

## **INITIAL CONTACT EMAIL**

*To send to those whose projects we need to learn more about as part of the selection process*

Dear [name],

Through a cooperative agreement with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (<http://www.imls.gov>), the Association of Research Libraries (<http://www.arl.org>) and Ithaka S+R (<http://www.sr.ithaka.org>) are leading a study on the sustainability of digitized special collections. I am writing now to request your participation in this study, which we hope will help us to better understand how and why libraries and other institutions are creating digitized special collections and the costs required to retain and increase the value of these collections to users, well beyond their launch dates.

We are seeking to identify examples of digitized special collections that are considered “success stories”: projects that are not only of excellent quality, but also meet certain specific criteria: existence for over a year; evidence of a strong user base; and the ability to cover the costs they require to keep running. We believe your project (name here) may fit these criteria, and we hope to be able to speak with you about this.

If selected, your project would be one of the eight case studies. In undertaking this project, we hope to provide useful models for the community to observe, emulate, challenge, and improve upon. By starting with “success” cases, we hope to be able to better understand the process taken to achieve these outcomes.

If you do choose to participate, we will plan to speak with up to four members of your team, during interviews that will last approximately 90 minutes each. Your contributions will help to develop case studies that will be made freely available to the library research community, university administrators, policy makers, and any other interested users.

This information is solicited under the authority of the Museum and Library Services Act of 2010, as amended. Your participation is entirely voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will in no way adversely affect your institution. Your cooperation is extremely valuable in obtaining much needed information to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the case studies. Any information you designate as “confidential” during the course of this study will be protected from disclosure to the extent permitted by law.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person should be asked to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 3137-XXXX. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates of suggestions for improving this collection of information, please send them to [nancy.maron@ithaka.org](mailto:nancy.maron@ithaka.org).

If this is of interest, we would be eager to speak with you to learn more about your project and to answer any questions about this study that you may have.

With best regards,  
Nancy Maron  
Program Director, Ithaka S+R