InterPARES Project
International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

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Press Release (July 18, 1999)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A newly funded research project will tackle one of the most critical global issues of the digital age--the long-term preservation of vital organizational records and critical research data created or maintained in electronic systems.

Because of the fragility of the medium and the changes in hardware and software, the task of preservation of electronic records is formidable. Records will need to be moved to different platforms and/or software

packages in order to be maintained permanently, but throughout these processes, there will need to be an assurance that the records are as authentic as they were when they were first created.

Philip Eppard, dean of the School of Information Science and Policy at the University at Albany, State University of New York, will be the principal investigator and director on a grant for the United States component of an international research project on the preservation of electronic records. Professor Anne Gilliland-Swetland from the Department of Information Studies at UCLA will serve as co-director on the project.

The grant of $424,796 from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the grant-funding agency of the National Archives and Records Administration, is for eighteen months and represents the single largest award ever made by the Commission.

The project, known as the InterPARES Project (International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems), will investigate and develop theories, methodologies, and prototype systems required for the permanent preservation of authentic electronic records. It will also develop model policies, strategies, and standards to ensure preservation of the authenticity of those records.

InterPARES is a three-year collaborative project based at the University of British Columbia. It brings together national teams of researchers from Canada, the United States, Italy, the United Kingdom, Australia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Japan, China, and Hong Kong. In the U.S., researchers at the University at Albany, UCLA, the University of Missouri, Georgia Tech, and Penn State are all involved in the project in collaboration with electronic records specialists at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

In addition, there is an industry group, including the Collaborative Electronic Notebook Systems Association (CENSA), which represents a worldwide industry group including pharmaceutical, chemical, biotechnology, high-tech, and other businesses that are interested in developing electronic lab notebooks.

"This project is distinctive in that it brings together archivists, records managers, preservation experts, computer scientists from around the world to deal with what is a worldwide problem. If our project is

successful, people who need to access information from records created electronically in the 1990s will have a guarantee that those important electronic records have survived and are authentic." Eppard said.

Further information is available on the US-InterPARESWebsite at http://www.is.gseis.ucla.edu/us-interpares

The US-InterPARES Project
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