact. Ellen Browning Scripps, whose biographical archives are in the Scripps Family Collection, was an iconic unmarried female figure in La Jolla in the early 20th century. Her model of radical philanthropy invested in knowledge, education, preservation, and the empowerment of others, especially women. At age 89, Time magazine featured her on its cover. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_Browning_Scripps accessed 11/12/23.) The Green Dragon Colony consisted of 11 small cottages for artists and creatives on a hillside overlooking the Pacific that was purchased in 1894 by Anna Held, a governess for the family of Ulysses S. Grant, Jr., the 18th president's son. It was designed and built by hugely influential modern architect Irving Gill and revolutionary botanist and landscape architect Kate Sessions planted eucalyptus trees there. "It attracted more and more artists, musicians, writers, and actors to visit and became an extraordinary artistic center in the early days of La Jolla." (<https://www.sandiego.gov/digitalarchives/new-discoveries/artistic-center-in-la-jolla> accessed 11/12/23)

The target audience for this Project's digitized materials is diverse and includes the City of San Diego's historic landmark researchers, local companies/organizations celebrating anniversaries of their founding or discoveries, and "retail" users such as curious locals, genealogists, and authors. It includes LJHS staff and the curators exploring exhibition themes. San Diego educators and youth will have meaningful engagement with the archival materials, as they will inform LJHS's education programming including free school tours. This reinforces LJHS's commitment to digitization with a purpose, ensuring these materials are interpreted for not only their local relevance, but importance to regional, national, and global history, and made available to the widest audiences possible.

Input about the recent cataloging progress has been positive from users requesting research assistance, who note that turnaround times, efficiency, and accuracy have improved. Access to pictures and stories on the internet in an organized and searchable context, as proposed in this Project, is very welcome and will bring La Jolla and San Diego history alive for students and learners of all ages. LJHS's experiences with interns—who are another audience—have been rewarding. This Project's internships will strengthen existing local

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university collaborations and continue to foster enthusiasm for history careers, goals noted in LJHS's strategic goals. Three of LJHS's past and current Collections interns have gone on to pursue careers and higher education in museums and public history, thereby positively impacting the broader museum and collections field. LJHS proposes to capture feedback from users (public, interns, teachers, and students) in its Project evaluation. (See *Performance Measurement Plan*.)

La Jolla's past has had broad implications. Dozens of renowned institutions started in La Jolla (the majority funded by Ellen Browning Scripps), including Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the University of California at San Diego, La Jolla Playhouse, the Salk Institute of Biological Sciences, Scripps Memorial Hospital, J. Craig Venter Institute, and more. Their contributions encompass climate change science, the polio vaccine, other life science breakthroughs, and profound scholarship and creative output. LJHS's Town Council collection (part of the Donor Based Collection) and Community Planning collections show what has been important to La Jollans, plus trends and concerns for San Diego and the region. Issues while constructing a local high-rise building led to the formation of the California Coastal Commission. La Jolla's significant contributions to the development of modern architecture and historic preservation are reflected in LJHS's extensive and growing architectural collections. Additionally, LJHS welcomes multiple fiction and nonfiction authors who draw upon collection materials for their publications. Raymond Chandler, the acclaimed pulp fiction author who set his popular book, *Playback*, in a fictionalized La Jolla, continues to inspire writers.

LJHS welcomes public requests as part of its mission "to preserve and share La Jolla's distinctive sense of place and to inspire and empower the community to make La Jolla's diverse past a relevant part of contemporary life." In its 2022-23 fiscal year, LJHS assisted 75 researchers who came in person and at least 250 others asking questions via emails and phone calls. Self-directed access is very emboldening, and this "retail/over-the-counter" approach underscores LJHS's vision to serve as a "thriving community resource and gathering place." LJHS hopes that interest in high-resolution reproductions for publications, exhibitions, and personal or corporate use will result in a revenue stream.

II) Project Work Plan

The Project will take two years, from September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2026. It consists of two one-year cycles of recurring activities as summarized below: (See *Schedule of Completion*.)

- Each September – October
 1. Create/update annual Project plan. Set quarterly/monthly progress goals for each component.
 2. Recruit, train, and manage two interns for each of four academic quarters or three semesters.
 3. Subscribe to/renew PastPresent Web Edition to which work will be accessioned. Revisit/confirm best practices in creating and managing digital content to ensure alignment.
 4. Supervise quality of digitization by interns and oral history transcriptions from David's Harp.
 5. Plan/review internal evaluation, including creation/implementation of evaluation tools, user surveys, and other protocols. (See *Performance Measures Plan*.)

- Each October through August
 1. Systematically work the Project plan including:
 - a. Intern 1: Scan items from selected Photograph/Postcard Collections, research/draft description fields, and accession to PastPerfect.
 - b. Intern 2: Digitize recordings from Oral History Collection, research/draft description fields, and accession to PastPerfect.

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- c. Collections Manager: Review/finalize intern work quality , including description fields. Review transcriptions. Upload to PastPerfect. Create form/data and upload documents to Online Archives of California.
 - d. Education and Public Engagement Manager: Identify key themes and narratives in digitized materials. Assess and interpret for public engagement via online and curriculum dissemination. Consider how All Ears Oral History curriculum could leverage interpretation opportunities.
- Each January and July
 1. Review Project progress. Make adjustments as needed in consultation with the Executive Director.
 2. Initiate data collection for evaluation, including PastPerfect Web Edition analytics and access of digitized materials, and report internally on performance measures.
 - Each August at end of Year 1 and Year 2
 1. Prepare interim and final IMLS reports.

Project risks are minimal. One concern is intern availability and quality. This has been successfully navigated in the past through LJHS’s screening, training, and hiring track record. LJHS has also proven adept in its oversight and regular review of intern work to ensure ongoing quality and efficiency. LJHS follows onsite and cloud backup protocols, mitigating data loss risks.

Deputy Director/Collections Manager, Dana Hicks, PhD., is the Project Director and will plan, implement and manage the Project. She will work closely with two qualified, trained, and paid undergraduate-student interns. One intern will focus on digitizing photographs and postcards while the other intern will digitize oral histories. Their process includes informational research to write descriptions that Hicks will approve. Oral histories will be transcribed through the services of David’s Harp Foundation, a local 501(c)3. Written transcripts facilitate searches including for international users. The results will be uploaded to PastPresent Web Edition, forming a portal on LJHS’s website for free internet access and cross referenced in the OAC.

Executive Director Lauren Lockhart will provide oversight and assistance, including the institutionalization of LJHS’s focus on collections digitization and access plus Board updates and management. Both Hicks and the Education and Public Engagement Manager report to Lockhart. She will manage fundraising for the grant match.

LJHS’s Education and Public Engagement Manager, McKenna Clifford Yahyai, will review digitized materials in the collections to identify key interpretation themes or narratives appropriate for public engagement and dissemination. Yahyai’s exploration of the oral history collection through this Project will support her ongoing management of the All Ears Oral History project, including planned school partnerships. (See *Supporting Document 3*, an example from LJHS’s All Ears Oral History project.) Yahyai will also assist Hicks in this Project with intern support and informational research. Her increasing familiarity with the collections will inspire future education programming development and collaborations.

LJHS has the staff experience, equipment, and vision to successfully implement this Project. (See *Key Project Staff* and *Resumes*.) In addition to salary allocations for existing staff, the major resources needed are the interns, transcription, and online services requested in this grant. (See *Budget* and *Budget Justification*.) LJHS will broadly advertise the results of this Project, urging its more than 500 member households and all visitors/callers to explore the digitized photographs and oral histories. LJHS will note this project’s progress on its website and in press releases.

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III) Project Results

This Project moves LJHS forward with digitizing its collection and making it available to the public. Digitization creates a process for preservation of all original archival materials, beginning with these prioritized 1,800 photographs, postcards, and oral history recordings and presents new opportunities for interpretation and expanded engagement.

Output goals will be set, tracked, and reviewed regarding digitization counts and public access through LJHS's website. Additional goals will be set for the interpretation of these items and the resultant sharing of them through educational and public engagement. The planned internal evaluation will measure and report progress.

Outcomes may include a new understanding and appreciation for the unconventional women—and immigrants—who did so much for La Jolla, San Diego, and Southern California. The digitized photographs and postcards will make information about them and other influencers of their era more accessible and relatable, providing empowering inspiration to all who engage with the material. The All Ears Oral History project teaches deep listening and curiosity for youth audiences, promoting empathy and appreciation of difference.

This Project aligns with LJHS's goals to increase public accessibility and strengthen stewardship through user-centered processes. Expected results include:

- Improved efficiency – These photographs, postcards, and oral histories include many of the most popular-- and most requested—at LJHS. Their easy availability online is more efficient for the user and LJHS staff.
- Increased users – The easy availability of photographs, postcards, and oral histories will encourage more members of the public to access them online, leading to increased use of the collections and higher visibility for LJHS.
- New revenue stream – LJHS currently fulfills requests for high resolution copies of photographs at a relatively nominal fee. With expanded viewing of what is available and an automated ordering process, LJHS believes it will develop a new source of revenue contributing \$3-5,000 annually.
- Education partnerships – The internships continue positive momentum in partnerships with local universities, and contribute to the broader museum and collections field.

Importantly, this Project will allow LJHS to establish formal protocol and procedures for digitization of its entire collection moving forward. This will lead to more efficient collection and preservation of new oral histories, as diversifying the voices in the archive is a high priority for LJHS in the next 3-5 years.

The LJHS Board of Directors and Collections Committee understands the urgency of digitizing its collections as part of increasing access and have advocated for this progress for some time.. Their support of ongoing archive accessibility projects will help sustain the benefits of this Project beyond the term of this grant.

DIGITAL PRODUCTS PLAN

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The La Jolla Historical Society intends to enable the viewing of approximately 1,800 digitized photographs, postcards, and oral histories by historians, researchers, educators, students, and other interested members of the public. This will be made possible through PastPerfect Web Edition.

Type

During this grant, LJHS will create digital content as follows:

- Still images (PDF, JPG, PNG, other) created by scanning existing photograph and postcard collections;
- Audio files (MP3/M4A, WAV, other) or audio/visual files (MP4, MOV, WMV, AVI) created by the digital recording/transference of existing oral and audio/visual histories on cassette tapes, VHS tapes, and reel-to-reel tapes;
- Audio files (MP3/M4A, WAV, other) to be created during new oral history interviews using digital recorders.

Each will be input, along with a researched description and other fields, in PastPerfect Web Edition, a browser based online database for managing collections content. LJHS has begun planning to redo its webpage or enhance existing portions of the website in order to be able to share this content with the public.

Availability

This Project's digital products will be made available through LJHS's website, through PastPerfect and on the Online Archive of California (OAC).

Access

All digital content will be copyrighted to LJHS as the creators of the content. It will be made available to be accessed, copied and shared, but it cannot be sold by others. Interested researchers, institutions or individuals may reproduce the content provided they are granted permission by LJHS and use the proper citation for materials as follows: "Collection of the La Jolla Historical Society".

Sustainability

The digitized byproducts of this Project will be made available to researchers, institutions, and individuals indefinitely and free of charge through the LJHS website. LJHS safely stores and backs up all digital content through its in-house servers and the PastPerfect Web Edition servers.

LJHS is eager to continue its work to make the valuable materials in its collection accessible virtually from any place in the world to support researchers, institutions and individuals exploring the history of La Jolla and its impact on the broader San Diego region. By doing so, it also ensure these assets can be reviewed in the event of another global event like the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented physical access to the collection.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT PLAN
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Applicant Name: La Jolla Historical Society

Project Title: Collections Digitization, Access, and Interpretation Project

Performance Measure	Data We Will Collect (e.g., counts, costs, weights, volumes, temperatures, percentages, hours, observations, opinions, feelings)	Source of Our Data (e.g., members of the target group, project staff, stakeholders, internal/external documents, recording devices, databases)	Method We Will Use (e.g., survey, questionnaire, interview, focus group, informal discussion, observation, assessment, document analysis)	Schedule (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, beginning/end)
Effectiveness: The extent to which activities contribute to achieving the intended results	<p><i>Example:</i> At the end of each month, using a report prepared by the registrar, we will compare the cumulative count of rehoused objects against the total number proposed for the project.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> At the end of each project year, our external consultant will present results of the ongoing observation-based evaluation and compare them against our intended project results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of each Project year, the Collections Manager will prepare a report comparing planned to actual progress regarding the digitization of: a) photos and postcard collections and b) oral history collections. At the end of each Project year, the Education and Public Engagement Manager will assess audience engagement with digitized materials by web analytics and curriculum downloads. 			
Efficiency: How well resources (e.g., funds, expertise, time) are used and costs are minimized while generating maximum value for the target group	<p><i>Example:</i> Twice per year, we will assess our expenditures for program supplies on a per-person-served basis.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Each quarter, we will calculate the dollar value of volunteer hours contributed to the project as recorded in our online volunteer management system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each quarter, the Collections Manager will assess actual: intern hours/expenses, transcript expenses, and salary hours compared to budgeted projections. 			
Quality: How well the activities meet the requirements and expectations of the target group	<p><i>Example:</i> At the beginning, the mid-point, and end of the project, we will administer a satisfaction survey to staff who have participated in the training.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> We will gather opinions about our online services through questionnaires provided to every 20th user.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the project, LJHS will set strategic goals for its evaluation of the Project and create the corresponding evaluation data-collection tools. At mid-point and end of each Project year, LJHS will survey staff, interns, archive visitors, and educators who have participated in or interacted with the project. 			
Timeliness: The extent to which each task/activity is completed within the proposed timeframe	<p><i>Example:</i> Every six months, our Project Director will assess the fit between our proposed Schedule of Completion and actual activity completion dates.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Each quarter, each project partner will submit to our Project Director a templated report showing their progress on meeting project milestones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each quarter, the Collections Manager will compare planned to actual progress regarding the digitization of: a) photos and postcard collections and b) oral history collections. At the end of each Project year, the Education and Public Engagement Manager will assess and track the volume of digitized materials interpreted for public engagement. 			