

**Draft 3/09/08**  
**For Discussion Purposes Only**

***Regents Advisory Council on Libraries Discussion Paper***

***THE NEW YORK DIGITAL COLLECTION INITIATIVE***

A collaborative project of New York's Libraries Museums and Archives  
*"New Yorkers preserving the past and creating the future"*

**Goal:** To create a statewide platform to promote the use of digital technologies to broaden and enhance access to our local, regional, and New York State cultural heritage institutions.

**Background:** At present, there are a number of excellent local and regional digitization models in New York State, such as The New York Public Library's Digital Library ([www.nypl.org/digital/digital\\_about.htm](http://www.nypl.org/digital/digital_about.htm)), the Hudson River Valley Heritage ([www.hrvh.org](http://www.hrvh.org)), Suffolk Historic Newspapers (<http://shn.suffolk.lib.ny.us>), and University at Buffalo's *UBdigit* (<http://ubdigit.buffalo.edu>). National models include North Carolina's ECHO, *Exploring Cultural Heritage Online* ([www.ncecho.org](http://www.ncecho.org)) and the Collaborative Digitization Program ([www.cdphheritage.org](http://www.cdphheritage.org)).

**Project Scope:** Numerous aspects of such a project each require thoughtful consideration and elaboration. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Access
- Content Creation
- Collaboration
- Standards and Guidelines
- Training
- Funding and Sustainability
- Marketing and Advocacy
- Preservation

**Core Concepts:** The foundation of the New York Digital Collection Initiative is based on a number of collaborative, coordinated approaches to digitization throughout New York State. These concepts and initiatives include:

- Increasing access to local, regional and state history to support P-16 education and lifelong learning.
- Expanding the role of New York's cultural institutions from providing access into creating online content.

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- Helping cooperating institutions to create online content; prepare online finding aids; establish partnerships; incorporate Web cataloging or metadata into digitization projects; develop curricula related to digital collections; and showcase projects for replication.
- Encouraging partnerships among cultural institutions throughout the state in a statewide initiative to create a New York Digital Collection.
- Ensuring compliance with and disseminating of information on existing or emerging national and international standards, e.g., Open Archives Initiative (OAI) and other appropriate quality benchmarks.
- Serving as the platform for State Library, State Archives, and State Museum digitization projects and training.
- Providing direct training and training grants for a full range of continuing education opportunities for participating institutions throughout the state.
- Serving as a portal and clearinghouse for related training, funding, and other digitization opportunities.
- Providing a funding source to support digitization efforts by local cultural institutions as well as major research institutions.
- Marketing the project to educational and cultural institutions, other repositories related to cultural heritage, funding agencies, and the general public.
- Establishing a means and a system for long-term preservation of digital collections assuring access to New York State's history in digital form.