RLG Model Request for Information (RFI)
for Digital Imaging Services

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This document was prepared by Cornell University under contract to RLG. It is a sample (or model) of how the RLG Guidelines for Creating a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Digital Imaging Services can be adapted to meet the needs of almost any digital imaging project.
The purpose of this Request for Information is to enable Cornell University Library to identify vendors who would like to receive a Request for Proposal (RFP) to bid on a digital conversion project involving the creation of 300,000 digital images and associated metadata. Supported by a grant from the Jane Smith Foundation, Cornell will digitize a collection of research library materials (books and serials) related to 19th century New York State and local history. Up to 1,000 volumes (300,000 pages) will be selected, scanned, and SGML encoded in a 10 month period (October 1998 - July 1999). Cornell is seeking a vendor (or group of vendors) to perform the digital conversion, metadata creation (directory structuring, file naming, header information input, indexing), text conversion (OCR), SGML encoding (TEI Lite DTD), and to produce printouts of the digital files.

Please note the following important dates associated with the RFI and RFP:

- **Friday, June 5, 1998, 5PM**: Vendor responses to RFI due.
- **July 27, 1998**: Cornell University Library sends the Request for Proposal (RFP) to vendors.
- **August 10, 1998, 5PM**: Vendors notify Cornell University Library indicating whether they will be responding to the RFP and wish to receive the sample volumes for scanning.
- **August 17, 1998**: Cornell University Library supplies each vendor with sample volumes and accompanying instructions for the Preliminary Production Test.
- **September 21, 1998, 5PM**: Vendors deliver to Cornell University their RFP response, plus the sample volumes and the products of the preliminary test.
- **Week of October 5, 1998**: RFP responses evaluated and Vendor(s) chosen.
- **Week of October 19, 1998**: Contract(s) awarded, and unsuccessful vendors notified.
- **November 6, 1998**: Shipment #1 consisting of 5,000 pages sent from Cornell to vendor(s).
- **November 27, 1998**: Shipment #1 products returned from vendor(s) to Cornell.
- **December 14, 1998**: Shipment #2 consisting of 40,000 pages sent from Cornell to vendor(s).
- **January 8, 1999**: Shipment #2 products returned from vendor(s). Shipment #3 consisting of up to 50,000 pages sent to vendor(s) from Cornell.
February 5, 1999  Shipment #3 products returned from vendor(s). Shipment #4 consisting of up to 50,000 pages sent to vendor(s) from Cornell.

March 8, 1999  Shipment #4 products returned from vendor(s). Shipment #5 consisting of up to 50,000 pages sent to vendor(s) from Cornell.

April 2, 1999  Shipment #5 products returned from vendor(s). Shipment #6 consisting of up to 50,000 pages sent to vendor(s) from Cornell.

May 7, 1999  Shipment #6 products returned from vendor(s). Shipment #7 consisting of up to 50,000 pages sent to vendor(s) from Cornell.

June 7, 1999  Shipment #7 products returned from vendor(s).

July 9, 1999  All retakes due to Cornell.

If you are interested in receiving a formal RFP, please complete and send back the attached form via fax, email, or mail by **June 5, 1998, 5 p.m.** to:

Anne R. Kenney  
Associate Director  
Department of Preservation and Conservation  
214 Olin Library  
Cornell University Library  
Ithaca, NY 14853

Fax: 607-255-9346  
Phone: 607-255-9346  
Email: ark3@cornell.edu

For those vendors who prefer responding via email, an electronic copy of this RFI is available for downloading at the following URL:  ftp://cornell.library.preservation.edu/RFI
1. During this 10-month project (October 1998 - July 1999), nearly 300,000 pages will be processed, including scanning, metadata creation, text conversion, SGML encoding, and printing. Therefore, we anticipate shipping 50,000 pages/month to vendor(s). Please confirm your ability to meet such a production workload.

2. We anticipate that the majority of images can be captured as 600 dpi bitonal images. Some of the volumes contain halftones that will require grayscale scanning or enhancement if captured bitonally. Please indicate your capability to scan images as:
   ____ 600 dpi bitonal
   ____ 600 dpi bitonal, with enhancement for halftone capture (please describe)
   ____ 300 dpi, 8-bit gray
   ____ 400 dpi, 8-bit gray

3. Most of the volumes will be disbound prior to shipment to the vendor(s). Many of the pages will be brittle and must be handled carefully. We anticipate the majority of them will have to be placed one page at a time on the scanning platen and that automatic document feed handlers will not be used for most of the volumes. Please indicate whether you have experience doing the following:
   ____ Manually scanning one page at a time on a flatbed scanner
   ____ Scanning bound volumes

4. The physical dimensions of pages will vary from 4" x 6" to 11" x 17". Please indicate the page dimensions you can handle:
   ____ 4" x 6"
   ____ 8.5" x 11"
   ____ 8.5" x 14"
   ____ 11" x 17"

5. Bitonal images should be captured as TIFF 6.0 files with Intel byte order, and compressed using ITU Group 4 (formerly CCITT). Grayscale images should be compressed in lossless mode using JPEG compression. Please confirm that you can deliver images adhering to these file formats and compression techniques.
6. Cornell will require the vendor(s) to create associated metadata to facilitate the matching of image files (file names) with physical volumes, and to provide bibliographic access to the files in several levels. Metadata creation will include directory structuring, file naming, indexing, and TIFF header data input. Please indicate your capability to provide these services.

7. All the images created during this project will be converted to text (ASCII) through OCR processing at 99% accuracy level (maximum 1 error in every 100 words). The ultimate goal is to encode the textual information for indexing and other text manipulation purposes using the SGML TEI Lite DTD. Please indicate your capability to provide OCR and SGML encoding services.

8. The vendor(s) will print 600 dpi paper copies of digital images to facilitate Cornell’s quality inspection and creation of hard copy replacements for the brittle originals. Please describe briefly your printing services.

9. Where will the production (scanning, metadata creation, OCR, SGML encoding, printing) take place?

10. Cornell would like to receive all files from the vendor on CD-R media. The CDs should comply with the ISO-9660 standard. Please confirm that you can deliver the products (images, metadata, SGML encoding) in this output/delivery media.

11. Respondents to the RFP will be asked to participate in a preliminary production test as part of the RFP process. This test will include scanning, metadata creation, text conversion (OCR), SGML encoding, and printout creation from the digital images. Please indicate your willingness to perform this test free of charge as part of your response to the RFP.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE RFP RETURN YOUR RESPONSE VIA MAIL, EMAIL, OR FAX NO LATER THAN JUNE 5, 1998, 5 PM TO:**

Anne R. Kenney, Associate Director  
Department of Preservation and Conservation  
214 Olin Library, Cornell University Library  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
Fax: 607-255-9346   Phone: 607-255-9346   Email: ark3@cornell.edu

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