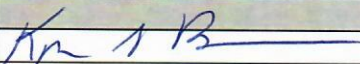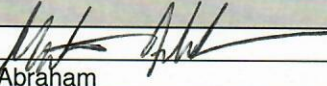**YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY**

Template for Strategic Investment Funding Proposals, FY 2018
Proposals must be submitted to the YSU Budget Office, no later than February 1, 2018

Section I: Proposal name and contact information

Title / name of proposal:	Digital Humanities Center
Contact person name and title:	Kristine Blair, Dean
E-mail address:	klblair@ysu.edu
Phone number:	(330) 941-3410

Section II: Approvals of the appropriate College Dean and/or Division Officer

To certify that the proposal is aligned with the strategic objectives of the department, college or division, signature approvals are required by the appropriate Department Chair or Director, College Dean, and/or area division officer, i.e., Provost, Vice President, Associate VP.

Signature of Dept. Chair or Director	
Name (printed/typed):	
Title:	
Date:	
Signature of Dean (if applicable):	
Name (printed/typed):	Kristine Blair
Title:	Dean, CLASS
Date:	1/25/2018
Signature of Division Officer:	
Name (printed/typed):	Martin Abraham
Title:	Provost
Date:	1-31-18

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Section II: Description of the proposal and its alignment with the YSU 2020 Strategic Plan

Please summarize the proposal and specify how it aligns with the YSU 2020 Strategic Plan.

We are seeking $100,000 in funds to develop an interdisciplinary Digital Humanities Center at YSU, a research, professional development, and instructional space designed to facilitate the role of digital media, communication, visualization, and preservation tools in humanities scholarship, teaching, and community engagement. Digital Humanities Centers are common across the country, and YSU's Center would focus on promoting a diversity of interdisciplinary digital research methods, including archives and preservation, geographic information systems and mapping, and overall digital scholarly publication processes that rely on audio, image, video and other forms of data and content visualization and would leverage current plans to virtualize Digital Space servers and update the software as well. Our team's plan is to apply for a $500,000 NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grant due March 15, 2018, which mandates matching funds of $1.5 million over the five-year period of grant funding to assure the development and sustainability of facilities, equipment, and programming. Overall, the proposal aligns with several of YSU's Strategic Planning Cornerstones, notably urban research, sustainability, regional engagement, and ultimately student success, given the potential impact on curriculum and undergraduate research.

Section III: Shared governance and stakeholder engagement

Was the proposal developed collaboratively and with input from all stakeholders? Please describe the process used to develop your proposal.

Since Spring 2017, the CLASS Dean's Office has facilitated a Digital Humanities Working Group, which has included faculty from Economics, English, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, and Philosophy. Until his departure from YSU, Research Services Director Andrew Shepard Smith, along with Assistant Director Ashley Riggleman, helped us brainstorm the purpose and mission of our proposed Center, along with funding resources for various DH initiatives at YSU. Some of our plans will involve establishing a pedagogical brown bag series, applying for state funds from the Ohio Humanities Council for a DH Symposium, and developing a digital humanities certificate. Our goals also include the alignment of our project with the Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Center, and the development and sustainability of various digital archives, including a faculty commons for the exhibition and dissemination of scholarship and creative work by faculty and by research teams that include both undergraduate and graduate students.

This current proposal is the result of a collaboration with the Offices of Research (AVP Hripko and Ms. Riggleman), Information Technology (AVP Yukech), the Maag Library (Interim Director Torres), along with faculty and administrative representatives from the Youngstown Historical Center for Industry and Labor (Professors DeBlasio and Pallante), and other faculty from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. We plan to reach out to other Colleges as well, including CCAC and STEM in areas such as art history, gaming studies, computer science, and 3D printing.

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Section IV: Return on Investment

If applicable, describe how the proposal may generate new revenue to support related expenses or other strategic initiatives. If there are benefits other than revenue-generation, whether tangible or otherwise, you may also describe those.

In addition to 1) the possibility for a national $500,000 grant to support our Center as discussed in Section II, there is 2) substantial fundraising potential for an endowed professorship to direct the Center and thus we plan to involve the YSU Foundation in developing a donor marketing campaign. Fundraising could also leverage existing initiatives such as the proposed Center for Italian and Italian American Studies based on the grant's goal of studying and documenting cultural heritage materials. Given part of the Center's emphasis on archival preservation, we are 3) also able to leverage the annual commitment of approximately $100,000 from the Ohio History Connection for the administration of the YHCIL. Finally, because of 4) additional state funding requests to implement the MVICC, these funds would represent part of the necessary NEH cost-share for our Digital Humanities Center, to be partially housed at the MVICC. We ultimately plan to develop a Digital Humanities Center of Excellence (DHCE), leading to increased scholarly visibility, student recruitment, and career placement.

Section V: Proposed funding amount requested (NOTE: Available strategic investment funds are one-time dollars left over from the prior fiscal year. Consequently, proposals requiring multi-year funding will require additional consideration.)

Single year funding request:	$100,000.00		
Multi-year funding request (if applicable):	$	No. of years:	1

Section VI: Space utilization and/or modification

If applicable, describe any special and/or additional building or space requirements that would be needed to pursue your proposal.

Although it is vital that there be a centralized, designated space for the Digital Humanities Center, preferably as part of the MVICC, the emphasis on archives would require likely allocation and potential renovation of space in Maag Library. In addition, the off campus location of the MVICC would mandate satellite stations and spaces on YSU's campus, with DeBartolo Hall as a potential space for augmenting professional development programming and training (especially due to the Cisco Spark Station to be placed in the building), as well as designating work stations for archiving, data gathering and visualization, and collaborating on digital exhibitions and projects.

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Section VII: Personnel costs / additions

If applicable, explain any additional costs associated with the need to add staffing and/or faculty resources required to pursue your proposal.

In its initial stages, the Center will require an allocation of reassigned time to several faculty charged with the development and implementation of Center programming, fundraising, and additional external funding proposals. Because of the specific collaboration both with the Maag Library and with Information Technology Services, both library and IT staffing would need to be allocated to this project as well. Other forms of staffing, particularly because of the alignment of the Center with student success and graduate/undergraduate research, will include student workers and graduate assistants, including GAIs that could be funded by external sources as part of our Center's fundraising goals.

Section VIII: Enterprise risk management

If applicable, describe the risk mitigated by your proposal, or the risk elevated if your proposal is not funded.

NEH grants are highly competitive. Being able to document that we have multiple sources of matching funds is vital to our success, and thus a seed investment of $100,000 would allow us to

1) implement faculty development
2) purchase software and hardware
3) begin to redesign facilities
4) allocate faculty, student, and staff (library, IT)

One challenge is that the University must commit space to this initiative, potentially both on and off campus, and while is possible that some of the equipment and facilities costs could be absorbed by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, a cost-share from the University budget and from external fundraising and grants is again imperative for sustainability. Overall, an investment on the part of YSU in the Digital Humanities Center is an important way to ensure that the liberal arts and social sciences have an equal role in the plans for the MVICC and in YSU's urban research, regional engagement, and student success priorities.