

PROPOSAL TO THE GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICY COMMITTEE**CENTER FOR DIGITAL INCLUSION**
Graduate School of Library & Information Science**APPROVED BY SENATE**
09/10/2012**DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARTER**

Full participation in our society increasingly relies on using information and communication technologies (ICT) for human development. Extensive inequalities persist, however, not only in access to ICT but also in digital literacy skills and know-how to effectively use these technologies. In the United States currently, there are 100 million people who are not connected; there are deeper divides in how people and organizations use ICT to address key social issues such as health and education.¹

Mission Statement

The mission of the Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI) is to foster inclusive and sustainable societies through research, teaching, and public engagement about information and communication technologies (ICT) and their impacts on communities, organizations, and governments.²

Digital inclusion encompasses not only access to the Internet but also the availability of hardware and software; relevant content and services; and training for the digital literacy skills required for effective use of ICT.³

Alignment with Strategic Direction of Campus

The Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI) at the Graduate School of Library & Information Science (GSLIS) will align well with the primary goals of the campus strategic plan, offering inclusive, hands-on, global leadership opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students; academic excellence by diverse faculty and staff; creation of knowledge and innovation with broad social impacts; transformational learning environments with tiers of undergraduate and graduate students involved in research groups; and access to the Illinois experience through intentional recruiting, mentoring, and support of students from underrepresented groups.⁴

¹“Executive Summary,” *National Broadband Plan* <http://www.broadband.gov/plan/>

²UNESCO describes it thus: “building inclusive knowledge societies for a sustainable future.” <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/ict-for-education-science-and-culture/>

³Definition based on *Communities Connect Network*, available at http://seattle.gov/tech/overview/What_is_Digital_Inclusion.pdf

⁴*Campus Strategic Plan*, p. 23.

Global Leadership Opportunities for Students

GSLIS is co-ranked no. 1 among library and information science schools, thus our students are among the best in the world, online and on campus. The Center will:

- Leverage national and international contacts with the iSchools consortium, a collective of Information Schools dedicated to advancing the information field in the twenty-first century.
- Offer opportunities for students to work internationally, including ongoing engagements in the Caribbean, for example.
- Work with the Center for Global Studies and the Study Abroad office to keep students and faculty aware of international options.
- Draw on the new informatics PhD and the informatics minor for student leaders, in collaboration with the Illinois Informatics Institute.
- Encourage student presentations at conferences.
- Engage students in research on digital inclusion worldwide.

Academic Excellence

The Center is structured to

- Foster a network of support from undergraduates into the master's and doctoral levels, with affiliates from the campus and community.
- Expand undergraduate opportunities by including students in research teams.
- Provide post-doctoral positions to support a rigorous intellectual environment.
- Work together to create knowledge about:
 - the roles of all types of libraries;
 - broadband policies;
 - citizen journalism and citizen science;
 - digital literacy and youth;
 - e-government and civic engagement;
 - informal education and e-learning;
 - cultural heritage digitization and preservation;
 - community archives;
 - community informatics;
 - community media;
 - critical information studies.

Broad Social Impacts

The Center is committed to weighing the tangible and intangible costs and benefits of information and communication technologies (ICT) for marginalized people around the world and directing research toward ameliorating the most serious crises that threaten us, including poverty, violence, food insecurity, climate change and disease. Our work will focus on policy as well as practice, examining ways in which factors combine to create or impede broad social impacts. Understanding barriers to technology adoption can serve as a catalyst to get more people digitally engaged.

CDI participants may address these questions:

- What does the information age mean for us as global citizens?
- What might inclusion mean for self-determination, self-definition and self-presentation by those just gaining access to information and communication technologies?
- While new opportunities are frequently lauded, what are the planned and unplanned consequences of ICT use by and for different interest groups that need to be carefully evaluated? In what ways do ICT uses by and for different interest groups support or challenge existing sociopolitical systems that institutionalize exclusion?
- As socio-technical structures change in relation to ICT, how might CDI become an information observatory that documents and maps shifting constellations of inclusion and exclusion and their impacts?

Transformational Learning

Given the many synergies on campus with other units, students from a variety of fields can find career-defining ways to participate in Center events. The Center's inclusive structure will:

- Promote engaged learning, rich with real-world experiences in which students are able to build on what they know and apply new ideas in diverse settings, such as Puerto Rico, where we have ongoing, funded research with Universidad del Turabo in Gurabo, P. R.
- Collaborate with the Office of Undergraduate Research and the Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI).
- Coordinate the Certificate in Community Informatics (an option in place since Fall 2009).
- Draw on the expertise of faculty in area studies, communication, journalism, sociology, social, community and organizational informatics, human and community development, social work, art and design, and history.

Access to Illinois

The Center for Digital Inclusion will recruit, mentor and support diverse students across disciplines and at all levels to gain access to the University of Illinois by:

- Nurturing GSLIS connections locally (e.g., Parkland College, TAP In Leadership Academy, Urbana Free Library) as well as in Chicago, East St. Louis, and rural communities.
- Tapping alumni to help recruit more students from underrepresented populations.
- Seeking funds to provide assistance for students.
- Continuing involvement with programs such as the LIS Access Midwest Program (LAMP), a regional alliance of ten Midwestern universities and their libraries that encourages students from historically underrepresented groups to enter the field of library and information science.

Public Engagement

Digital inclusion means striving to understand and ameliorate technological exclusions. The Center aims not only to facilitate equitable access to ICT, but also the effective use of ICT by a variety of people. CDI aims beyond digital literacy to applications of research that promote digital excellence among communities, public entities, non-profit organizations, and businesses, and that intentionally address digital exclusion. ICT offers powerful tools for economic growth and employment, delivery of social and government services, and entrepreneurship; CDI will build capacity to satisfy local, national, and global human development needs with ICT, as appropriate, and implement strategies to sustain innovations. CDI will provide structures for incubating innovative public engagement and digital inclusion at various scales and across domains as well as a platform for analysis and evaluation of these activities.

Timeline

The GSLIS dean will review the Center annually, after an initial launch in Fall 2012.

JUSTIFICATION

“Information literacy... is a basic human right in a digital world.”⁵
Alexandria Proclamation 2005

If the twenty-first century is indeed aptly characterized as the Information Age and the Networked Society, far too many people are left out of the networks, people who are unable to access, evaluate, and create knowledge in a world that has excluded them for too long. CDI is committed to fostering inclusive and sustainable societies through research, teaching, and public engagement about information and communication technologies and their impacts on communities, organizations, and governments. As with any technology, information and communication technologies are *sociotechnical* in nature; thus CDI will combine rigorous social science with technical innovations to address social inequities and digital divides. Further, CDI instantiates one commitment by GSLIS to actively and always welcome and learn with those who are different from each of us, within the School, on the campus, and around the world.

Exclusions exist for a wide range of social reasons that may be further institutionalized or countered by ICT depending on design, implementation, and equitable access. These include racialization, economic class, sexual orientation, gender, age, or differences in mobility or abilities. The multidimensional causes of exclusion are compounded locally, nationally, and internationally by circumstances that include poverty, lack of education and transportation, substandard housing, language barriers, cultural norms, and poor health. By studying how digital

⁵<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/information-literacy/> Accessed October 6, 2011.

technologies are changing our social and economic structures, CDI will be at the forefront of informatics research and practice.

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

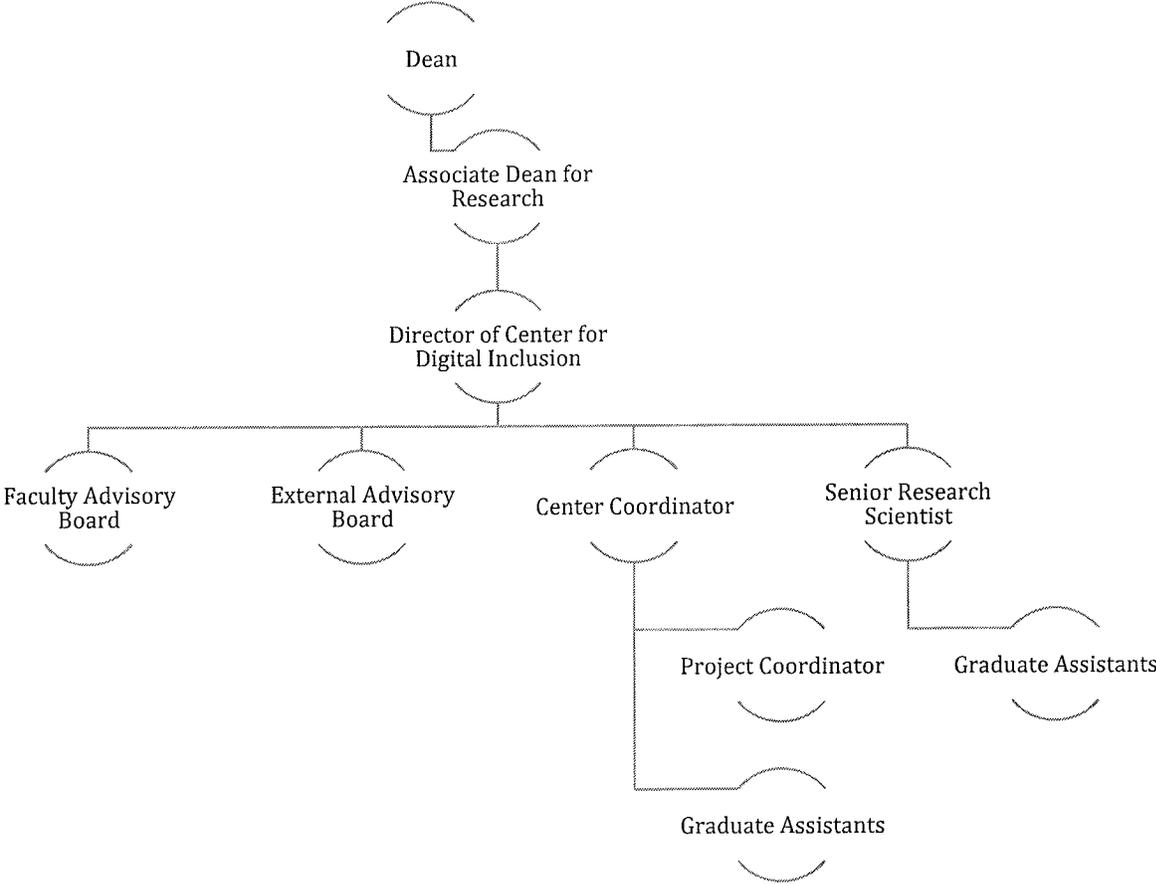


Figure 1. Organizational Chart for the Center for Digital Inclusion

As indicated in Figure 1:

- ❖ The director of CDI will be a GSLIS faculty member, initially Jon Gant, who will be appointed by the GSLIS dean and report to the associate dean for research.
- ❖ There will be two advisory groups working closely with the Center director:
 - An external advisory board, which will help with fundraising, strategic planning, and job placements. This group will engage with community groups and extend the Center's impacts off-campus, meeting virtually twice a year. The external advisory board will include local and global affiliates from the regions in which the Center has projects, or who are familiar with digital inclusion policy and practice.⁶ The initial founding advisory board members will be a small group as we identify and extend invitations to other potential members. The board will include those deeply concerned with finding ways to solve critical problems of inequality related to ICT.
 - A faculty advisory board, which will direct their research through the Center, supervise graduate students and post-doctoral scholars who work on their projects, and implement ideas from the external advisory board. Service on the faculty board will be credited by GSLIS for promotion and tenure purposes.⁷
- ❖ Assisting and reporting to the Center director will be a Center coordinator, who will manage the day-to-day operations of the Center, coordinate proposal development on grants, ensure compliance with funding guidelines, and oversee those who work on some faculty research projects, including
 - Project coordinator(s) and
 - Graduate assistants
- ❖ The Center includes a Senior Research Scientist, who primarily will be paid through external funds, working on faculty projects and supervising graduate assistants on those projects. This academic professional will report to the Center director. In the future, there may be more research scientists on staff.

The CDI offices are located on the east side of the third floor of GSLIS.

⁶Advisory Board members may include, for example, GSLIS alum Elisabeth Pierre-Louis from Haiti's *Fondasyon Konesans Ak Libète (Foundation for Knowledge and Liberty, FOKAL)*; Dennis Alicea, Chancellor, Universidad del Turabo, Gurabo, Puerto Rico; Elise Kohn, GigU at Aspen Institute; Martín Gómez, Los Angeles Public Library; John Horrigan, Vice President, Policy Research, TechNet; Mary Alice Ball, Senior Library Program Officer, U.S. IMLS; Nicol Turner-Lee, Vice President and Director, Media and Technology Institute, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies; Frances Roehm, Skokie (IL) Public Library

⁷Faculty of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science will be asked to serve on the Center faculty advisory board; board members may include: Abdul Alkalimat, Ann Bishop, Alistair Black, Cathy Blake, Bertram Bruce, Stephen Downie (*ex officio*), Les Gasser, Lori Kendall, Kate McDowell, Rae-Anne Montague, Dan Schiller, Mike Twidale, Kate Williams, as well as affiliated faculty from other units, Susan Davis, Rayvon Fouché, Brant Houston, Lisa Nakamura, and Christian Sandvig.

While other units on campus are concerned with informatics⁸—the ways in which people and scholarship interact with computer systems—the Graduate School of Library and Information Science has a long and varied involvement with ways in which different publics have accessed, organized, and created information, before and since the development of personal computing.

CDI will build on the legacies of Prairienet, an early freenet founded in 1994, and subsequently incorporated into the Community Informatics Initiative (CII; 2007-2011), an effort generously funded by the Office of the Provost through the Illinois Informatics Institute. Both Prairienet and CII were campus-wide and interdisciplinary efforts to “develop *tools* that [were] both powerful and accessible to diverse users, *methodologies* for research on community inquiry, *ways of working* with a wide range of types of communities, and *theory* adequate to address the complexity of the processes involved.”⁹ As with its predecessors, CDI will “facilitate boundary-crossing interactions among departments and colleges when new knowledge and sharpened engagement with problems of the larger society are the reward.”¹⁰

CDI will enhance the already-established graduate Certificate in Community Informatics (CI) at GSLIS, which is a non-transcriptable certificate available to students who take one required course and two additional courses for a total of twelve graduate credits. The Center will provide an intellectual home for students seeking the CI certificate as well as faculty and staff engaged in related activities.

In addition to leadership in community informatics since 2004, GSLIS staff and faculty have been in the forefront of broadband development and evaluation since 2009. This work has strengthened local and national connections related to digital inclusion. CDI faculty director Jon Gant, for example, was a Fellow in 2010 in the Media and Technology Institute at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, D.C., and in 2011 published with the Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Currently, Gant is director of broadband adoption for Urbana-Champaign Big Broadband (UC2B). Both Gant and GSLIS faculty member Kate Williams testified to the Federal Communications Commission in 2009 and 2010; Williams and Abdul Alkalimat are currently involved with case studies and data management of broadband projects across the country. These scholars exemplify why GSLIS is well-positioned to continue significant research on digital inclusion and sociotechnical systems.

⁸Illinois Informatics Institute (Guy Garnett, interim director) and I-CHASS, for example, are obvious CDI partners.

⁹Bishop, A. P., and B.C. Bruce, “University of Illinois Community Informatics Institute: Concept Paper,” unpublished (2005): 1.

¹⁰*Campus Strategic Plan*, p. 8.

ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

The Center will collaborate with any campus faculty and research staff whose research agendas align with the Center's mission. For example, the Center will work with contacts in Korea, Singapore, and Sweden, nurtured by the GSLIS Associate Dean for Research, to foster scholarship with international partnerships that may provide global leadership opportunities for students. Globally active staff and faculty will be welcome to affiliate with the Center, further promoting academic excellence. Community members may also be affiliated with the Center. The Center for Children's Books at GSLIS offers courses and activities that will intersect with future CDI scholarship on youth and information literacy; GSLIS also offers a joint degree program with the Center for African Studies, another area of synergy.¹¹ These affiliations will support transformational learning for students as well as increased access to the Illinois experience.

GSLIS is a top-ranked school of library and information science, concerned with many foundational issues of information in society. Historically, public libraries have been (and remain) among the most central information institutions of the public sphere. The GSLIS commitment to the Center for Digital Inclusion instantiates the importance of libraries to our civic life. This crucial role for libraries as societal information institutions has been emphasized by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as well as the American Library Association. The just-released IMLS Strategic Plan states: *Museums and libraries help to level the playing field and provide opportunities that some individuals might not otherwise be able to access. Without libraries and museums it would be more difficult and potentially impossible for many people to pursue their education, seek employment, and lead healthier lives. Libraries and museums are fundamental to supporting the civic life and wellbeing of our nation.* Digital inclusion also means training culturally competent LIS professionals to work with diverse populations. The School has entered into an ongoing, focused discussion around race and racism within the School in order to improve the climate for everyone, to call attention to diversity-related needs and accomplishments, and to provide research and curricular resources to the GSLIS community. CDI will support and strengthen these internal efforts, as well as collaborate with campus-level diversity initiatives.¹²

A variety of units on campus share CDI goals; the Center can leverage the staff and faculty in these areas to broaden the interest in and impact of the Center on and off campus. In addition to those already mentioned, these units include:

¹¹<http://ccb.lis.illinois.edu/>; <http://www.lis.illinois.edu/academics/programs/ms/joint-degree>

¹²<http://provost.illinois.edu/programs/diversity/index.html>;

<http://www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu/>

Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership; Action Research.Illinois; Applied Technologies for Learning in the Arts and Sciences (ATLAS); Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services (CITES); Center for Education in Small Urban Communities; Center for Global Studies; Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Center for People and Infrastructures; Center for Veterans in Higher Education; Champaign-Urbana Community FabLab; College of Applied Health Sciences; College of Law; Cyberinfrastructure Lab; Extension; I-STEM; International Programs and Studies; Institute of Government and Public Affairs; Mortenson Center for International Library Programs; Office of Equal Opportunity and Access; School of Social Work; Study Abroad Office

BUDGET AND FUNDING STRATEGY

GSLIS now holds two current-use funds for the Center: one is specifically dedicated to CDI; the other, the Community Engagement Fund, is available to GSLIS faculty, staff and students to carry out community-based work, with deliverables left with the community partner, as agreed-upon in advance.

GSLIS will provide start-up funding of \$250,000 for FY13 and \$200,000 for FY14. (Most of these funds already support staff being reassigned to the Center.) After that time, GSLIS support for the Center will be \$125,000 a year. Not included in the amounts listed above but also provided by GSLIS is the director's base salary. GSLIS will provide the standard administrative support services available to faculty and projects, and waive the computer services fee (on a %FTE basis) for School-funded staff.

External funding will be sought for research, public engagement, and teaching activities that may include:

- Community scholar program;
- Endowed funds for post-doctoral positions;
- Student travel;
- Incubator projects and implementation thereof;
- Lecture series

In addition to grants, funding may be generated by corporate sponsorship, paid participation in webinars, and drawing on a percentage from spin-off projects. Further, the Center will seek foundation funds from, for example, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the Ford Foundation.¹³ We already have a close working relationship with the campus Associate Director Mark Nolan in the Office of Corporate Relations. We will work with the GSLIS Advancement Office on further corporate foundation support from, for example, the Aon Corporation, Motorola Solutions, and R. R. Donnelley. (See attached letters of support.)

¹³These foundations in particular support research on citizen journalism, media literacy and youth, and broadband policies.

Current sources of support include GSLIS, the Illinois Informatics Institute (FY12), the National Academies of Science (DOT Sub CS 8504.001), CERL/the Army Corps of Engineers (2011-05107 IPA), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (RE-05-11-0074-11), Partnership for a Connected Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Big Broadband (UC2B), the National Science Foundation, and the American Library Association.

The Center will endeavor to maintain a range of engagements, a portfolio of projects, so to speak, that will be diverse in funding, partnerships, and locations. We will continue or seek out connections locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, in rural and urban areas. In maintaining this portfolio we will conduct ongoing evaluations, sharing the findings broadly.

OUTCOMES

We are actively working to establish metrics to evaluate the Center annually. Metrics for students, staff and faculty affiliated with the Center may include:

Global leadership

- Number and quality of global leadership opportunities
- Retention and graduation rates

Academic Excellence

- Number of nationally and internationally recognized faculty
- Number of faculty in leadership positions in professional societies
- Percentage of underrepresented faculty and staff
- Student quality (GPA, awards, honors)

Breakthrough Knowledge and Social Impacts

- Total sponsored research expenditures by source
- Sponsored research expenditures by per faculty FTE
- Number of publications/citations per faculty FTE
- Impact on societal needs (illustrated by examples)

Transformational Learning Environment

- Internships and job placements for students;
- Research experiences for a range of students, from undergraduates through post-doctoral positions
- Number of Certificates in Community Informatics

Access to the Illinois Experience

- Percentage of students receiving financial aid
- Percentage of under-represented students
- Number of distance learning IUs
- Percentage of faculty involved in civic engagement

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Library and Information Science Building
501 East Daniel Street
Champaign, IL 61820-6211



February 6, 2012

Dear Jon,

We, the senior administrators of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS), are pleased to offer a commitment of support to the Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI) as outlined in the Proposal to the General University Policy Committee.

GSLIS faculty have long been interested in how different communities access, organize, and create information resources, before and since the development of personal computing. Beginning with Prairienet in 1994, GSLIS staff and faculty have been at the forefront of community networking and examining the effective use of information technologies in underserved communities. In addition to our national leadership in community informatics, we have been active in evaluation of broadband deployment since 2009. This work has strengthened local and national connections related to digital inclusion.

Building on existing synergies, CDI may collaborate with other research centers at GSLIS to examine, for example, the political economy of digital inclusion, the design and function of information and communication technologies, digital literacy among children and youth, and large-scale data and digital archives in organizations and society. CDI already is bringing together scholars in social and organizational data analytics to address real-world environmental issues. A variety of units on campus also share CDI's goals; the Center can leverage the staff and faculty in these areas to broaden the interest in and impact of the Center on and off campus.

As the top-ranked library school in the country, the GSLIS commitment to the Center for Digital Inclusion instantiates the importance of libraries to our civic life. This crucial role for libraries has been emphasized by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as well as the American Library Association. The just-released IMLS Strategic Plan states: *Museums and libraries help to level the playing field and provide opportunities that some individuals might not otherwise be able to access. Without libraries and museums it would be more difficult and potentially impossible for many people to pursue their education, seek employment, and lead healthier lives. Libraries and museums are fundamental to supporting the civic life and wellbeing of our nation.* Digital inclusion also means training culturally competent LIS professionals to work with diverse populations. The School has entered into an ongoing, focused discussion around race and racism in order to improve the climate

for everyone at GSLIS, to call attention to diversity-related needs and accomplishments, and to provide relevant research and curricular resources to the GSLIS community. CDI will support and strengthen these internal efforts, as well as collaborate with the Inclusive Illinois Initiative.

As agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Center and the School, GSLIS will provide start-up funding of \$250,000 for FY13 and \$200,000 for FY14. After that time, GSLIS support for the Center will be \$125,000 a year up through year five, at which time the School support will be revisited. (The Director's salary is and will remain part of another budget line, not included in the CDI budget.) We look forward to a vibrant and growing Center as part of GSLIS, which will actively pursue external funding for research, teaching and engagement, benefiting not only our School and campus, but also the state and its broader constituencies.

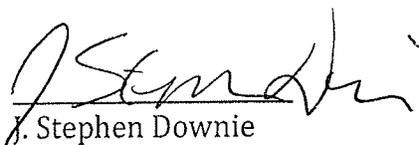
Sincerely,



John Unsworth



Allen Renear



J. Stephen Downie



Linda C. Smith

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Library and Information Science Building
501 East Daniel Street
Champaign, IL 61820-6211



February 3, 2012

Dr. Jon Gant
Research Associate Professor
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
501 East Daniel
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Jon Gant,

In my capacity as Assistant Dean for Advancement & Alumni Relations, I am excited to offer my support for the Center for Digital Inclusion. As you know, our office works closely with both the campus Foundation and Corporate Relations units. With their assistance we have already identified a number of possible prospects that may be interested in supporting this new Center. Based on areas of interest and support to similar programs in the past, top corporate foundation prospects include those of the Aon Corporation, Motorola Solutions, RR Donnelly, and Sara Lee. Other sources of funds may come from Coleman and Retirement Research Foundations, the Chicago Community Trust, Ford Foundation and MacArthur Foundation.

I look forward to working with the Center to build a base of support that will fund research, teaching and engagement as it relates to sustainable digital inclusion.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diana".

Diana Stroud
Assistant dean for advancement and alumni relations

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Public Engagement
Swanlund Administration Building
601 East John Street
Champaign, IL 61820



January 31, 2012

Dr. Jon Gant
Research Associate Professor
Library and Information Science
112 LIS Bldg.
M/C 493
Champaign, IL 61820

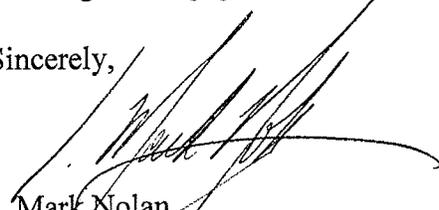
Dear Dr. Gant:

In my capacity as Associate Director in the Office of Corporate Relations (OCR), I am pleased to offer my support for the Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI) at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS). Our corporate partners are an important source of research funding for the campus, and I am eager to be a liaison between CDI, corporations, and other relevant organizations to form productive and mutually rewarding relationships. As you are aware, we have identified a number of possible prospects that may be interested in supporting this new Center. My office would certainly work closely with Foundation Relations and the GSLIS Office of Advancement to optimize these opportunities.

Another key contribution of CDI that you have shared is its role in workforce development and public engagement. Businesses throughout the state have a need for people with skills in digital technology. This must be combined with sophisticated understandings about access and effective use of these technologies by people all along the digital spectrum. I believe that CDI will help provide positive relationships that will benefit job creation and economic development statewide, and contribute to the public good.

I look forward to working with the Center to build a base of support that will fund research, teaching and engagement as it relates to sustainable digital inclusion.

Sincerely,



J. Mark Nolan
Associate Director
Office of Corporate Relations
University of Illinois

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs

Swanlund Administration Building
601 East John Street
Champaign, IL 61820



March 28, 2012

Nicholas Burbules, Chair
Senate Committee on General University Policy
Office of the Senate
228 English Building
MC-461

Dear Professor Burbules:

Enclosed is a copy of a proposal to temporarily establish the Center for Digital Inclusion.
It now requires Senate review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristi A. Kuntz".

Kristi A. Kuntz
Assistant Provost

KAK/nh

Enclosures

c: C. Livingstone
A. Renear

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Library and Information Science Building
501 East Daniel Street
Champaign, IL 61820-6211



March 13, 2012

Kristi Kuntz
Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost
204 Swanlund Administration Building

Dear Ms. Kuntz:

I am pleased to send to you the attached proposal for the *Center for Digital Inclusion (CDI)*. The CDI will be located physically, financially, and administratively within the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) and will report to the GSLIS Dean.

The CDI responds directly to specific needs and priorities within GSLIS and to the missions of GSLIS and the University. We developed this proposal over the last year, working with many interested stakeholders. On March 7, 2012 the GSLIS tenure-system faculty reviewed the final proposal and unanimously voted their support.

Please find attached several letters of support from the GSLIS senior administration, the GSLIS assistant dean for advancement, and from the UIUC associate director of corporate relations. I believe the next step is for your office to forward this proposal to the General University Policy committee of the Faculty Senate.

I will of course be delighted to provide any assistance that you might need to support the review of this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Allen Renear'.

Allen Renear
Interim Dean