PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Scholarly annotated editions of historically significant texts constitute an important foundation for learning and research in the Humanities. Scholarly editing requires a sustained investment of highly specialized expertise, but long-term funding is difficult. Existing editorial procedures are still rooted in the pre-digital work practices and space constraints of the printed codex.

A collaboration of documentary editing projects has demonstrated how current Web technology can greatly aid scholarly editing projects and increase the return on investment by making the their research notes promptly and fully available through Web publication; gaining efficiency through collaborative, shared access to working notes among related projects; and providing lateral interoperability with other scholarly infrastructure, specifically special collections curators’ notes.

Nevertheless, Web publication, in itself, does nothing to take advantage of the powerful tools already developed in Digital Humanities research and development projects but not yet incorporated into the day-to-day work practices of individual scholarly editors or, indeed, scholars generally. Further, the present situation remains unsatisfactory because of the absence of attention to the preservation of editors’ research notes.

The University of California, Berkeley, proposes a two-year demonstration project led by the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI), a unit created in 1997 to advance the humanities and social sciences internationally by promoting the adoption of digital best practices. ECAI would collaborate with three scholarly editing projects and a major public archive:

- The Emma Goldman Papers Project, part of the University of California, Berkeley. http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/goldman
- The Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony Papers Project, Rutgers, The State University. http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/ and

A grant is requested to support a demonstration how scholarly editing practices could be evolved to take advantage of Digital Humanities innovations, to implement credible preservation and access procedures, and to demonstrate horizontal interoperability between archives and editorial projects.