 **Articulating the Idea**

**1. Describe your project idea in two sentences.**

In honor of Mississippi’s bicentennial, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Archives and Records Service Division, in partnership with local colleges, libraries, and historical societies, will promote the state’s history, culture, diversity, people, and geography by emphasizing collection materials that celebrate Mississippi’s past and present achievements.

This will be done through a series of outreach programs that allow partnering organizations to create a social and digital space to highlight and access historical collections around the state.

**2. What is the purpose of the project? Does it solve a problem? Meet an institutional need? Address an interest? Put existing resources to new use?**

The purpose of the project is to promote outreach among historical institutions across the state of Mississippi, educating Mississippians about resources statewide, and to celebrate the bicentennial on a local level.

It meets the need for increased public outreach by MDAH and solves a lack of programming about how to do research at the archive. There is an interest in researching our sources, but also learning about what is accessible online. The proposed program utilizes old programming and an existing network of partnerships.

**3. What will be the impact of your project? How will it affect your institution, the profession, the public?**

Partner and develop better relationships with local libraries, colleges, and historical societies in order to continue long term programming options across Mississippi.

Create greater awareness of historical resources for both the profession and the public. Our institution will gain contacts across the state and our reference staff will have another outlet for promoting our institution.

**4. What are the products? Should you consider any standards, mandates or best practices?**

Products include a centralized website that celebrates Mississippi bicentennial history and points to MDAH online resources, as well as a flexible program that reference staff at the archives can utilize when talking to others about resources and how to carry out research on site and online.

We intend to consult other archives who have carried out similar outreach projects.

**Identifying Audiences and Key Constituencies**

Questions and considerations:

* Characteristics: Who will participate in, use, and/or benefit from the project? Is there a specific group already asking for this resource? Who?
* Resources: What are the technical abilities, constraints, and resources of potential project audiences?
* Relationships: What relationship do my audiences have with our institution(s)? Do we need to build bridges and relationships?
* Primary and Secondary Audience: The “general public” is too general an audience. The more specific your audience is the more likely you are to meet their needs.
* Internal Constituency: Within your organization, what is the key constituency you need to engage, involve and persuade?

Primary audience

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristics | Resources | Relationships |
| Students  -high school  -college | More technically inclined and interested in online availability of materials.  Have greater access to technology, but may be limited to school use only. | Need to build up relationship with this audience. |

Secondary audience

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristics | Resources | Relationships |
| Historical folks  -individuals who frequent historical societies, libraries, museums | Less technically inclined and more interested in step by step tutorials.  May have limited access to technology.  Source of knowledge as well. | A relationship exists in localized areas, but could be stronger to include whole state. |

Tertiary audience

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristics | Resources | Relationships |
| Partnering institutions | Potential source of resources.  Know the technical capabilities of their users.  Know interests of users. | Existing relationships are very limited and there is a need for developing more cross-institutional partnerships. |

Internal constituency

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristics | Resources | Relationships |
| Reference staff and those involved with outreach.  Public information staff (communications/marketing) | Collection materials limited to building, so have to rely on digital resources.  Staff are knowledgeable, but limited by work schedules and other programming. | Relationships across departments are always encouraged and have room for strengthening. |