

## THE BRITISH LIBRARY

### CO-OPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

#### **South Asia through Official Eyes : Mapping the National Collection of South Asian Official Publications**

**Proposal submitted by: Oxford University Library (lead site); The British Library; The Centre of South Asian Studies, Cambridge; The School of Oriental and African Studies; and the University of Cambridge Library (Official Publications Dept. & Royal Commonwealth Collection) on behalf of the South Asian Official Publications Library Group (SAOP).**

#### **Aims and Objectives**

- To enable libraries to share information about current collecting of serial South Asian Official Publications and to collaborate on collection development in this area through creation of a web-based collection assessment tool.
- To improve access to South Asian Publications by researchers by bringing together information from the British Library and libraries in the University sector.

This will be achieved by conducting a title by title survey of current acquisitions of serial South Asian Official publications in the collaborating libraries. An interactive, web-based, collaborative management tool, which will be associated with the RSLP Mapping Asia site, will then be developed from the results of that survey. This management tool will be the first step towards the South Asian Official Publications Libraries Group goal of working towards a more co-ordinated and co-operative acquisitions programme. This is a demonstrator project that is scalable and the web-based tool will be applicable to co-operative acquisitions management of serial publications in other subject areas.

The web-based tool will enhance access for users by offering detailed information on current serial subscriptions and the libraries where they may be found, information that at present is very difficult to obtain. The database will unify bibliographic information currently split between resources such as OPAC97 and COPAC and information only held in manual records. An electronic suggestions box will allow users suggest new serial titles for acquisition and thus participate in developing the national collection.

#### **Background - rationale for project**

The books and serials in the official publications of South Asia are essential primary sources for the study of South Asia from the nineteenth century to the present day and are an important resource for international and comparative studies in the humanities and the social sciences.

Prior to independence, UK libraries received their Indian and Sri Lankan official publications by legal deposit. After independence in 1947 and 1948, however, the flow of deposited official publications gradually ceased and each library made purchase decisions in isolation. There is currently no easy access to information about acquisition policies for post-independence South Asian official publications. It is not clear, for instance, whether any library is systematically collecting State level publications, if they are being purchased at all.

The general lack of data makes collection development decisions difficult and raises concerns about unnecessary duplication and/or gaps in the national collection.

The South Asian Official Publications Libraries Group (SAOP) was formed in September 1999 in recognition of the challenges posed by this material. The first meeting, attended by representatives of the British Library, the British Library of Political and Economic Science, the School of Oriental and African Studies Library, the University of Cambridge Library and the University of Oxford Library, concentrated on current acquisitions. Although members of the group were keen to work towards a more co-ordinated acquisitions policy, it was clear that progress could only be made if detailed title by title information of current serial acquisitions could be collected. Members agreed that work towards more co-ordinated collection policies should involve tackling the issue of national access and there would also need to be some way of making information on co-operative initiatives transparent to users.

### **Proposed Timetable**

- July 2000 Appointment of Project Officer.
- Aug-Oct 2000 Identification of core serials and design of survey of current acquisitions of those serials by Project Officer. The Project Officer also draws up operational requirements for the acquisitions and selection management database, the web-based interface and the general South Asian official publications web-site in consultation with the Project Steering Committee.
- Nov 2000 Mailing of the survey of current serials acquisitions to be returned by Feb 2001.
- Nov-Feb 2001 Development of the web-based collection management database according to the agreed operational requirements, using external consultants where necessary. During this period the Project Officer would also concentrate on developing the public section of the web site by gathering collection development policy statements, information on access arrangements and overviews of the historic collections.
- Mar-April 2001 Analysis of surveys, follow-up visits, resolving queries that arise from acquisitions audit. Input of data from survey on to database.
- May-June 2001 Beta testing and evaluation of web-based South Asian official publications management tool.
- July 2001 Final modifications to web-site in the light of feedback from testing and evaluation and dissemination of the project.

### **Outcomes & Deliverables**

- An acquisitions and selection management database.
- A web-based interface for searching the above.
- A public/private web site for displaying this and other descriptive information about the collections.

Detailed documentation drawn up during this demonstrator project will provide full technical specifications and standards to enable transfer of the web-resource technology to other projects.

The public section of the web site would offer researchers:-

- Title by title holdings information for core series (see under Standards for definition of core series).
- Access arrangements.
- Collection development policy statements.
- Brief overviews of the historical collections, with descriptions of any catalogues and finding lists, plus hotlinks to any which are on the web, such as OLIS and OPAC97.
- Electronic suggestions box for new acquisitions.

The private site would additionally contain for each title:-

- Cost.
- Contact details of the agent used, exchange partners, donating institution.
- Comments on agents (reliability, etc.).
- Frequency of title.
- How obtained (purchase, exchange, donation).

Each title would contain the following bibliographic information:-

- Country of origin.
- Title.
- Pressmark/shelfmark.
- Name of issuing body.
- Holdings, including notes of significant gaps.

Data would be searchable by the following:-

- Keyword in title and corporate name.
- Name of country.
- Browsable index of titles, arranged by country.
- Browsable index of corporate names, arranged by country.

### **Standards & Scope**

- The survey will cover core series as identified in authoritative reference guides such as the *Guide to official publications of foreign countries* by the American Library Association Government Documents Round Table, ed. Gloria Westfall (2nd ed, 1977).
- The web-site will be developed following the design criteria laid down for the Mapping Asia web-page, which will follow standards currently under development by UKOLN for RSLP mapping projects.
- Close co-operation with the Mapping Asia survey of newspapers, which will in many respects, be similar to the survey of current serials acquisitions, to ensure consistency of approach, especially with regard to display of vernacular titles.

The partner libraries will be able to complete the database within the 12 month time-frame of the project by confining the survey to core serials (both English language and vernacular) as identified in authoritative reference sources. The project will co-operate with the Mapping Asia newspaper project to explore the best way to display vernacular titles in the database, thus ensuring that the project will be scaleable to include more peripheral series (whether vernacular or English language) at a later date.

### **Expected benefits and How the Project will use available resources**

Anticipated benefits include:-

- Cost savings through the elimination of unnecessary duplication.
- Identification of gaps in the national collection, which will be filled by agreement amongst SAOP members.
- Sharing of expertise in acquisitions.

The proposed project builds on the impetus created by the formation of the South Asia Official Publications Library Group and the RSLP Mapping Asia project to improve coverage of and access to the essential primary sources for the study of South Asia. The combined UK collection of South Asian official publications numbers some 91,000 volumes but the lack of data about these publications, and the uncoordinated way in which acquisition has taken place, has long hampered researchers. This project therefore has the full support of the British Association for South Asian Studies. As Chair of the Association (see attached letter of support).

### **Relationship with other existing programmes**

The project will have close links with the two following projects:-

- Mapping Asia: Library Collections, Language Expertise and Newspapers (RLSP Funded).
- Digital South Asia Library Project (US Department of Education Funded).

Although this project will be developing an entirely new resource to offer to the library and research community, in the form of a web-based co-operative management tool, it will also benefit from its close relationship with the RSLP Mapping Asia project. Mapping Asia is a demonstrator project which aims to improve access to and coverage of UK library materials for researchers by mapping existing UK library collections relating to Asia, treating newspapers in depth and examining the availability of language expertise in UK libraries, which is required to service these collections. The project will disseminate this information via a web-site. The Mapping Asia work will enable national collaborative collection management policies for information sources in Asian studies to be discussed and formulated, allowing gaps in coverage in the distributed national research library for Asian studies to be addressed and unnecessary duplication of specialist materials to be avoided. South Asia through Official Eyes will be able to make use of web-design standards developed for the RSLP funded project and by associating its web-resource with the Mapping Asia site will be able to benefit from the SOAS commitment to support this web-resource after the end of the RSLP project.

The project will also benefit from very close links with the University of Chicago Library's Digital South Asia project (DSAL). There is already close collaboration between the University of Chicago Library and the British Library as the result of the e BL's duplicate set of official publications of India being deposited in the University of Chicago. James Nye, DSAL Project Director, is an international member of SAOP. His project, funded over three years by the US Department of Education, seeks, amongst other objectives, to create an on-line bibliography of US holdings of serial South Asian official publications. Collaboration between the two serial official publications projects will ensure a consistency of approach and standards.

### **Justification of Resources**

The resources are based on the model provided by the RSLP funded Mapping Asia project. South Asia through Official Eyes will be managed by 10% of the time of an ALC4 (£38,773 p.a.) South Asian specialist. The Project Head will be responsible for budget management and will chair the project Steering Committee, which will include representatives from partner libraries and the Mapping Asia project. The Project Head will also liaise with the project's academic advisory panel.

The Project Officer graded at ALC2 (£28,678 p.a.), which is equivalent to the grading of project officers for the Mapping Asia project, will be responsible for design and distribution of the survey and will then organise follow-up visits to participating libraries to clarify any issues raised in the survey. The Project Officer will be responsible for design and testing of the web-based collection management tool and, in consultation with staff of the Mapping Asia project, will design the web-site display.

It is estimated that the project will also require a C3 (£15,228 p.a.) Project Assistant at 10 hrs a week for six months, to be responsible for photocopying and mailing the surveys as well as inputting data from the survey returns.

### **Partnership Funding**

Oxford University Library is able to offer partnership funding in kind by committing 10% of an ALC 4 post for the Project Head. The Bodleian Senior Management Group has confirmed this commitment.

### **How the project will be sustained beyond the period of Co-operation and Partnership Fund Grant**

- The South Asian Official Publications Library Group intends to use information from the survey of current acquisitions to identify individual titles that could offer the opportunity for co-operative access or acquisitions agreements. Any co-operative acquisitions initiatives reached through the Group's twice-annual meetings and the SAOP Mailbase mailing group would be managed through the web-based tool developed as part of the project.
- The South Asia Official Publications Library Group will survey the information on the project's web-site at its twice-annual meetings and will commission any necessary follow-up surveys and software enhancement, applying to funding sources such as the South Asia

Library Group for support. During the period of the grant-aided project, the Project Officer will draw up detailed documentation of the project methods and standards. Since the proposed web-site is a component of the Mapping Asia site, it will benefit from the SOAS commitment to support this web-resource after the end of the RSLP project.

### **Intentions for Publicising the Project and Dissemination of Transferable Lessons and Findings**

- Details will be circulated to the appropriate Library Groups such as the South Asia Library Group and the National Council on Orientalist Library Resources. At the start of the project, details of its aims will also be circulated to the relevant academic societies e.g. The British Society for South Asian Studies and the Royal Asiatic Society. In addition, information will be sent to relevant e-mail discussion lists such as H-ASIA.
- A test web-site will be mounted as part of the Mapping Asia pilot site at SOAS and will explain the scope of the project and inform users about the development of public access features of the web-resource. Relevant web-sites, such as the British Association for South Asian Studies home page, (<http://basas.homepage.com/> ) and the Digital South Asia Library home page (<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/southasia/dsal.html>) will be invited to provide links to the test site and to the final web-resource.
- Progress reports on the project will be sent to relevant e-mail lists and articles will be contributed to appropriate publications such as the *South Asia Library Group Newsletter*, *The British Association for South Asian Studies Bulletin* and the *International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) Newsletter*. The progress reports and articles will encourage feedback on the test-site and comments received will be taken into account when developing the web-resource.
- The above bodies will be notified of the outcomes of the project as it nears completion.
- Documentation compiled during the project on issues relating to the application of standards and the design of surveys and the web-resource will be made freely available to the relevant library groups to assist with the development of further co-operative collection management projects.

### **How the project will be monitored and evaluated**

- The project will set up a Steering Group consisting of members drawn from partner libraries and a representative from the Mapping Asia project. Representation from CURL and RLG will also be invited.
- The project will seek the assistance of the British Association of South Asian Studies in setting up a panel of up to five academics who use South Asian Official Publications in their research to assess the public features of the web site. It is anticipated that this panel will meet twice during the course of the project, to advise on information which researchers would find useful and to test and evaluate the resulting public features of the web site and collection management tool.
- Assessment of the private features of the collection management tool will be undertaken by a panel of librarians to include John McIlwaine, Senior Lecturer, School of Library, Archive & Information Studies, University College London and Graham Shaw, Deputy director, Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library.

### **Evidence of the Applicant's ability to carry out and manage the project**

The applicant has managed the Indian Institute Library since 1993. This library has a significant collection of approximately 16,000 South Asian official publications dating from the 1800s to the present day and adds approximately 280 titles to the collection each year.

As Chair of its IT sub-committee, the applicant managed a survey of the use of IT in Orientalist libraries in 1998 for the National Council on Orientalist Library Resources. She has completed an Oxford University Project Management course and has the support of her line-manager, who is the Project Co-ordinator for the RSLP funded Mapping Asia project, as well as that of the Bodleian Senior Management Group. The applicant has a long-standing interest in South Asian Official Publications and was responsible for forming the South Asian Official Publications Library Group, which is committed to improving access to the material and exploring co-operative collection management. The applicant has also set up a Mailbase mailing group to facilitate communication between librarians with responsibility for South Asian Official publications.

### **Roles and responsibilities of each of the partners and evidence of commitment**

The Project Head and Project Officer will work from Oxford University Library, where the C3 Assistant will also be based. Project staff will be responsible for co-ordinating the survey of serial acquisitions and development of the software for the collection management tool. SOAS will provide the host site for the web-based management tool.

Collaborating Libraries are committed to providing information for the title by title survey of serial publications purchased by their library. All collaborating libraries are members of SAOP, and will therefore use information gained from the collection management tool to develop initiatives in co-operative acquisitions of serial South Asian Official Publications. Letters of support from collaborating libraries are attached.

### **Costs**

<b>Total cost of project</b>	<b>£51199</b>	<b>Total grant required</b>	<b>£47322</b>
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<b>Breakdown of grant required</b>	<b>Professional staff</b>		<b>£32555</b>
	<b>Clerical</b>		<b>£1744</b>
	<b>Travel and subsistence</b>		<b>£1000</b>
	<b>Equipment, materials and consumables</b>	<b>Non-recurrent</b>	<b>£2200</b>
		<b>Recurrent</b>	<b>£500</b>
	<b>Other costs</b>		<b>£13200</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£51199</b>

<b>Details of any partnership funding obtained for this project or funding applications pending</b>	<b>Sources of partnership funding</b>	<b>Amount sought</b>	<b>Amount approved</b>
	<b>Oxford University Library</b>	<b>£3877</b>	<b>£3877</b>

### **Staff**

Salaries are based on standard costs supplied by the Oxford University Administrative Offices. Professional staff costs comprise one ALC 4 at 10% for twelve months at £3877 (partnership

contribution in kind by Oxford University Library) and one ALC2 Project Officer for 12 months at £28678. The clerical staff cost represents one C3 at 10 hours per week for six months. (For justification of staff costs see section on justification of resources).

### **Travel & Subsistence**

Travel and subsistence costs will cover travel to meetings of the Steering Group, travel to meetings with applications designers and necessary follow-up visits to surveyed libraries by the Project Officer. The estimate reflects the fact that the Project Officer may need to make more than one follow-up visit to libraries with large acquisitions programmes.

### **Non-recurrent & Recurrent Costs**

The non-recurrent equipment estimate covers two computers for use by the Project Officer and Project Assistant (Oxford University Libraries will supply a third computer for the Project Manager as part of the contribution in kind) and a shared printer. This cost is based on standard figures supplied by Oxford University. The recurrent estimate covers paper, copying and postage costs for the survey as well as telephone costs for arranging follow-up visits and liaison with members of the academic panel.

### **Other Costs**

Other costs include £6000 for consultancy on web-design and £5000 for one full cycle of collection management tool application development including Beta testing and evaluation (following advice from Oxford's Bodleian Library's Systems Section). This figure is based on current available information, taking into account that the project wishes to include core vernacular titles, but it may be possible to reduce this figure once it becomes clear what the collection description developed for RSLP mapping projects may be able to offer. Monitoring and evaluation costs of £700 are intended to cover the travel costs for the academic panel and the specialist librarians panel (partner libraries will pay for the travel expenses of members of the Steering Committee). Recruitment costs of £1500 for staff are based on standard costs given by Oxford University Offices.