



NATIONAL
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Digital Scriptorium
NEH HCRR Quarterly Report
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*The National Endowment for the Humanities and Digital Scriptorium together:
Democracy demands wisdom.*

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this report do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Digital Scriptorium, through its institutional partner at the University of Pennsylvania Libraries, received a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources implementation grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to continue and expand our work in building the DS Catalog. This work designated through the grant focuses mainly on creation of original metadata descriptions for previously undescribed manuscript objects and increasing the number of records available in the DS Catalog. Additionally, the grant is intended to support projects that encourage reuse of DS data as well as outreach and education opportunities for member institutions to increase their knowledge about DS Catalog workflows and infrastructure. Elements of this outreach will include workshops and presentations about the DS data model, the structuring of DS data, how to use the DS Wikibase and search interface for improved discovery, and how DS carries out data enrichment and reuse workflows and processes.

In our grant application, DS indicated that regular quarterly reports would be made to the DS Board of Directors and shared with the public. These reports endeavor to keep both the Board and our community informed about grant-related activities and the completion of workplan goals and deliverables. To that end, this third quarterly report marks ongoing fulfillment of the grant by carrying out the following actions:

Manuscript Data Curation Fellow Activities

MDCF Kelly Tuttle has worked consistently on data enrichment tasks for contributed data from member institutions, helping to develop and improve DS data dictionaries,

especially for Name authority records and Standard Titles. Successful completion of this work has allowed DS to continue to add new records and update existing records in the DS Catalog.

In addition to data enrichment tasks, MDCF Tuttle has also been focused on other areas of work which seek to fulfill grant workplan benchmarks and deliverables. MDCF Tuttle continued outreach to member institutions to assist them with metadata creation for undescribed and underdescribed manuscript objects. To date, the following institutions have received description assistance for the indicated number of items (94 total):

- Boston Public Library: 2
- Buffalo & Erie County Public Library: 7
- California State Library: 24
- Newberry Library: 9
- Oberlin College: 22
- Ohio University: 10
- Smith College: 6
- Union College: 1
- Western Michigan University: 13

DS continues to reach out to existing and prospective members to provide minimal descriptions for previously undescribed manuscript objects.

During this quarter, MDCF Tuttle also planned and presented a small series of two online workshops on identifying and describing manuscripts from Islamicate traditions. The first workshop dealt primarily with understanding general aspects of these manuscripts and the second workshop looked more closely at specialized features such as genre, scripts, and decoration. These May workshops were well attended with over 20 participants. It is anticipated the series will be repeated in the coming months.

Furthermore, to address communication-related deliverables MDCF Tuttle has published blog posts for March, April, and May 2026. The March blog post described cross-cultural examples of techniques for rules, or layout features guiding scribes while writing on the page, across DS member collections. April's blog post delved into "incomplete" manuscripts from the blank surface to the partial illustration to the fully realized page. In May, MDCF Tuttle recapped the Digital Medieval Studies Institute workshop led by DS staff (Lynn Ransom, Kelly Tuttle, and L.P. Coladangelo) in which participants were guided through the process of generating manuscript descriptions and transforming those descriptive elements into machine-actionable data.

DS Catalog and DS Membership Expansion

Even as we met our goal for the total number of records in the DS Catalog put forth in

the grant application, we have experienced additional growth which we are reporting during the grant award period. Two new institutions have joined the DS consortium since the last quarterly report: Haverford College (as a full voting member) and The Athenaeum of Philadelphia (as an associate member). We look forward to receiving their data contributions in the coming months.

Since the last quarterly report, we have uploaded 1,234 records from the following institutions:

- University of Dayton
- University of Kansas
- Lehigh University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Pepperdine University
- Princeton University
- Vassar College

Existing records were also updated for the following institutions:

- Bryn Mawr College
- The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens
- Newberry Library
- Free Library of Philadelphia

Additionally member institutions have also contributed new and updated data which is currently being processed. The DS Catalog now contains records for 29,898 manuscript objects at 48 member institutions.

DS to Wikidata Project

DS continues to create items in Wikidata for DS Catalog-represented manuscript objects and to upload relevant data to Wikidata based on an earlier successful pilot program. Wikidata item creation and uploading of data furthers both completion of grant deliverables as well as fulfillment of long-term DS goals to contribute manuscript metadata to the Linked Open Data ecosystem.

Currently, DS has created 14,835 Wikidata items, which is well within striking distance of the grant-stated goal of 18,650. Wikidata item creation is now an integrated step in our DS Catalog extraction, enrichment, and ingest workflow. As institutions contribute new and updated data in the coming months, we expect to surpass the goal we set out in the grant application. We will also explore more closely integrating Wikidata QIDs, other identifiers, and links to additional resources directly into DS Catalog records when considering future data model and platform redevelopment.

Workshops and Conferences

In addition to the successful two-part workshops on Islamicate manuscripts held in May (described above), DS staff also participated in the Digital Medieval Studies Institute (May 13, 2026), held prior to the International Congress on Medieval Studies (Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 14-16, 2026).

During DMSI, acting Executive Director Lynn Ransom, Project and Data Manager L.P. Coladangelo, and MDCF Kelly Tuttle participated through facilitation of a workshop entitled “Manuscript Description and Research in the Digital Ecosystem.” The workshop guided 12 participants through hands-on exercises in creating descriptions for manuscript objects owned by Western Michigan University, structuring those descriptions as manuscript records ingestible into the DS Catalog, rendering those descriptions as linked data values through the use of Linked Open Data vocabularies and authorities, and finally, understanding how manuscript descriptive elements become machine-actionable data when published as LOD and queryable using SPARQL endpoints.

The latter portion of the DMSI workshop will be expanded and reworked by PDM Coladangelo as a five-part online series taking place in July 2026. Through the series, participants will be introduced to LOD in the DS Wikibase context; learn how to write a basic SPARQL query; modify queries through actions such as filtering, sorting, and limiting; integrate more advanced SPARQL clauses into their query structures, and finally, explore techniques for extending data and combining datasets, such as federated queries.

Immediately following DMSI, DS participated in the ICMS as program sponsors and conference exhibitors. DS, along with the Peripheral Manuscripts Project, sponsored three sessions (totalling nine presentations) on the topic “Medieval Manuscripts in North America, and How They Got Here.” DS also staffed an exhibit booth giving live demonstrations of the DS Catalog, informing conference attendees about the Catalog and the consortium, and encouraging representatives of potential member institutions to join DS.

Respectfully submitted,

L.P. Coladangelo
DS Catalog Project and Data Manager