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1. Meeting the Purpose of the Authorizing Statute

1. A. Introduction

The *African Oral Narratives* project of Michigan State University and multiple partners at African institutions and U.S. universities will make accessible to scholars rich collections of oral narratives from West, Northeast, East, and Southern Africa. For the past 40 years, African historians have collected diverse types of oral narratives as key sources for understanding African's pre-colonial and colonial past as well as the social history of African peoples in the complex and increasingly integrated social and political world of the 21st century. Scholars of Africa across a wide range of other disciplines — anthropology, sociology, political science, geography, and all of the humanities, also conducted oral interviews and collected oral histories and traditions for their research. A substantial repository of significant African oral materials will have broad interdisciplinary value.

In addition, the repository will be a uniquely important source of oral content for learners of African languages. The collections of oral narratives to be made available on the Web includes speakers of Akan (Twi), Wolof, Bamanankan (Mandinka), Igbo, Fula (Pulaar), Farefare, Amharic, Oromo, Swahili, Zigula, Chewa, and six of South Africa's 11 official languages – Zulu, Pedi, Southern Sotho, Tswana, Afrikaans, and English.

The digital revolution and rapid increase in affordability of digital technology is making it possible to share multimedia materials in ways never before imagined. The *African Oral Narratives* project will create a rich repository of previously unavailable African oral materials and also incorporate a suite of user tools that will enable faculty and students to engage these resources for scholarship and language learning. Scholars also will be able to add collections, building the corpus of oral narrative materials that will benefit a growing community of scholars.

The proposed *African Oral Narratives* project builds upon 10 years of digital projects about Africa by Michigan State University completed with numerous partners. Among others, these
include: (1) the current TICFIA project on *Diversity and Tolerance in the Islam of West Africa* (http://westafricanislam.matrix.msu.edu/); (2) the 2000-2004 TICFIA *South African Film and Video* project (including the *Community Video Education Trust* archive – www.cvet.org.za); (3) the NSF-funded *West African Online Digital Library* (www.aodl.org/westafrica); and (4) the NEH-funded *South Africa: Overcoming Apartheid, Building Democracy* (www.overcomingapartheid.msu.edu). These websites with multimedia primary materials from Africa – each with its own thematic and organizational integrity – have been assembled in the African Online Digital Library (AODL) (www.aodl.org). This proposed *African Oral Narratives* project will be added to this portal site. Placing all these projects in the AODL will dramatically increase the value of current and future digital collections.

1. **B. Objectives**

   This project has five objectives that will guide its implementation and evaluation plan. **Objective 1:** The project will make freely available on the Web a substantial repository of oral narrative collections from different regions of Africa. The project will publish online more than 20 thematic collections containing hundreds of carefully-selected oral narratives, accompanying photographs, and transcripts and translations that will enhance the value of the spoken word for research and teaching. The scholars who collected the materials also will provide intellectual framing of each collection. **Objective 2:** Partnerships that have been developed with scholars in Africa and at U.S. universities to carry out this project will be collegial, reciprocal, transparent, and mutually beneficial to all partners. Project partners include the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana; Department of History, Addis Ababa University; Department of History, University of Malawi; the South African History Archive (Johannesburg); United Nations Multimedia Research Unit (New York); as well as scholars at Indiana University, Oakland University (Detroit), and MSU who are working in Ghana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Gambia, and Tanzania. These equitable partnerships will provide a sound basis for this project to continue collecting and
providing access to additional valuable oral narratives after the conclusion of the grant.

Objective 3: The collections will provide free, public access to materials in many African languages that are useful to language teachers and students. Addressing the Invitational Priority of this competition, the project will make available foreign information sources in eight of the 15 African languages on the U.S. Department of Education’s Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) list: Akan, Wolof, Mandinka, Igbo, Amharic, Oromo, Swahili, and Zulu.

Objective 4: The oral narratives will be made accessible for interactive use, not only passive listening. Scholars will be able to make use of these materials in new ways made possible by digital technology, for example by adding information to each other's digital objects or segmenting and grouping objects into personal galleries, creating alternative contexts and new insights.

Objective 5: The African Oral Narratives website will become a significant repository with a critical mass of oral narrative resources about Africa and in African languages to which African partners and scholars of Africa will be able to add new collections. The materials in this proposed project are purposely selected for diversity of types of oral narrative collected by scholars in different disciplines, breadth of geographical coverage, and number of African languages in order to engage a wide range of scholars and attract new contributors.

1. C. Furthering the purposes of the TICFIA program

The objectives of the African Oral Narratives project closely match purposes of the Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access (TICFIA) program. This proposed project will implement four objectives of TICFIA as defined in the statute.

1. Facilitate access to or preserve foreign information resources in print or electronic forms.

At the core of the African Oral Narratives project is the commitment to making oral materials about Africa and in African languages available via the Internet with no cost or restrictions. The philosophy of open access has guided all MATRIX digital projects. Another of MATRIX's tenets is to respect the intellectual property rights of scholars and the people they interview. We follow the “Principles and Standards of the Oral History Association” that regard
interviewer and interviewee as mutual owners of copyright to an interview. To this end, we have
an understanding with project partners that all reasonable efforts will be made to obtain
permission from interviewees for their oral narratives to be placed online. In some cases,
funding will be used to return to field sites to obtain these permissions.

MSU will be given an irrevocable, but non-exclusive license to provide open access to
materials online as part of this educational project, but copyright ownership will remain
unchanged. This approach is essential, given the wariness of many African scholars about
partnering with institutions in the North on digital projects because of concerns about who will
ultimately control and benefit from the output. As these licenses are contractual irrevocable,
MSU will be able to guarantee that all materials collected and digitized under this project will
remain freely accessible in perpetuity.

Preservation of digital files is a key responsibility of all digital repository projects. Some
recordings in this project date from the late 1970s, so the original recording formats vary. Most
are audio, although we will have some video content. Most audio recordings are on cassettes, a
few are reel-to-reel, and some are born digital. MATRIX will make digital preservation copies
of the recordings in this project as desired by the partners, including the analog ones and will
apply best policies for long-term preservation and forward migration to them. MATRIX has
more than a decade of experience in digital preservation of audio-visual materials and will use
the standards that we developed with funding from the National Endowment of the Humanities
and the Institute of Museum and Library Services for the priceless archive of 40 years of
programming of Detroit Public Television's *American Black Journal*.

2. **Develop new means of shared electronic access to international data.**

We are at the dawning of a new age of access to audio-visual materials. Anybody who
utilizes the Internet for education, information, or entertainment realizes this. Almost
unimaginable broad open access that YouTube pioneered just a few years ago is now spreading
throughout the Web. The impact is revolutionary for entertainment, but also for the spread of
information. News gathering and distribution is being revolutionized, and the impact of this on
politics and economics has already been profound in this country and around the world. It is important to recognize as well how fundamental this change will be for education and scholarly research in years to come.

Until the digital revolution, audio-video recordings were expensive, scarce, and difficult to access. This is particularly true in Africa. African audio-video recordings were scarce and always at risk. Recordings that existed were only available at best in a handful of libraries and archives. For scholars who increasingly saw oral narratives as a way to address a colonial imbalance in African scholarship by utilizing audio materials, this was a huge roadblock. (The same is true for linguists seeking to teach African languages.) The digital revolution provided a way around this hurdle, but, until very recently, the cost of working with and storing audio-video content was prohibitively expensive. (When MATRIX received a grant from the NSF to pioneer a National Gallery of the Spoken Word, the projected cost of four terabytes of storage was $600,000. Today it is under a $1000.) Along with these declining costs has come an increasing sophistication of our ability to provide both increasingly useful on-line access to these materials as well as long-term preservation. MSU has been a pioneer university in this regard, with over $7 million of grants devoted to working with audiovisual materials in digital repositories.

The goal of this grant is to pioneer a new era of access to valuable African oral narratives. The project will provide online access to more than 700 hours of audio recordings and supporting multimedia materials from Africa that are of interest to a myriad of scholars and teachers. Equally important, the project is designed to span the continent and work in a wide range of African languages so that it will set the groundwork for a vast expansion of access to African audiovisual materials in the future. Scholarship across the humanities and social sciences is increasingly based on digital resources, and scholars are more and more looking for the richness of audio-visual recordings as source materials. In addition to providing access to the valuable discrete collections of African oral narrative described below, this project will build the cyber-infrastructure for vastly expanded collection, storage, and access to African audiovisual materials in a myriad of languages.
The ability to hear and, in some cases, see these oral narratives being spoken is unprecedented, but for us the promise of "access" goes much farther than just listening. This project is designed so that scholars will be able to "work with these objects" in their research and "use" them in their scholarship. At the same time, the project seeks to empower the community of scholars to add to the value of the materials. Therefore, we will create a suite of user tools to segment and annotate items and to bring together original items and / or segments into personal galleries for multiple purposes, as discussed in Section 4.

3. Assist teachers of less commonly taught languages in acquiring, via electronic and other means, materials suitable for classroom use.

Listening is one of the five areas of language competence (with speaking, reading, writing, and cultural knowledge), and this competence can be achieved only when students have access to oral sources of native speakers. The collections in the African Oral Narratives project will include oral recordings of native speakers of Akan, Wolof, Mandinka, Igbo, Pulaar, Farefare, Amharic, Oromo, Swahili, Zigula, Chewa, Zulu, Pedi, Southern Sotho, Tswana, and Afrikaans. The previous West African Islam and South African TICFIA projects also included oral materials in Akan, Wolof, Mandinka, Zulu, and Afrikaans as well as materials in these languages not in this new proposed project: Hausa, Arabic, Joola (Jula, Dyula), and Xhosa. All told, these oral sources include 11 of the 15 African languages on the U.S. Department of Education’s priority list of LCTLS. These materials in the African Online Digital Library will become a truly unique, easily accessible and searchable online collection of oral African language materials.

4. Promote collaborative technology-based projects in foreign languages, area studies, and international studies among grant recipients under this title.

International collaboration is a crucial prerequisite for obtaining and providing access to foreign information sources, and digital technology is a powerful means for making these resources available in ways that provide the widest possible access and the mutual benefit which strengthens international partnerships. In this project, we have made an effort to work with partners in Africa as well as scholars of Africa in the United States. We are cooperating with
colleagues at these African and international institutions: Esi Southerland-Addy at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana (Legon), Tessema Ta'a at Addis Ababa University Department of History and Heritage Management, Wapulumuka Mulwafu at University of Malawi Department of History, Catherine Kennedy at South African History Archive in Johannesburg, and the United Nations Multimedia Research Unit in New York. Collaborators in the U.S. include Gracia Clark at Indiana University Department of Anthropology and Getnet Bekele at Oakland University Department of History in addition to Nwando Achebe, Laura Fair, Assan Sarr, and Joshua Grace in the MSU Department of History and Breanne Grace in the MSU Department of Sociology.

Incorporating the collections of the current West African Islam TICFIA project in the AODL along with the proposed *African Oral Narratives* collections and creating new tools for working with digital objects across both these projects also will significantly enhance the materials and intellectual work of partners in the West African Islam project. These include scholars based at Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, Boston University, University of Pennsylvania, James Madison University, and Indiana University.

The oral sources that will be made available span both African language and area studies and relate to multiple disciplines (history, anthropology, sociology, political science, linguistics, etc.) and fields (agriculture, law, gender studies, communications, health, conflict resolution).

### 2. Extent of Need for the Project

African oral narratives are foundational for many fields of studies across the humanities and social sciences, and, until now, there have been very few means for scholars to access each other's oral materials. Oral sources from Africa for both scholarship and advanced language learning are few in number and woefully inadequate in content and presentation. They are largely restricted to a small number of research libraries such as the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, where only a small number of scholars are able to access them.

In Africa, too, there are some specialized archives for audio and video materials, such as at
the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana at Legon, but it has been particularly
difficult for under-resourced African institutions to afford adequate archival storage and staffing
to care for and protect the increasingly fragile and deteriorating recordings of the spoken word.

There is a special urgency for creating digital projects to attend to such audio and video
materials before they deteriorate further in the climactic conditions and under-resourced facilities
of much of Africa. This is one of the reasons for our focus on oral sources from Africa, given
that materials in paper archives can be preserved in their original form for far longer.

Looking to future production of oral research sources, American scholars need to find ways
to assist African colleagues to expand their research activities. The British Academy and the
Association of Commonwealth Universities recently released strategies recommended for
institutions in the United Kingdom that are equally relevant to the U.S. The Nairobi Report:
Frameworks for Africa-UK Research Collaboration in the Social Sciences and Humanities
(March 2009) notes the need for publishing and networking space for African humanities and
social science scholars, such as this African Oral Narratives project can provide:

If African research is to be strengthened, then African researchers need to be better
connected to each other, as well as to the rest of the world. Improving collaboration
and networking within Africa must be a priority, and must be encouraged and
supported within research funding programmes... Much emphasis has been placed
on a ‘centres of excellence’ approach but we feel that the focus should instead be on
communities of research excellence.1

Al Kagan, Africana Librarian at the University of Illinois-Urbana (which supports a Title
VI comprehensive African studies center), wrote in a letter of support for this project:

This is exactly the kind of primary source materials that are so lacking in our field.
A long time ago, one of my South African librarian colleagues made the bold
statement that we were mostly collecting materials about African written by
academics who are themselves usually not even resident in Africa. I think she went
a little overboard, … but the motivation behind her remark remains valid. We
should be concentrating more on primary materials. [See letter in Appendix A.]

Peter Malanchuk, Africana Librarian at University of Florida, another comprehensive Title

1 Harle, Johnathan. Frameworks for Africa-UK Research Collaboration in the Social Sciences and Humanities, The
VI African Studies center, concurred:

As an African Bibliographer for more than thirty years, I am readily aware of the critical shortage of authentic African oral narratives that are publically accessible for scholars, language instructors, and students to use in gaining competency for a significant number of African languages.

Web-based repositories are particularly advantageous for resources in African history and other social sciences and humanities fields. As African historian Jan Vansina pointed out:

In all other major parts of the world... the writing of history, academic history included, has primarily been conducted in the area itself, by authors of the area, and for audiences in the area. But in tropical Africa the writing of academic history was organized by 'outsiders,' and ever since, the epicenters of this activity have remained outside Africa, despite all efforts to alter the situation.²

While many African scholars still have limited bandwidth to access to the Web, Internet connectivity in Africa has grown and will continue to increase, so the Web's potential should be exploited for collaborative scholarship and the growth of African studies online.

The quantity of African language resources on the Web is growing, and progress has been made in the necessary software and coding to type and display characters required for African orthographies. A study quoted in the UNESCO report Measuring Linguistic Diversity on the Internet found that there are now many sites documenting African languages but few that "use an African language as the language of communication." Xavier Fantognan reports on a second study that examined online discussion fora and found "a very satisfactory level of using three widely-spoken African languages – Kiswahili, Hausa, and Lingala."

Fantognan's chapter, however, does not even raise the issue of African oral language materials. One source for identifying Web-based African oral language materials is the Title VI-funded UCLA Language Materials Project. Searching this database for authentic audio materials reveals how very limited these resources are. For example, there were 13 results for Swahili (by far the most widely spoken African language), nine for Amharic, and only one for Oromo. And

many of the oral online sources are created by non-Africans, such as foreign journalists and religious groups. This parallels Fantognan's findings about documents online, which often are religious or pedagogical documents and not authentic narratives. As Professor Lioba Moshi wrote in support of this proposal, "As a long-time teacher of African languages, I can testify to the great shortage of authentic African oral narratives that are publically available for scholars as well as for language teachers and students to use in mastering a number of African languages."

3. Significance of the proposed project

3. A. Significance of African oral narratives for humanities and social science research

During the past 50 years, humanities and social science scholars of Africa have given great importance to a wide range of oral narratives as crucial sources for understanding the continent's complex history, cultures, and politics. As historians Luise White, Stephen Miescher, and David Cohen noted in their introduction to African Words, African Voices:

… no element has served as a clearer signature of and for African historiography than the development of a central position for the oral source and oral history within the programs of recovering the African past." [emphasis in the original] 4

White, Miescher, and Cohen describe the significance of African oral narratives using two interrelated motifs: "words" and "voices." "Words" stands for the struggle to obtain evidence from oral sources in societies considered to have been without literacy until very recently. "Voices" stands for the quest for African voices, "not only as a means to knowledge but also as a frame of authority" (White, Miescher, and Cohen, p. 3).

Jan Vansina’s Oral Tradition as History was a foundation for a generation of African historians. It regarded oral tradition – understood as messages or testimony transmitted orally from one generation to another – as evidence of Africa's pre-colonial past that was absent from dominant colonial histories. It was the task of the historian to decode the meaning of oral traditions reported to them as "oral statements spoken, sung or called out on musical

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instruments. Scholars' interests in African oral narratives and their methods for interrogating them have changed – and sometimes been strenuously contested – since Vansina’s work, but the value accorded to oral sources has never been higher. Scholars use oral history to document indigenous knowledge and to democratize history by representing marginalized people and groups whose voices, memories, and actions were often absent from the official (written) record.

The search for "African voices" that tell of life experiences from the perspective of individual Africans has led to a growing interest in oral history or life history sources. African historians are part of an increased focus on oral sources that are valued for their subjectivity rather than questioned as a source of objective truth, as the field of history generally has "subtly shifted to the individual." Historians of women and gender have been among the leading practitioners of oral history because women are 70 percent of the world's illiterate people and, therefore, research in written sources tends to reproduce their social and political marginality.

As African studies and disciplines such as history are becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, the importance of oral tradition and oral history will continue to grow, and the richly diverse oral sources in *African Oral Narratives* will find a large scholarly audience.

3. B. Significance of the oral narrative collections

The African oral narratives collections that this project will assemble are a unique compilation of oral sources collected by African and American scholars. They reflect the range of types of oral materials valued in social science, humanities, and communications research and reveal individuals' perspectives on historical periods from the 16th century to the present. A wide range of *genres* of oral narratives are represented, including oral history, life history, and oral traditions including folklore, and song. The partners are both renowned and younger scholars and are based both in Africa and in the United States.

*Figure 1* presents the researchers, topics, locations, and languages of these oral sources.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholars and Institutional Partners</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Country of Narratives</th>
<th>City or Region</th>
<th>Dates of Collection</th>
<th>Number of Interviews *</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Gracia Clark, Anthropology Department, Indiana University</td>
<td>Kumasi Market Women's Life Stories</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Kumasi</td>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>50 (75 hours)</td>
<td>Akan (mostly Asante Twi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Nwando Achebe, History Department, Michigan State University</td>
<td>(1) Igbo Women and the Biafran War; (2) When Dieties Marry</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>20 each (40 hours)</td>
<td>Igbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assan Sarr, History Department, Michigan State University</td>
<td>Mandinka Land Tenure Systems: History and Customs</td>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>multiple locations</td>
<td>2006-2008</td>
<td>4 (4 hrs) + 12</td>
<td>Mandinka, Wolof, Pulaar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Tessema Ta'a, History Department, Addis Ababa University</td>
<td>Memories of the Macca Oromo in Wallagga and Shawa regions</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td></td>
<td>1978-1980; 2004</td>
<td>25 (30 hours) + 15</td>
<td>Amharic and Afaan Oromo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Getnet Bekele, History Department, Oakland University</td>
<td>Land Use in Rural and Urban Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ada and Lume</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3 (7 hours) + 15</td>
<td>Amharic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Laura Fair, History Department Michigan State University</td>
<td>Taarab songs of Siti binti Saad of Zanzibar</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Zanzibar? / Bombay, India?</td>
<td>1928-1931</td>
<td>30 songs (1.5 hours)</td>
<td>Swahili</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breanne Grace, Sociology Department, Michigan State University</td>
<td>Zigula Narratives of Migration in Tanzania and Somali</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Chogo, Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>25 (25 hours)</td>
<td>Swahili</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joshua Grace, History Department, Michigan State University</td>
<td>Oral History among the Zigula of Somalia; Life Stories of 12</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Chogo, Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>20 (12.5 hrs) + 12</td>
<td>Swahili &amp; Kikuyu</td>
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<td>South African History Archive / Julie Frederikse</td>
<td>Julie Frederikse Collection</td>
<td>S. Africa</td>
<td>interviews in Harare, Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1979-1990</td>
<td>30 (30 hours) + 30</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>South African History Archive / School of Journalism, University of Witwatersrand</td>
<td>White South Africans who Fought against Apartheid</td>
<td>S. Africa</td>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
<td>date unknown</td>
<td>17 (15 hours)</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>South African History Archive / De Wet Potgieter</td>
<td>Military intelligence in apartheid-era South Africa</td>
<td>S. Africa</td>
<td>Johannesburg</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8 (15 hours) + 15</td>
<td>English, Afrikaans</td>
</tr>
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* Number of Interviews - Persons already interviewed to be selected for publishing online + supplemental interviews or new collections to be added
Here we provide very brief descriptions of the significances of these collections.

**West Africa:** Four scholars will contribute oral narratives from their research in West Africa. Three of them focus particularly on the lives of women through their lens of anthropology, history, and literature. They have collected life histories, first-hand accounts,
personal narratives, songs, stories, and traditional prayers from women reflecting on the impacts of slavery, colonial rule, and post-independence civil conflict and socio-economic transitions.

**Nwando Achebe** will explore women's experiences during two important epochs in Biafra, a region deeply affected by the transatlantic slave trade and, 100 years later, by civil conflict as Biafra attempted to secede from Nigeria. In the resulting devastating and prolonged civil war, more than 50,000 Igbos lost their lives and an estimated two million fled from non-Igbo regions of Nigeria to the Igbo east. Achebe will collect case studies of the lived experiences of girls and women during the Biafran war, recording personal accounts of survival strategies that Igbo girls and women evolved, including their participation in "afia attack" (market at the warfront) and development of wartime schools for children. The collection, in Igbo, will fill a gap in African and gender historiography by providing material sources of this important period.

Achebe will conduct a second set of interviews, "When Deities Marry," that will seek to unpack the where, whys, and how comes of spirit-to-human dedication in Northern Igbo-land. While much has been written about the transatlantic slave trade, there is little work on the African communities that were devastated by this international trade on the coast. Nsukka history is replete with accounts of the tradition of deity goddesses who marry women and establish autonomous communities of *igberema* and their descendants committed entirely to their parent divinity. Achebe will explore how inland Igbo communities, weakened by forced removals of the slave trade, looked to supernatural protector spirits to serve their societal needs.

**Gracia Clark** will contribute more than 50 unstructured life histories from Akan (Twi)-speaking women traders from the Central Market of Kumasi, Ghana's second largest urban center and the transportation hub of the country. As traders, they paid very close attention to varying economic conditions and were practiced in bargaining and dispute settlement. Some of the women were gifted story-tellers who demonstrate the rhetorical and stylistic repertoire sustained by their thriving traditional culture. Most of the women interviewed were aged 50-90 and had experienced transitions from the first years of British rule through Ghana's current period as the "poster child" for structural adjustment. Clark's interviews explore the market
women's ideas about national and local economic history through their commentary on personal experiences. This new large collection of interviews will complement 30 interviews with Muslim men and women about Islamic practice which Clark has contributed to the current West African Islam TICFIA project.

**Esi Sutherland-Addy** and Mary Dakubu have assembled *The Kropp Dakubu Collection of Farefare (Gurene dialect) Discourse* which was recorded at Bolgatanga and Bongo (Upper East Region of Ghana) and at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana in Legon, Accra. The oral sources include interviews and discussions about life experiences, oral histories, storytelling, songs, and traditional prayers. This collection in Farefare (spoken by more than one million in the capital of the Upper East Region of Ghana and in Burkina Faso) is interesting in its focus on gender and legal problems, divorce and custody dispute settlement of women, and inter-ethnic marriage. Some recordings feature a Bongo Chief on his ascendancy to a chieftaincy and the traditional governance process now embedded in the Ghanaian constitution.

**Assan Sarr** is probing questions about the changing concepts of land tenure among the Mandinka in Gambia – one of three collections about land tenure in different regions of Africa to be brought together in this project. Landholding and land use have become a central interest to many anthropologists, economists, and political scientists addressing issues of development and property rights in sub-Saharan Africa. Sarr's oral histories about the late pre-colonial period reveal how land was an important symbol of control for the Mandinka aristocracy until the 19th century. These oral sources will challenge the dominant historiographical assumption that Africans valued “property in slaves” more than land.

**Northeast Africa: Tessema Ta’a** will provide a rich set of narratives. Titled "Memories of the Maccaa Oromo in Wallagga and Shawa: Narratives, Folklore and Songs,” the collection contains diverse oral history interviews and narratives about the formation of Ethiopia. These contain history, culture, religion, and songs of the 16th-20th century, and they reflect the socio-economic life of the Maccaa Oromo with oral history on Oromo traditions of origin and settlement, the birth of social classes, state formation, the Gojjame and ansar (Mahdist soldiers)
invasions, and Menilek II’s conquest. Other themes include regional autonomy and cultural identity, the land tenure system and its consequences, and the Italian occupation of Wallagga. Contemporary narratives concern the regimes of Emperor Haile Sellassie, the Derg, and Meles Zenawi, as well as the Oromo Liberation Front, folklore and songs about love, society and politics, and religion among the Oromo in Ambo, Woliso, and Borana.

**Getnet Bekele** has interviewed farmers in Ada (Lume District) of Ethiopia about their perspectives on agricultural change, state policy, markets, and land tenure. These narratives give a unique socio-economic perspective on the life experiences of individual farmers not found in state archives or reports from agricultural research stations at a time of rapid transformation in Ethiopia. This collection captures the historical interpretations of recent Ethiopian politics and its implications for local rural development through the eyes of a rural population. Bekele will conduct an additional series of interviews about changes in land use in the vast urban area of Addis Ababa, with its high population density and urban redevelopment.

**East Africa: Laura Fair** brings a collection of 30 Swahili songs of Siti binti Saad and her band from Zanzibar. In 1928 they traveled to Bombay and recorded 130 of their songs, becoming the first East Africans to have their voices and music recorded on gramophone disc. These recordings became immensely popular in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam. Siti binti Saad's songs elevated the social and cultural position of Kiswahili speakers and affirmed their status as among the “civilized” and “modern” peoples of the world. Siti’s lyrics offered a view of contemporary life from a distinctively working-class and female perspective, yet she was widely respected amongst the Swahili elites. She had a profound influence on East African musical culture and is memorialized by generations of East Africans as giving “voice to the voiceless.”

**Breaane Grace** has conducted interviews about varying forms of migration along the Swahili coast by the Zigula, including 19th century slavery, early and mid-20th century labor migrations, forced migration in the 1990s, movement among resettlement sites, and returns to Somalia. The interviews include unique oral narratives of prophets and prophetesses that provide rich cultural contextualization about a return to Uzigulani (Zigula land, modern Handeni in
Tanzania), believed to fulfill a prophecy from the earlier slave period. Songs and oral traditions describe the “life cycle” of this prophecy from slavery to current resettlement. The interviews also detail several generations of migration that culminated in a forced migration after the war in Somalia in the early 1900s and the way pre-existing social networks facilitated flight during war.

Joshua Grace's "Histories and Historians of the Somali-Zigula" includes personal histories and oral traditions of the Somali-Zigula (in Swahili and Kizigula) describing the group's 19th century enslavement in contemporary Tanzania, their passage to the Benadiri Coast, escape, and the founding of a maroon community in Somalia's Jubba River valley. Some interviews describe traditional healing and supernatural power (uganga and uchawi). Due to the rarity of documents on this period, these oral sources provide a unique glimpse at how a slave group overcame the violence and stigma of slavery to create a community. A second group contains life histories of the Zigula narrators and Zigula history through colonialism, independence, political change in contemporary Somalia and its civil war. A third group is of Zigula war stories, describing the escape from slavery and settlement as a violent process requiring men and women with physical and spiritual prowess. A second collection of "Life Histories of 12 Tanzanians" will highlight the importance of family, friends and personal interactions in people's lives.

Wapulumuka Mulwafu has collected interviews that focus on the history of conservation and particularly the African experiences with the implementation of the colonial conservation policies in Malawi. The interviews were collected in chiChewa language.

South Africa: Originally slow to use oral sources, historians of South Africa recently have embraced oral histories, particularly to capture the knowledge and memories of people, both nationally-prominent and in local communities, who struggled against apartheid. The fact that many of these people are now in their 70s and 80s brings a special urgency to oral documentation. A number of scholars and journalists have deposited their oral history collections at the South African History Archive (SAHA), which will provide public access to seven collections by partnering with our African Oral Narratives project.

(1) The earliest collection is a rich set of recorded interviews with 190 anti-apartheid
activists and leaders conducted from 1979 to 1990 by journalist Julie Frederikse while she was a reporter for National Public Radio. Many of these interviews provided material for her 1990 book, The Unbroken Thread: Non-Racialism in South Africa. SAHA plans to return to approximately 30 of the interviewees both to obtain permission for making their interview public and also to conduct a second interview in order to elicit their perspectives 20 to 30 years later, after more than a decade of democracy. (2) The Wits School of Journalism, with funding from the Tucker Foundation, conducted a set of interviews with white South Africans who fought against apartheid, which complements the non-racialism theme of the Frederikse collection.

Several South African oral history projects have documented the experiences of people serving sentences or detained in apartheid's prisons. (3) In 1993-1994, Barbara Harmel and Phil Bonner interviewed prominent South African leaders and ex-political prisoners who were active in the struggles against apartheid, many of whom were already in their 70s and 80s. Follow-up interviews will be sought with some people in this group. (4) In 2002-2003, SAHA and the Historical Papers Department of the University of Witwatersrand conducted the 1981 Detainees Oral History Project at the request of 37 people who were imprisoned on September 21, 1981. Some of these people remained in prison for only two weeks, while others were jailed until the release of political prisoners in 1990. The arrests came at a time of heightened protest in South Africa, and the interviews shed light on the development of the mass democratic movement that grew with the formation of the United Democratic Front in 1983.

(5) A third SAHA collection about political imprisonment is Oral Histories from John Vorster Square, a series of interviews with both detainees and police personnel at the John Vorster Square Prison in Johannesburg. There is a great synergy among these three collections of oral histories about political detention and imprisonment in apartheid-era South Africa. (6) A final collection of 15-20 apartheid era oral histories focuses on South African military intelligence. These interviews are being conducted on SAHA's behalf by De Wet Potgieter, a journalist who specializes in this area. Most of these interviews are in Afrikaans.

(7) The last collection, the Alternative History Project, explores a different terrain –
South Africa since democracy. Independent researcher and trained political scientist Dale McKinley conducted 60 interviews in 2007-2008 with people in rural communities in Venda and Free State provinces to learn how people felt that their lives had, or had not, changed in the first 10 years of democracy. The interviews were conducted in the local languages of Pedi, Southern Sotho, Zulu, Tswana, and English, and transcriptions and translations have been completed.

The United Nations Multimedia Research Unit proposes to make a large collection of broadcasts available to the public from the U.N. Anti-Apartheid Radio Programme through this project. Starting in 1978, the U.N. produced and beamed into South Africa and Namibia daily, 15-minute broadcasts, which continued less frequently in the mid-1980s, ending in 1994. There are approximately 330 hours of interviews, speeches, testimony, and news reports about South Africa, Namibia, the Frontline States, the U.N., and the international solidarity movement.

When these collections from SAHA and the United Nations are made available online in the African Online Digital Library repository, they will be accessible with 45 other interviews with South Africans (published online by MSU in 2007 as part of the South Africa: Overcoming Apartheid, Building Democracy curriculum resource) and the Community Video Education Trust archive of 90 hours of video documentation of political protest and repression in Cape Town in the 1980s and early 1990s. Together, they will provide users with a remarkable wealth of easy-to-search audio and video sources about South Africa in the second half of the 20th century.

3. C. Significance of oral sources in African languages

People's culture, identity, and view of the world cannot be fully expressed – or fully understood – separate from their language. This case is made frequently by advocates for Americans learning other world languages. UNESCO called attention to the significance of language by declaring 2008 The International Year of Languages.

"The first instrument of a people’s genius is its language," said the French writer Stendhal. Literacy, learning, social integration … Everything transits through language, which embodies national, cultural and sometimes religious identity for each person. It constitutes one of the fundamental dimensions of a human being.

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Determining which African languages should be given priority for language teaching and providing learning resources in the United States is complex because of the many hundreds of languages spoken on the continent and the fact that "[t]he typical African pattern is one of numerous languages per nation, with no one language clearly dominant either in numbers of speakers or in the sociopolitical power of its speakers."  

Of the 16 languages included in the proposed *African Oral Narratives* project, eight are among the 15 African languages in the TICFIA Invitational Priority LCTL list, and six more languages are among the 34 languages that the Title VI African Studies NRCs designated in 2004 as of highest priority for U.S. national language learning needs.  

Approximately 211 million African peoples speak these 16 languages as a first or second language – more than one-fourth of the sub-Saharan African population. *Figure 3* shows the location and number of speakers of these languages (from *Ethnologue Languages of the World*).

3. D. The size and significance of the potential audiences and their use of the resources

There is a vibrant African studies community in the United States. The African Studies Association (ASA), the principal professional association, has approximately 2,200 members, and ASA Associate Organizations focus on many countries to be included in this project, such as Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Igbo Studies. Seventy African Studies programs participate in the Association of African Studies Programs; these programs throughout the country support faculty engaged in research and teaching about Africa and its languages. The H-Net organization of more than 190 professional discussion lists (hosted at MATRIX) contains 10 electronic discussion networks on Africa about research areas such as African history, South African history, West Africa, African literature and cinema, as well as teaching about Africa. There are 7,137 unique subscribers to these lists, many participating in more than one list.

The strong interdisciplinary interest in Africa oral sources will make this repository useful

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for scholarship and teaching in multiple fields. Historian Ben Carton wrote in a letter of support:

I teach several historical methodology classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These courses require students to conduct primary-source research and write a major paper that could be published in a peer-review journal. I can say with care and confidence that the "African Oral Narratives" project will become my central repository of evidence which my students will use in their work.

**Figure 3: Languages in *African Oral Narratives*: Countries of Use, Alternate Names, Number of Speakers, and Priority of Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Alternate Names &amp; Dialects</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Speakers ( + 2nd lang spkrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>West African Languages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akan ☐</td>
<td>Twi, Akuapem, Fante, Asante</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>8.3 million (+ 1 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolof ☐</td>
<td>Yallof, Walaf, Volof, Waro-Waro</td>
<td>Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Maurit.</td>
<td>3.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamanakan ☐</td>
<td>Mandinka, Mandingo, MANDINGUE, Mande</td>
<td>Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>1.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbo ☐</td>
<td>Ibo</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>18.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fula ▲</td>
<td>Pulaar, Fulani, Fulfulde, Peul</td>
<td>Senegal, Gambia,Niger, Chad, Mali, Benin,</td>
<td>3.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farefare</td>
<td>Gurune, Nankani, Booni</td>
<td>Ghana, Burkina Faso</td>
<td>845,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast African Languages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromo ☐</td>
<td>Afan, Western &amp; Central Oromo, Mecha, Galla</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia</td>
<td>30.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amharic ☐</td>
<td>Abyssinian, Ethiopian, Amarinya, Amarigna</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Israel, Egypt, Sweden, U.S.</td>
<td>17.4 million (+ 4 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>East African Languages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swahili ☐</td>
<td>Kiswahili, KuSwaheli</td>
<td>Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, etc.</td>
<td>circa 70.0 million first &amp; second lang speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zigula</td>
<td>Zigura, kiZigua</td>
<td>Tanzania, Somalia</td>
<td>355,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewa ▲</td>
<td>Nyanja, Ngoni, Nsenga</td>
<td>Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique</td>
<td>5.6 million (+ 6.0 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southern African Languages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulu ☐</td>
<td>Isizulu, Zunda</td>
<td>S. Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland</td>
<td>9.6 million (+ 15.7 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tswana ▲</td>
<td>Setswana, Sechuana, Chuana, Coana, Cuana,</td>
<td>Botswana, Namibia, South Africa,Zimbabwe</td>
<td>4.4 million (+ 150,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedi (Northern Sotho) ▲</td>
<td>Masemola, Kgaga, Koni,</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>3.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Sotho ▲</td>
<td>Suto, Suthu, Souto, Sesotho</td>
<td>Lesotho, South Africa, Botswana</td>
<td>4.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrikaans ▲</td>
<td>S. Africa, Lesotho, Namibia</td>
<td>S. Africa, Lesotho, Namibia</td>
<td>6.0 million (+ 10.3 million)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Approximate Total Speakers (first & second language)** ca. 211 million
Students of African languages are a particularly important target audience for this project. While the absolute number of African language learners in the U.S. may not be large, that number is increasing, and they are a strategically important group in whom the U.S. Department of Education is investing significant resources with FLAS fellowships and support to language programs through Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) grants as well as summer intensive programs. The latest Modern Language Association (MLA) foreign languages enrollment study reported 2,163 enrollments in Swahili in fall 2006, a 35.8% increase since 2002.\footnote{Furman, Nelly, David Goldberg, and Natalia Lusin. "Enrollments in Languages Other Than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2006. Web publication, 13 November 2007. p. 5.}

The MLA data do not capture all African language enrollments, because specific data about least commonly taught languages often are not known by registrar's offices that report to the MLA. To fill some of this lacuna, the e-LCTL Initiative at MSU recently compiled the latest data about language offerings and enrollments at universities with Title VI NRCs (accessed from the U.S. Department of Education IRIS system). These data show that 10 languages represented in our collections were taught by at least one African NRC university in 2006-2007. Swahili was taught at all the universities (with a total of 1,059 enrollments in 2006), Zulu and Wolof at five (170 and 158 enrollments, respectively), and Akan at seven (84 enrollments). Also, 799 of the 1207 FLAS fellowships (66%) given for the study of African languages from 2001-2007 were for languages included in our proposed projects. These students of African languages would be clear beneficiaries of online oral sources, especially in the advanced levels of instruction before they depart for field and archival research in Africa. (Suggested methods for using the African language oral sources for language learning are discussed in Section 4.)

While the project emphasizes providing access to materials in African languages, we also will assure that the oral collections have value to people who do not speak the particular language. At least three oral sources in each collection will be translated into English, and the contextual information about the collection also will be in English. Also, most of the South African collections contain interviews in English, making them accessible to a broad public that
is interested in the struggle against apartheid and efforts to overcome apartheid's legacy.

3.E. Dissemination of results to encourage use

This project is co-hosted by the African Studies Center at MSU, one of the oldest Title VI-funded African Studies Centers and which has the largest Africanist faculty in the nation. Our African Studies Center distributes a weekly electronic bulletin that reaches across the nation and the world to Africanists. In addition, the African Studies Center is a regular presence at all meetings of the African Studies Association and many smaller conferences. Working with MATRIX, the Center will present the results of the African Oral Narratives project at these conferences in both the exhibit hall and in scholarly sessions on on-going basis. The Center will also sponsor scholarly essays and research build upon the collections made accessible through the project. MSU also hosts Africa Past and Present, the most widely accessed academic podcast on Africa. Africa Past and Present will extend the reach of this project by highlighting new collections and disseminating the work of each of the scholars engaged in creating them.

Adding African Oral Narratives collections to the African Online Digital Library (AODL) will immediately help publicize new collections. Not only will the AODL portal page facilitate quick scanning of sites, but the forthcoming search function - of individual digital objects across collections by both topic and African languages - will bring items of interest from different collections to the attention of users, which we expect will significantly expand use of materials in all the sites. We post announcements of all new sites to Africa-related listservs, which increasingly are disseminated further by people contributing to blogs, bookmarks, and portal sites. The project design itself is focused on encouraging multiple uses of the foreign information sources in ways that will attract more users to the site. Opportunities to annotate and segment resources and place selected items in personal galleries will encourage scholars and students to share their favorite resources and comments about them with others who, in turn, will be encouraged to come to the site and explore other resources, adding further data to the site to benefit yet other users. (The user tools are explained further in Section 4.)
4. Quality of the Project Design

4. A. An exceptional approach to meeting needs of the target audience

At its core, the African Oral Narratives project is about making oral materials on Africa and in African languages available on the Web. It is also about devising innovative means for scholars, teachers, and students to engage valuable digital primary sources and aggregate value-added information about them. This project will broaden the scope of African Oral Narratives beyond a digital repository and collection management tool by incorporating user tools. The promise of digital “access” is “use.” The tools developed under this project are designed to vastly enhance the ability of our target users to work with and augment digital objects in an online repository. User-generated and contributed content such as transcriptions and annotations will provide an additional layer of metadata that will enhance the scholarly value of the digital sources and simultaneously increase the "findability" of the resources on the Web.

At present, individuals with valuable oral research materials do not have a mechanism to contribute these resources to the African Online Digital Library (AODL). African Oral Narratives can break new ground with the development of an on-line public ingestion process that is open to individual contributors, guided by best practices, and managed by leading scholars in the field. Posting contextual information as well as individual multimedia objects and contributing these resources to a repository used by other scholars will have much greater value than posting individual video files to public sites such as YouTube or Google Video.

African Oral Narratives is designed to meet TICFIA’s purposes not only by making new African oral sources available during the grant period but also by developing a sustainable and scalable model for the ongoing expansion of the African Oral Narratives repository through a long-term collaborative, user-contributed collection and enhancement strategy. There are three components to this project design.

(1) Mount collections of oral narratives and associated metadata to the web: This project will result in a unique online repository of oral sources collected by African and American
scholars, as described in section 3. Mounting these digitized oral narratives to the online repository is the first step toward facilitating access to foreign information resources.

(2) Develop and implement online tools to enhance use, research, and analysis: MATRIX will develop and implement a server-side suite of tools to enable users to segment, annotate, and publish content in the *African Oral Narratives* repository as well as multimedia materials throughout the AODL. The new tools will create an environment not only to work with and analyze digital media but also to share and discuss findings with a community of users. New digital tools will allow users to: (a) add annotations about individual objects, (b) create segments of audio and video, (c) create personal galleries to collect and share objects, and (d) add collections of oral resources to the *African Oral Narratives* repository through a public ingest system. Annotating, transcribing, translating, segmenting, and commenting on digital objects from the repository will provide value-added metadata to the objects in the *African Oral Narratives* repository. These additions will provide additional context and diverse opinions about an object that certainly cannot be replicated in traditional cataloging metadata.

These tools have multiple uses for the project’s target audiences. For example, teachers of African languages can search and collect audio and video materials in any one of 20 languages that will be in the AODL by the end of this project. They can then segment, annotate, and save groups of resources that, for example, illustrate a regional variation in a language or a particular grammatical construction under review in the classroom. By visiting an instructor’s personal gallery, students can interact with the carefully-selected segments in order to experience how native language speakers use the targeted language. Or teachers might ask students to transcribe portions of an oral narrative. Finally, students might be required to review, comment on, and rate other transcriptions or translations on the site. Student interactions with and subsequent comments on the materials would shed light on their learning as well as contribute valuable user-generated materials to the repository.

Graduate students or other scholars also could use the segmenting, annotating, and gallery tools to bring together selected materials on a particular theme from different collections. For
example, the collections to be made public in this project include three sets of oral history interviews about land tenure in Gambia, Ethiopia, and Malawi. A thematic gallery could be created and made public to facilitate online discussion of underlying themes or contrasts in the research materials collected in these three sites by three different historians.

(3) Establish infrastructure and capacity for public object submissions: The project design also includes providing a mechanism for individuals or institutions to submit collections of digital materials to the *African Oral Narratives* repository. Easy to use, online ingestion forms will allow users to describe and directly upload digital files into the MATRIX repository where they will be reviewed before release. MATRIX will supply contributors with guidance and best practices for digitizing and cataloging their contributions. An advisory board will work with staff to establish a submission workflow and vetted acceptance process to ensure quality control of public contributions. Such a system bridges the social and democratic power of public websites such as YouTube and MySpace with the curated presentation, contextualization, and quality that museums and libraries provide.

4. B. Building capacity and yielding results beyond the period of Federal grant assistance

The new digital tools will significantly extend benefits to scholars and language learners beyond the grant period. The tools for creating clips of audio and video streaming files and for annotating the digital objects will allow the community of scholars engaged with the site to grow, as they add further value to the collections. Thus, the investment in the proposed new project will add value to previous TICFIA-funded projects concerning West African Islam and South Africa, as well. The new online ingestion system will allow scholars to add new collections (including sources about additional countries and in other Africa languages) into the future. This system also will allow the current partners in the *African Oral Narratives* project to expand their collections with the addition oral sources beyond those supported by this grant.
5. Quality of Project Personnel

The African Oral Narratives project brings together renowned scholars, an important South African historical archive, an agency of the United Nations, a leading African Studies Center, and leading humanities technology center to produce a unique project in foreign materials access.

Principal Investigators: PI Mark Kornbluh (5% FTE) is Director of MATRIX: Center for Humane Arts, Letters and Social Science Online and Professor and Chairperson of the Department of History at MSU. He directs several major humanities preservation and access initiatives. He has served on several national standards boards including the Best Practices in Humanities Digitization Advisory Board for the National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage (NINCH), the National Research Council committee advising the National Archives on the creation of the Electronic Records Archive, and the scholars advisory committee of the Digital Library Federation.

PI David Wiley (15% FTE) was director of the MSU Title VI African Studies Center for the past 30 years, has been President of the African Studies Association, and has experience developing African partnerships, including in the previous TICFIA South African Film and Video Project. Wiley assisted the African Studies Association Board of Directors and the MSU Africanist faculty in creating ethical guidelines for partnerships with African colleagues and institutions. Wiley also is PI of the e-LCTL Initiative which has engaged Title VI centers for all world regions in collaboratively determining priorities for teaching LCTLs in the U.S.

PI James Pritchett (5% FTE) became director of the MSU African Studies Center in January 2009 and also is Professor in the Department of Anthropology. Formerly director of the Title VI African Studies Center at Boston University, Pritchett has served on the Board of Directors of the African Studies Association from 2003 to 2007. He has done extensive field research among the Lunda-Ndembu in South Central Africa and published on this subject.

PI Dean Rehberger (10% FTE) is Associate Director of MATRIX and Associate Professor of Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures. His primary areas of research include information design and architecture; digital libraries, museums and archives; Internet technologies in the
classroom; and hybrid learning environments. He is a seasoned leader in implementing major humanities technology projects and has managed numerous online educational projects that involve collaboration among multiple institutions, both in the U.S. and internationally.

**Key project personnel:** Catherine Foley (75% FTE) will serve as project manager. A digital librarian, Foley has a proven track record in managing the current West Africa TICFIA project (http://www.aodl.org/galleries/ticfia) as well as the Community Video Education Trust (CVET) digital archive (http://www.cvet.org.za), part of the South African Film and Video TICFIA project. She also is manager of *Preserving American Black Journal* (http://www.matrix.msu.edu/~abj), funded by NEH and the Institute of Library and Museum Services (IMLS). Foley has training in IMLS Outcomes Based Evaluation.

**Other MATRIX staff** contributing to this project are described in Section 8 regarding management. MATRIX makes an affirmative effort to seek student programming employees who are women and African Americans, both of which are under-represented groups in engineering. Our current group of programmers includes people from both these groups.

The team of scholars in this project – who are diverse in terms of race, gender, national origin, and age – are identified with the materials they have collected in Section 3, and their resumes are included in the Appendix C. Here we briefly described their qualifications.

**Nwando Achebe** (5% in years 1 and 2) served as a Ford Foundation and Fulbright-Hays Scholar-in-Residence at The Hansberry African Studies Institute and History Department of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1996 and 1998. Her research interests involve the use of oral history in the study of women, gender, and power. Achebe has authored *Farmers, Traders, Warriors and Kings: Female Power and Authority in Northern Igboland, 1900–1960*.

**Laura Fair** (5% FTE) is author of *Pastimes and Politics: Culture, Community and Identity in Post-abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001) which was a Herskovits Prize Finalist as well as *Choice* Outstanding Academic Book of the Year, 2001. More recent publications explore the collection of songs in this project and cinema in Tanzania.

**Peter Alegi** (15% FTE) is the author of *Laduma! Soccer, Politics, and Society in South...*
Alegi's interest in the intersections between social, gender, labor, and political history informs his research on community-based beauty pageants in South Africa. With Peter Limb, Alegi hosts the *Africa Past and Present* podcast.

Three MSU Ph.D. candidates are participating in this project with independent oral narrative collections Assan Sarr, and has received a Compton Peace and Conflict Fellowship to complete his dissertation on "Landlords and the Landless" in 19th century Gambia. Joshua Grace, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History, received a Fulbright Fellowship to go to Tanzania in 2007-2008 and has a four-year University Distinguished Fellowship at MSU. Breaane Grace, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology, received a Fulbright IIE award and Islamic Civilizations Fellowship in Tanzania in 2007-2008. She has received FLAS fellowships for the study of Swahili at both MSU and in Tanzania. Two Ph.D. candidates in the History Department, Winifred Uche Nwaefiod and Leonard Ndubueze Mbah, will be Research Assistants for Nwando Achebe on two oral history projects to be conducted in Nigeria.

**Project Partners:** Esi Sutherland-Addy is head of the Language, Literature, and Drama Section of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana at Legon. She was Ghana's Deputy Minister of Higher Education from 1986 to 1993. Sutherland-Addy is a member of the UNICEF/UNESCO Joint Committee on Education and several other boards.

Gracia Clark has concentrated most of her research on market women in Kumasi, Ghana. After completing her doctorate at Cambridge in 1984, she has taught mainly at the University of Michigan and Indiana University. Her publications deal with gender, urban and market issues. She is collaborating with MSU on the current TICFIA project on West African Islam.

Tesema Ta'a is Associate Professor in the Department of History and Heritage Management and former Dean of Social Sciences at Addis Ababa University. He has written extensively about the farming system of the Macca Oromo and the integration of indigenous knowledge and new technologies.

Getnet Bekele is Assistant Professor of History at Oakland University. His research interests are in environment and development, identity, and conflict studies in Modern Africa.
Wapulumuka Mulwafu is a faculty member in the Department of History of the Chancellor College, University of Malawi. He has conducted research and written on agricultural systems, conservation, land use, and water use and water access.

Catherine Kennedy, a trained librarian, is the Coordinator of the Struggles for Justice Programme at the South African History Archive in Johannesburg. She supervises an archival team engaged in collection, preservation, and promotion of archival materials documenting past and continuing struggles for justice in South Africa.

Dale McKinley is creator of the Alternative History Project, which interviewed 50 South Africans about their experiences and perceptions of the first 10 years of democracy. Trained as a political scientist, he has done research on the history of the African National Congress, U.S. foreign policy towards South Africa, and new social movements in post-apartheid South Africa.

Jennifer Davis, born in South Africa, worked at the American Committee on Africa and The Africa Fund beginning in 1967, first as Research Director and then Executive Director in 1981. She was interviewed on a number of occasions for the U.N. Anti-Apartheid Radio Programme, about which she will write an introduction and assist with data for this project.

6. Quality of Project Services

6.A. The KORA digital repository application

African Oral Narratives will utilize MATRIX’s open source digital repository application called KORA, now in its third generation (http://sourceforge.net/projects/kora). This innovative software, developed and piloted with funding from the National Science Foundation's Digital Library Initiative, allows users to ingest, manage, and deliver online digital objects and their corresponding metadata. KORA is unique among digital repository applications in that the architecture of its table structure and design can accommodate diverse metadata schemes without the need for custom programming. In the case of African Oral Narratives, KORA will make it possible to enforce use of certain Dublin Core descriptive metadata fields and necessary vocabulary control and standardization (such as names of countries and languages) to allow
effective searching and sorting while also allowing some variation and additions to descriptive metadata for individual collections. This is a powerful combination of features appreciated by people who work with digital libraries.

Another benefit of KORA is its simple, point-and-click user interface for setting up metadata schemes, uploading digital files, and entering metadata. This makes it an efficient application not only for building the many collections to be included in this project but also to create a public ingest system (with user authorization) for other scholars to add new collections independently. With a training tutorial, which will be created for the project, we have found that new users can learn to use KORA in approximately one-and-a-half hours. Since KORA is an online application, multiple users can work in separate collections or the same schemes from separate locations simultaneously.

6.B. New tool development

Multiple front-end and back-end tools will need to be built to handle public ingestion into KORA, taking into account the intricacies of user permissions and moderation of content (i.e., allowing designated people to accept or deny new content, with guidance from an advisory editorial body). A system will be included in KORA to allow collections to have a public ingestion space that exposes the standardized forms to users who have been authenticated. This exposure of the KORA data formatting will allow data to be correctly ingested but will not automatically allow moderated access.

Video and audio segmentation and annotation will be accomplished using tools similar to Pachyderm and Media MATRIX. The tools also will integrate into the submission system to allow user-submitted annotations or translations of audio content to appear on the site. A cohesive and overarching approach to the moderation system will be taken so as to also allow users to create heterogeneous video and audio presentations and collections in conjunction with the segmentation and annotation tool. An additional tool will be created to allow storage of a user's collections of content (i.e. creating new collections or personal galleries of material from other collections that have been annotated or segmented). The multiple tools and technologies to
allow for storage of user content will be integrating into KORA. All enhancements to KORA
will be available for other existing projects in KORA and, because KORA is open source, they
will be included in future versions of KORA releases for the public to use.

The content management and media manipulation tools also allow for data mining tools to
be created, utilizing the new user-generated content and ratings. The data mining tools will be
able to analyze data stored about collections such as overall ratings, positive or negative
feedback, high community rated user-generated collections, and so on. This will allow
researchers to gain insight into why a specific topic may be particular important, or allow the
tracking of trends to be followed, correlating current events in the media with activity on the site,
for example. The newly created tools will open up possibilities for further research tools.

MATRIX has undertaken many digital humanities projects, during the course of which
MATRIX leaders and digitizing and programming experts have participated in national
consultations about and kept apprised of best practices in the field. MATRIX has developed
particular expertise in digitizing audio and video from a number of analog formats with project
partners as diverse as Detroit Public Television and the community-based Community Video
Education Trust in Cape Town, South Africa. Digital technologies have changed rapidly during
the past decade, and they will undoubtedly continue to evolve. MATRIX staff will apply their
knowledge and on-going experience to implementing this project.

7. Adequacy of Resources

The African Oral Narratives project is admittedly ambitious in scope. It covers a wide
range of languages and geography and will include 20 new collections. Nonetheless, as we are
building upon a strong base of past work in providing open on-line access to audio-visual
materials and MSU is cost-sharing the vast majority of faculty labor on the project, we are
confident that the resources requested will be sufficient. As described in section 4, the proposed
project builds upon the phased development of an open source digital repository application,
KORA, originally developed with funding from NSF, that MATRIX has used for a wide variety
of on-line humanities projects including a series of African digital projects. These African projects are being brought together in the AODL portal, which also will serve as a doorway to this project. Substantial work has already been done on KORA to facilitate this project, including the development of Dublin Core metadata fields to make both cross-project searching and public ingestion easier. Since this work has been completed in advance of the new project, grant funds will not be needed for these improvements.

Similarly, the project will build upon our experience with the West African Islam TICFIA project. The gallery design and programming on "Everyday Islam in Kumasi" (http://westafricanislam.matrix.msu.edu/Kumasi) provides a model for multimedia presentations in the proposed *Africa Oral Narratives* project. Having a template will lower costs of mounting individual collections, making it possible to undertake the ambitious goals of mounting 20 new collections, creating new digital tools, and opening the project to new collections, all at a reasonable cost. It is important to note that, while the design and programming requirements of the current and proposed TICFIA projects are similar, the thematic foci, regions of Africa explored, and African languages included are all distinct.

Equally important, digitization costs have been kept to a minimum for the *Africa Oral Narratives* project. Some of the partners have already digitized many audio cassettes, and others are conducting interviews with digital recorders. Several partners received support from other sources to conduct the interviews that will made public, providing indirect support to this project.

The approximately 750 hours of recordings will be a uniquely valuable resource for researchers in multiple disciplines who seek oral sources from Africa and students of African languages. Evidence presented in Section 2 demonstrated that the needs of these targets audiences have been very poorly met until now. The rich repository created by this project will attract other collections over time, we believe, creating even more value for a modest investment.

**MSU institutional commitment:** MSU has a strong commitment to African studies, historically its strongest region of area studies, led by the African Studies Center that has been a Title VI National Resource Center for more than 40 years. With 170 faculty working on Africa
and more Ph.D. production on Africa than any other university now for more than 20 years, the university has developed a unique commitment on Africa. The MSU Administration has adopted an international initiative focused on building selected strategic partnerships with institutions abroad, especially in Africa. The *African Oral Narratives* project is building on – and strengthening – existing relationships with Addis Ababa University, the University of Malawi, and a multi-institutional focus on cultural heritage institutions in South Africa. The Provost's Office has designated a minimum of $48,000 per year in travel and planning funds for strategic partnerships in Africa, some of which can be expected to accrue to further developing some partnerships in this project. For example, Professor Wapulumuka Mulwafu, chair-designate of the History Department at University of Malawi and a collaborator on this project, is currently spending a sabbatical semester at MSU to work on a manuscript, and Professor Wiley's trip to South Africa to develop this project's first-time cooperation between MSU and the South African History Archive was supported in part by MSU Africa strategic partnership funding.

The MSU Africana Library is among the largest three Africana collections in the U.S., not only in books and other manuscripts but also with special foci on maps, films, posters, and growing archival collections. The Michigan State University Museum has one of the largest collections of contemporary South African material culture in the U.S. Both the MSU Library and MSU Museum have a strong interest in African digital preservation and access projects, and their linkages with colleagues in Africa complement the technical capabilities that MATRIX brings to the growing collection of materials in MSU's African Online Digital Library initiative.

The AODL is an important, highly-visible entry point for the public into MSU's extensive African studies research and outreach, and MSU is committed to maintaining it in perpetuity. Indeed, the MSU Archive and MSU Library have begun working with MATRIX to use the KORA digital repository application that underlies the AODL for MSU electronic archives.
8. Quality of the Management Plan

The MSU African Studies Center and MATRIX have a long and effective history of collaborating on African digital projects. Wiley (15%) and Pritchett (5%) will engage with the colleagues who are partners in this project in Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi, and South Africa and will work closely with the Project Manager to maintain effective communication with them.

Kornbluh (5% FTE) and MATRIX Associate Director Dean Rehberger (10% FTE) will ensure that project development follows sound best practices in digital repositories. Catherine Foley, an experienced project manager, will devote 75% of her time to this project both to collaborate with Wiley on working with African partners and with colleagues at MATRIX on coordinating development of the digital repository and website. Foley also will publicize collections as they go online. Matt Geimer (40% FTE), MATRIX's IT Manager who designed the latest version of MATRIX's KORA digital repository application, will oversee programming for the website and tools. Scott Pennington (10% FTE), head of MATRIX digitizing, will supervise digitizing of audio cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes and preservation of digital files.

Dr. Steve Cohen (15% in years 1 and 4 and 10% in years 2 and 3) has developed the evaluation plan and will conduct the evaluation of the project. Resident in Boston, he will travel to East Lansing once each year and attend one conference each year with someone from the project team in order to conduct evaluation activities with scholars who are representative of our target audiences. Cohen will work with Foley to ensure that evaluation planning is incorporated into the project workflow and that needed evaluative data are collected.

Each of the scholars engaged in this project has committed to prepare an introduction to their collection, write descriptive data about the individual oral sources, contribute photographs to accompany the oral sources where possible, and oversee preparation of transcripts and English translations of a subset of the recordings. (See letters of commitment in Appendix B.)

Work on the seven collections to be prepared by South African History Archive will be overseen by SAHA staff member Catherine Kennedy, an experienced project manager. She will work with a group of SAHA consultants who have the requisite skills to obtain permission from
**Figure 4: Timeline and Milestones for *Africa Oral Narratives* Project**

### A. Development of Collections and Dissemination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Year</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six months</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Partner**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Year</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Gracia Clark</td>
<td>Digitize, Text, Obtain</td>
<td>Text, Text, Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Nwando Achebe</td>
<td>Interview, Text</td>
<td>Text, Text, Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute of African Studies, Ghana</td>
<td>Digitize, Text</td>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assan Sarr</td>
<td>Obtain, Interview</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Tessema Ta’a, Ethiopia</td>
<td>Obtain, Digitize, Text, Write</td>
<td>Interview, Text, Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Getnet Bekele</td>
<td>Digitize, Text</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Text, Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Laura Fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Digitize</td>
<td>Text, Write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breanne Grace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview, Write</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Grace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview, Write, Post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Wapu Mulwafu, Malawi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview, Obtain, Write</td>
<td>Text, Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African History Archive (SAHA)</td>
<td>Post (7), (6)</td>
<td>Post (5)</td>
<td>Post (4)</td>
<td>Post (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Multimedia Research Unit</td>
<td>Digitize</td>
<td>Digitize</td>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination (C - Conferences; L - Listservs)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C, L</td>
<td>C, L</td>
<td>C, L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY:**

- **Obtain** - Obtain permissions from interviewees
- **Digitize** - Digitize analog media
- **Interview** - Conduct interviews
- **Text** - Prepare transcripts, translations
- **Write** - Write introduction & metadata
- **Post** - Post collection online
- (#) - Collection number of SAHA (see SAHA budget justification, also)

### B. Tools Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website development</td>
<td>Design; spec; program; ingest; test; modify; launch</td>
<td>Ingest content; evaluate site</td>
<td>Ingest content; modify site; integrate tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segmenting, annotating, and gallery tools</td>
<td>Design database, interfaces</td>
<td>Write specs; program</td>
<td>Test; launch, evaluate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Submission system</td>
<td>Establish submission &amp; acceptance policies</td>
<td>Design database &amp; interface</td>
<td>Spec; program; test; modify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C. Evaluation

See section 9 of the narrative for the timeline of evaluation activities.
interviewees, prepare written introductions and descriptive data, select appropriate accompanying images, and conduct new interviews.

The United Nations Anti-Apartheid Radio Programme materials have only a minimal index, so a graduate student in African history will listen to each program and prepare descriptive metadata, supervised by Peter Alegi (15%). Consultant Jennifer Davis will prepare the introduction to the collection and help solve problems that arise with data about particular shows.

*Figure 4* shows the timeline and milestones for the collections development, digital tools development, and evaluation of the project.

**9. Quality of the Project Evaluation**

We will pursue a range of focused assessment activities, all of which will measure the degree to which the project has met its objectives and therefore TICFIA's mission. We will also use evaluation to feed back into the design and the ongoing development of the *African Oral Narratives* project. Some assessment activities will be formative — intended to be sure that the project tools and activities we put in place are working as we hope and expect. Others, particularly those in year 4, will be summative — measuring the extent to which *African Oral Narratives* objectives are met or exceeded. Finally, some activities will be exploratory — helping to guide the development of *African Oral Narratives* by identifying new and emerging prospects spawned by the project which had not been anticipated earlier.

The following two complementary assessment methods will be utilized to gather data with all three evaluation goals in mind:

- quasi experimental designed assessments to establish estimates of success and proximity to milestones;
- focus groups and protocol analysis with expert and novice users (Flagg, 1990) to assess

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usability, tool effectiveness, working relationships, and broad use of the collections.

Below is a summary of evaluation activities related to the project's five main objectives.

**Activities to Evaluate Project Objectives**

**Objective 1:** The project will publish online more than 12 thematic collections containing 100s of carefully-selected oral narratives and accompanying photographs, transcripts and translations.

**Milestone by Year 4:** Scholars and teachers identify at least 12 collections in *African Narratives Online* that have a critical mass of materials that are thematically connected and complete for their purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Experiments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups 2 per year:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2:** Partnerships developed with scholars in Africa and at U.S. universities to carry out this project will be collegial, reciprocal, transparent, and mutually beneficial to all partners.

**Milestone by Year 4:** *African Narratives Online* will spawn at least six working groups of colleagues, each group including at least one scholar from the US and another from Africa, characterized by the collegiality, reciprocity, transparency, and mutually beneficial partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Experiments 1 per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus groups 2 per year

Each year the project management will identify two cohorts, one that is working together most effectively and the other is least effectively. Two focus groups will be convened allowing for private vetting of successes and areas for improvement. This feedback will be used to design supportive and corrective working environments for partnerships.

**Objective 3:** The collections will provide free, public access to materials in a number of African languages that are useful to language teachers and students (8 of the 15 African languages).

**Milestones by Year 4:** A curricular model for using the collections to support language learning will be successfully vetted in an outcomes assessment demonstrating either improved learning efficiency, depth of understanding, or both.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quasi Experiments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In years 3 and 4, four teachers of foreign languages that have participated in the focus groups and used the collections will be invited to participate in an assessment formally designed to assess their benefit. Working with the project evaluator, teachers will identify uses they have found to be particularly promising, and a test will be designed to assess their effectiveness. At the end of year 3, results will be used to provide feedback on the curricula, materials and tools, and a model will be developed. In year four a second round of experiments will test the model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each year there will be a focus group for teachers of African languages. The group will identify the main challenges they face as teachers, review the materials and tools, and suggest applications that will improve either learning efficiency or depth of understanding. The feedback will be used to design access to specific content and tools that seem to enhance learning. After two years, teachers will be invited to participate in a formal outcomes assessment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 4:** The oral narratives will be made accessible for interactive use.

**Milestone by Year 4:** 80% of all users will choose to use tools within 10 minutes of selecting a collection in order to enhance access or depth of understanding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quasi Experiments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 3 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers, teachers, and students will be asked to use the site, one group with defined tasks (some designed to encourage tool use, some designed to deter tool use even though they might be helpful); others will be left to their own devices. Using protocol analysis, we will learn what factors influence effective tool use for each population and make incremental improvements to the interface, metadata and tools. Particular attention will be paid to the extent to which annotating tools and personal galleries meet the needs of different groups of users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus groups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As part of the focus groups by researchers and language teachers, participants will walk through storyboards for <em>African Narratives Online / AODL</em> to assess usability issues and better understand the kinds of tools required to meet goals. Feedback will be turned into revised design specifications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 5:** The *African Oral Narratives* website will become a significant repository with a critical mass of diverse oral narrative resources about Africa and in African languages to which African partners and scholars of Africa will be able to add new collections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone by Year 4: A preponderance of attendees at relevant conference sessions will have heard of and used <em>African Narratives Online.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Experiments 1 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups 1 per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sum of the evaluation activities will provide conclusive evidence about the extent to which the project met its objectives and provide feedback suitable to TICFIA’s mission. In addition to these focused assessment activities, bi-annual meetings will be used to review use data collected by AWStats (with a focus on who is using the site, international access, access by users outside those expected) as well as reviewing all feedback to consider if any new objectives are emerging that the project is in a position to meet. Results of these meetings will help ensure that information collected as part of the evaluation is thoroughly reviewed and used as effectively as possible to steer and improve the project.