

## **University of Chicago**

The University of Chicago Library proposes a four-year collaborative project to improve access to vital resources on South Asia for scholars, public officials, business leaders and other citizens through the creation of digital resources delivered via the World Wide Web. The proposal encompasses all nine authorized activities enumerated in the statute authorizing the Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access program.

### **Need and Significance**

This project will address significant needs described by national foundations and associations to provide a wide variety of users with reliable bibliographic and holdings information for publications from South Asia. It will also address the unanimous recommendations on reference and other resources made by eighteen eminent scholars and librarians at the Center for South Asia Libraries' 2003 planning meeting. In addition, this project will meet the need for resources for instruction in the less commonly taught languages of South Asia that both scholars and public officials have cited as a particular need.

### **Project Design and Activities**

Building upon the foundation and experience of several previous digital initiatives, the proposed project, *Audio, Maps, and Images from South Asia: Overseas Resources for Understanding the Subcontinent*, will make new contributions to scholarship with three specific services:

- 1) recovery and delivery of early audio recordings in the languages of South Asia;
- 2) creation and presentation of digital cartographic resources and geographic information system data for the entirety of South Asia; and
- 3) conversion and digital access to important photographic images of the subcontinent.

All of these resources will be of wide-ranging use across the social sciences, humanities, and sciences. It is particularly noteworthy that the project is designed to create resources for instruction in less commonly taught languages and other uses by collecting, digital conversion, and delivery via the Internet of gramophone records in the languages of South Asia.

### **Personnel, Resources, Management, and Evaluation**

In order to implement the program outlined above, the *Audio, Maps, and Images from South Asia* project will create an infrastructure that draws upon the experience and cooperative relationships established in other projects. The extensive experience of University of Chicago and the Center for Research Libraries in the implementation of global projects will be made available to the project through the Principal Investigator, Co-Director, and Project Manager. They have extensive experience in projects of this kind and have established close relationships with collaborating institutions in South Asia and Europe, including the British Library, the Roja Muthiah Research Library in Chennai, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the Mushfiq Khwaja Library and Research Centre in Karachi, the Centre for the Study of Marathi Culture in Pune, and the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in Calcutta, among others. The project will continue to draw upon the technical expertise of the Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL) at the University of Chicago and the University of Chicago Library that has helped to make the Digital South Asia Library a prominent source of South Asian information on the Internet. Evaluation is central to the project design. We will monitor the program and conduct formative and outcome evaluations based on project objectives. Quantitative and qualitative data will be used in determining the extent to which the project's objectives have been met. A professional evaluation advisor will guide our assessment activities throughout the four years of funding.