



THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

School of Library and Information Science
and the College of Public Health

Center for Digital Communications in Development and Education

Amount	\$900,000
Legislation	FY09 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations

Request

The University of Iowa requests \$900,000 in FY 09 funding as the first year of a 5 year, \$4.5 million project to establish a University of Iowa Center for Digital Communications in International Development and Education.

Compelling National Need

Public diplomacy efforts by the State Department, the Library of Congress, the NSF, the Peace Corps and other federal agencies, as well as USAID efforts to improve primary and secondary education, will be enhanced by the implementation of better delivery of educational and resource materials through the University of Iowa's eGranary Digital Library and new models for low-cost, interactive international teaching and collaboration.

University of Iowa Unique Capabilities

The University of Iowa's WiderNet Project has developed the eGranary Digital Library, a collection of millions of digital educational documents, and delivered it to over 200 schools and clinics in developing countries. With an established record of research in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategies, best practices, and Internet connectivity in developing countries, their training programs have reached over 3,600 administrators, technicians, and librarians in five African countries, with 55 top administrators visiting the University of Iowa for intensive exposure to ICT in academia. The University of Iowa's College of Public Health has spent five years developing low-cost models for delivering education in developing countries, creating opportunities for students and faculty to interact asynchronously and in real time with their peers using low-bandwidth, inexpensive digital communications.

FY09 Plan and Justification

FY 2009 expenditure would include: \$325,000 for personnel, programmers, faculty release, graduate students, and hourly student staff; \$275,000 for UI faculty, trainers, and students to travel to partner countries as well as for partner curriculum builders and university administrators to visit the U.S.; and \$225,000 for equipment for University of Iowa and partner universities.

At the end of the first year the following goals/deliverables will have been accomplished

- Three seminars and courses in digital communications studies designed and implemented
- Three UI international courses will be redesigned to incorporate digital communication
- eGranary Digital Libraries will be delivered to 50 partner institutions with USG linkages
- Twelve foreign professors in American studies will visit the University of Iowa
- Two American Studies curriculum developed and delivered.
- In-country ICT training for 200 university administrators followed by visits the UI by 20
- Participation in the program by faculty and students from a wide variety of disciplines

National Benefits

Public diplomacy will be enhanced by the distribution of hundreds of Digital American Corners – as well as millions of digital educational resource materials – to primary schools, secondary schools, higher education institutions, research centers, clinics, and public libraries throughout the developing world.

New models for student-to-student interaction, a virtual study abroad experience, will be developed to create better U.S. understanding of the lives of people in developing countries.

New models for research collaboration, using low cost digital communication tools, will increase the capacity for U.S. scholars to interact with their peers in developing countries. Better access to information resources from U.S. institutions like the Law Library of Congress and the Centers for Disease Control will provide greater incentive for foreign editors and authors to participate in populating international databases with their proprietary information

Contact

Dr. Derek Willard
Special Assistant to the President for Governmental Relations
& Associate Vice President for Research
Office of Governmental Relations
105 Jessup Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242-1316
(319) 335-3714
derek-willard@uiowa.edu