

# Corporation for Public Broadcasting

## The American History and Civics Initiative

### Pre-proposal Briefing

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#### Participants:

Ken Ferree

President & CEO

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Michael Pack

Senior Vice President

Television Programming

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

James Denton

Senior Consultant

American History and Civics Initiative

**KEN FERREE:** Good morning and thank you all for coming to this pre-proposal briefing for CPB's American History and Civics Initiative. As you probably know by now, this initiative represents a major commitment by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to enhance middle and high school students' knowledge and understanding of American history and the political process.

The objective of the initiative is to bring together content developers, folks in the education, high-tech communities and others, to develop groundbreaking projects using new media, using the media that our middle and high school students interact with on a

daily basis to fill those critical shortfalls in their understanding of American history and hopefully to enhance civic participation. It's an ambitious objective, but your participation and attendance here today gives me great hope that we can achieve our objective. So thank you very much for coming and I'm going to turn the podium over to Michael Pack at this point.

MICHAEL PACK: Thanks, Ken. That was a good summary of the purpose and goals of the History and Civics Initiative. And to achieve these goals--as you know, we are asking for partnerships to apply to the initiative, so in the spirit of collaboration and knowing who's out there I thought I would begin by asking everyone in the audience to briefly identify themselves by stating their name and the organization they represent.

Dick Hezel of Hezel Associates.

Karen Jaffe, MacNeil Lehrer Productions.

Susan Mills, MacNeil Lehrer Productions.

Joe Krushinsky, Maryland Public Television.

Naomi Spinrad, producer and writer.

Bill Ferster, University of Virginia.

John Allen, Signature Communications

Rhonda Allen, Signature Communications.

Cameron Clarke, Vodium.

Katie Moran for PerformTech, Inc.

John Prizer, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Mark McLindon for CA Consulting Internet Solutions.

Kevin Clark, George Mason University.

Susan Bellows, American Experience, WGBH.

Tam Taylor, Center for Civic Education.

John Hale, Center for Civic Education.

Tom Phelps, the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Robert Rupp, West Virginia Wesleyan College and Cleveland BIC.

Holly Taylor, Tiger Tigress Productions.

Mary Frost, Frank Frost Productions.

Barry Stoner of WITF, Harrisburg.

Sue Baldwin-Way, WITF.

Jack Hurley, the Newseum and Freedom Forum.

Sheila Bernard, the Newseum.

Paul Sparrow, the Newseum.

Chris Gergen, K12.

Tom Kester, Core Knowledge Foundation.

Barbara Garvin-Kester, Core Knowledge Foundation.

Skip Coblyn with the National Visionary Leadership Project.

Phyllis Slade Martin, National Visionary Leadership Project.

Julie Benyo, WGBH.

Ron LaRussa, WGBH Interactive.

Maryanne Culpepper, National Geographic.

Claire Griffin, the Bill of Rights Institute.

Melanie Tacoma, the Bill of Rights Institute.

Carl Colby, Colby Television.

Roy Morris, the MIT Enterprise Forum.

Keith Deaven, Media Barn Incorporated.

Tor Manders, MassLight, Inc.

Daniel Abrams, MassLight.

Ana Post, the National Council for the Social Studies.

Ali DeGerome, State of the Art, Inc.

Gerardine Wurzburg, State of the Art, Inc.

Mila Thomas, the International Society for Technology and Education, ISTE.

Kenneth Lee, National Catholic Educational Association.

Sonny Izon, independent producer.

Ira Klugerman, Educational Film Center.

Jim Cortina, Cortina Productions.

Joe Geraghty, Close Up Foundation.

Steve Schupak, MPT.

Noel Gunther, WETA.

Craig Impink, WETA.

Karen Kenton, WETA.

Glen Hoptman, The Lightbeam Group and Studio.

Andrew Aurbach, ASAA Multimedia.

Joan Desmond, Fifth Avenue Productions.

Karen Goodwin, Fifth Avenue Productions.

Rachel Kramer, Higher Achievement Program.

Rachel Ward, the Association of Public Television Stations.

Ruth Collins, Achieve 3000.

Maura Phillney, Blue Vista Productions.

Karen Morison, Civic Enterprises.

Dave Witzel, Forum One Communications.

Jennifer Woods, Junior Achievement.

Eugenia Kemble, the Albert Shanker Institute.

Layla Masri with Bean Creative.

Sharon Leon, the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University.

MR. PACK: Once again, thank you all for coming.

I'm Michael Pack. I'm the Senior VP of Television Programming at CPB, and I'm joined here by two others who will help answer your questions-- Jim Denton, a senior consultant to CPB who is guiding the development and implementation of the History and Civics Initiative, and Melissa Maher, who is the project's senior coordinator.

I'm pleased we have a range of organizations present because, as I mentioned previously, our notion is to fund partnerships between the kinds of groups that are represented in this room. This pre-proposal meeting will be nuts-and-bolts oriented-- focused on explaining our objectives and strategy and, generally, how the RFP works, so that you are better prepared to respond, if you decide to do so. In that spirit I will speak briefly about the initiative and then we'll take your questions and answer them as best we can.

My intention is to briefly summarize the initiative's goals and to highlight the RFP's key points in order to create context for the question and answer period that will represent most of our conversation here this morning. I will speak assuming that everyone has read the RFP.

The purpose of the American History and Civics Initiative is to find new ways to teach middle and high school students by fusing content, curriculum, broadcast and the new technologies. Students are graduating from high school without very basic knowledge about American history and with declining levels of civic engagement. And, it gets worse every year, with the levels of knowledge about American history and how American government works declining annually. We believe these well documented realities represent a serious threat to our democracy and we also believe that public television can help solve the problem.

In addition, this RFP offers us the opportunity to experiment, to try out new ways to reach these kids--not just to get the media to them but to move the needle on their learning. So, it's an ambitious project, requiring the development of new partnerships among people who don't normally work together, and we task them to develop new approaches using new technologies to solve an old but increasingly serious problem.

By way kind of introduction, I will very briefly review some of the key criteria described in the RFP. As you know, the initiative incorporates three grant making stages --first Research and Development, then Prototype Development and, last, Production and

Implementation. For the purpose of this meeting, our emphasis will focus on the first stage--Research and Development.

Back to the various criteria in the RFP, the first of which is “**Audience, Need, Standards, and Formative Research.**” We are looking for projects that teachers and students need and will use. Therefore, we expect projects will most likely relate directly to classroom history and/or civics curricula as well as incorporate, in some meaningful way, relevant standards.

**Point two: “Public Television and Other Media.”** Since we are the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, there must be a public television broadcast component to your project, but in the case of this initiative, unlike many others at CPB, the television broadcast component can not be the only media component. The historical pattern in public television has been to fund television productions and then to version the end products for classroom use. The History and Civics Initiative flips that traditional model on its head. In this case, our emphasis is to encourage potential applicants to devise new models and methods to teach students by integrating content and curriculum with new interactive broadcast technologies. The project may then be versioned for television broadcast which need not be the main vehicle for learning.

We do also require that applicants incorporate the resources within the public broadcasting system in addition to its broadcast capacity. There are ample education-oriented human and technical resources in the public broadcasting system--talent, know-how, and networks.

**Point three: “Contact and Production Style.”** We expect the content to be linked to curriculum needs and that the content will focus on key principles, values, and events as they relate to American history and civics. With respect to style--the product must capture both the imagination and attention of middle and high school students. They’re a tough audience. To truly move the needle on learning requires imagination and new approaches. This is a tough group to reach. They’re distracted, have lots of things on their minds, and swim in a sea of media. We want to see an imaginative ways to reach this group, to capture their imagination, not just to hand them the same material in the same old way.

**Point four: “Outcomes: Summative Research and Measuring Effectiveness.”** It’s essential for us that we move the needle on learning in this project, and we require that that “movement” be measurable and demonstrable. The RFP requires that each applicant design and outline the evaluation method by which they intend to rigorously measure their programs effectiveness and results. In that regard, we expect applicants to identify and establish concrete base lines and incremental benchmarks against which measurements can be made to assess real improvements in learning on the part of the pool of students in the target market.

In addition, CPB intends to engage an independent evaluation firm to assist CPB in its evaluation of proposals and projects once implemented. Thus, the outside evaluator

will evaluate the applicants' proposed evaluation methods (which will be explained in their proposals). In addition, this evaluator will establish a means to independently monitor and evaluate each grantees project results separate from the individual grantees self-evaluation.

**Point Five: “Partnerships.”** Given the complexity and the array of resources and expertise that must be mobilized to achieve the Initiative’s objectives, CPB requires that applicants enter the competition formally as partnerships. Each partnership will have a lead partner, or Managing Partner, responsible for managing and representing the overall project. The partnership will consist then of the Managing and the so-called Key Partners.

The RFP offers limited requirements on the nature of individual partnerships. That said we envision that partnerships will generally consist of at least 4-5 partners that might include a public television station or consortium of stations, a curriculum developer or textbook publisher, a production or content development entity, a high tech company and quite likely one that specializes in interactive or gaming. A partnership might include a city, district or state board of education, or another public entity. Partnerships could include academic institution, or think tank and, certainly another public or private grant making entity. There are a whole range of possible partners--but each should serve a key and clearly stated function in the overall concept.

Generally speaking, I would add that we anticipate that the proposed learning concept or model and strategy will be developed first, and that the partnership will be designed and constructed to implement the concept.

Finally, there is the **“Financial Models and Business Plans”** section. CPB will strongly favor projects that bring co-funding. We have a general belief that a key indicator of a proposal’s seriousness, financial viability and sustainability will be in part measured by the degree to which a high tech commercial entity invests in the project. We believe there is significant long term profit incentive for a company that successfully incorporates interactivity or gaming into school curriculum and teaching. Therefore, we will be looking for a commitment by the private sector in this public-private venture.

We assume that CPB’s financial buy-in to individual projects will decrease proportionately to the overall project budget as the project advances from one stage to the next. I hope the RFP is clear that CPB is looking for projects that will design new ways to teach and learn that will continue beyond the initial production and implementation phase, and that these new models can be adopted and expanded nationally in time. So to that end we want to know what your business plan is, where you expect to get your money, how it’s all going to work, what your long-term vision and plan is. And once again, we expect more detail as the project advances, but even at the earliest stage applicants must consider the longer term issues. In the end, these projects will not be viable if they’re not financially sustainable for the long haul.

That is about all I want to say at this point about the RFP and the key categories. Rather than continuing to talk I will open the discussions for questions. All right, any questions?

Q: Layla Masri. I'm with Bean Creative Web Development Studio, and I have two questions. Hopefully the first is more straightforward than the second.

The first question is, do applicants need a national advisory panel for the R&D part of the project? Second question is, will an R&D application be competitive if it proposes a sophisticated online application and then moves to television?

MR. PACK: You don't have to have an advisory council. An advisory council is a tool for you to design, develop and deploy as you see fit, if you see fit.

And, no, individual projects needn't begin with a broadcast. We envision that the broadcast component, in most cases, will come later. For example, some of the school materials might be cut into short video segments that can be strung together into perhaps one hour or a couple half-hour segments. And so, no, the order doesn't matter although we'd probably prefer that the projects avoid a huge gap in time between the various components being rolled out.

Q: Susan Mills from MacNeil Lehrer. My question is on schools and classroom because the RFP mentions after-school hours, off school grounds and out of classrooms. So if something were hypothetically a broadcast and had a lot of interactivity or games, how would you see that fitting into--does it have to fit into the classroom?

MR. PACK: No, it does not have to fit in. We assume that many projects will be in-classroom, but surely products could be assigned by the teacher for home use or use in other learning environments.

We place no limits on partnerships in this respect. If it is needed by teachers, if they say that they want and will use it--chances are we'll be satisfied.

Q: Claire Griffin with the Bill of Rights Institute. I have a question about the timeline for this project. It's clear that there are three phases. Is it your sense that R&D will take X number of months, years, and what's the X, and prototype will take how much time?

MR. PACK: Again, do not want to be too limiting. It depends on the project. Some will be more complex than others and some will require more development work than others. So it's hard to say. And some may skip prototype completely, as we say in our RFP.

Do you want to give any broader guidelines to what we imagine, Jim?

JIM DENTON: Not really. We are leaving it up to the applicant to come up with

a concept and we'll adjust our timeline accordingly within reason. We don't really have a timeline to adjust, to be perfectly frank. We only say, technically speaking, that CPB will commit up \$20 million to the initiative over three years. But, even that is most likely flexible given how the initiative evolves.

MR. PACK: Let me also add that our focus is on quality rather than speed.

Q: Ron LaRussa from WGBH Interactive. Given the difficulty in reaching this audience on television generally for public broadcasting, does the broadcasting component necessarily have to be directed at this audience or could it be directed at parents or teachers or some support element of the core audience?

MR. PACK: That's a good question. The broadcast could be directed to anybody but it must relate to and reinforce the content of the larger project in some reasonable way.

Q: Maryanne Culpepper, National Geographic. My question is a good corollary to that because for middle school and high school students, public television isn't necessarily the first place they flip on the dial. We may indeed be able, in the broadcast component, to design something that will attract a higher number of them, but is public broadcasting the only, or must it be the solo, venue for a broadcast component? If you were to create some great American history video game, you might want to look at another broadcast outlet to do a tie in.

MR. PACK: It's true that middle and high school students don't watch a lot of public television. That's one of the reasons the broadcast will not likely be the central component in most proposed projects. We do require that every project contain a broadcast component, but it need not be the central component. And, yes, we expect that there will be other media broadcasts besides television in the projects as well.

MR. DENTON: Just for clarification--when Michael says that "broadcast" need not be the primary component, we're referring to television broadcast. If you look at broadcast in the larger sense, and we certainly are looking at it in the larger sense in this RFP, "broadcast" could be a website, it could be a cell phone, it could be a game. And, it is the television broadcast that need not be primary. We're obviously looking to incorporate these new interactive media which the young people are swimming in. We want to see if these interactive media--websites, games and so on--can be used to teach young people American history as opposed to just teaching them how to cut off monster's heads, build castles and these sorts of things that games do now.

Q: I'm Sue Baldwin-Way from WITF in Harrisburg, and I have two questions, both of them related to baseline assumptions. One is that you just said that these students are swimming in technology but on the first page it specifies that you want projects to help the underserved. Is there any baseline research that can help us or that you can direct us on what technology the underserved truly have access to and is embraceable by them?

And my second question is about baseline research related to outcomes assessment and the proof of real learning in the classroom. You have to start with something, and what mechanism you might have or whether we are supposed to build into our proposal an assessment of what's going on in the classroom now.

MR. PACK: I think in both cases we are relying on you to give that as evidence that your project is needed and fits in. Of course, we did look at some of the research that is out there. However, if your project is directed to a particular audience, perhaps an underserved constituency, it's up to you to research where that audience is in terms of media use and other things. It's further complicated because "underserved" is a broad term. A group might be underserved in significant ways but actually have a lot of media. For example, a lot of under-performing public schools have good facilities and weak teachers.

In general, it's up to you to collect and analyze the relevant research and/or plan to conduct additional research.

Q: Yeah, it's actually the research you have in here about whether real advancement in teaching and learning has taken place as a result of the project. It sounds like we would have our baseline--we would build that into it.

MR. PACK: With respect to the summative research, we expect the applicant to indicate how he or she thinks learning results should be measured. Then, we would also expect the applicant to work with the research group we select to independently measure the results individual projects.

MR. DENTON: I would add, with respect to underserved, again, that in the context of this project, and using the broader sense of the word "underserved," given the national test results one could say the entire high school population is underserved. Of course, in the narrower more traditional use of the word--public television has a very keen interest in addressing the needs of the underserved. If an applicant were to identify an underserved subgroup as the focus of a proposal and if that subgroup lacked access to the necessary technology--then you might want to solicit a commercial technology partner who could provide the needed hardware.

Q: Daniel Abrams, MassLight, Inc. This is as much a suggestion as it is a question, but is it possible to get some sort of email group or list set up to facilitate different types of organizations that want to partner so that maybe a technology company that wants to meet a content producer that wants to meet an education provider as they're developing their proposals can get together?

MR. DENTON: Thank you. That's an excellent idea because one of the RFP's big challenges is to bring people together who have not worked together before. At a minimum we'll try to post the list of attendees for this meeting and those to follow, as well as the attendees' relevant contact information on our website. There may be some

privacy issues here, but we will do what we can. Keep an eye on the website--and the FAQs.

MR. PACK: We want to be careful not to pair up one group with another group. We are a public entity, so we need to be open to all. To the extent that we can facilitate things and share information in a free and open way, such as on our website, we will try to do it. We do realize the importance of this kind of networking. We are working to find ways to do this as much as we possibly can within the guidelines of the laws that govern us.

Q: I guess what I'm suggesting is basically just – and we'd even be happy to do this--just setting up something like a Google group that anyone would be open to join and then they could post what they're looking for, what they do, what they're interested in.

MR. PACK: That's a good idea. We will look into it, there will likely be privacy issues, but we will try to find a way to post the names of the participants in order to facilitate communication and partnerships among potential applicants. In the interim, if anyone here does not want their name on any list which would be public and perhaps distributed, I ask you to contact us in writing at [History.Civics@cpb.org](mailto:History.Civics@cpb.org).

Q: Cameron Clarke, from Vodium. I want to reiterate that that I think this meeting and list is really critical for all of us. I see that as vital as we move forward. Secondly, it looks like you're going award multiple contracts? Will they need to talk to each other, will they be separate projects? How does that work?

MR. PACK: They will be separate and independent projects. It is our expectation and intention to fund different approaches and methods. Middle and High School students are a difficult audience to reach, as has been said, and we want to try different approaches; that's part of the reason for R&D. We estimate that CPB will award, I think the RFP says 10-15 R&D grants, and then fewer prototype grants and even fewer production grants. And, of course, the CPB grant amounts increase significantly in size as an individual project advances to a follow-on stage.

I believe the market can absorb and sustain several different approaches. It's a huge market--we're talking all middle and high school students. There are wide variety of methods one could deploy. And, we hope that applicants will come up totally new ideas. By the way, any new successful teaching and learning method that works with American History will probably be applicable to other subjects as well. That expands the marketplace yet again. I think there is room for lots of creativity and innovation.

Q: Kevin Clark with the Instructional Technology Program at George Mason. I have two questions. One--the deadline is September 8<sup>th</sup>. Can you give us an idea of when the decisions will be made? I know it mentions the three years, but then you said that it is three years but it could be longer. So I'm trying to get a sense of when the awards will be made. That's my first question and my second question is--when you list the ranges in each of the three phases, is there a certain percentage of that amount that you would like

to see matched or externally funded?

MR. PACK: We expect the co-funding percentage to increase from stage to stage. In the R&D stage, we expect the co-funding to be proportionately lower. Beyond R&D, we expect co-funding to increase sharply.

Regarding the timeline, it's difficult to predict how long the evaluation process will take because there are many unknown variables. The first of which is the number of proposals submitted. The novelty and complexity of this project--the multiple objectives, the experimental quality, the partnership feature, the commercial buy-in component, and so on--makes it difficult to make accurate predictions about the final timeline.

MR. DENTON: In the *America at a Crossroads* initiative, which was launched about a year and a half ago, we received an unprecedented 440 proposals. We attribute this in large measure to the aggressive marketing campaign we launched to bring new talent and voices to public television. Indeed, about half of those were first time applicants to CPB. While we were very pleased with the strong response, on the other hand, it rather slowed things down because we had a small staff and an obligation to perform due diligence on each proposal.

We are also aggressively marketing the *American History and Civics Initiative*--visiting 5-6 cities across the country to reach out to potential applicants. However, because this is a complex project, and the bar is set rather high with respect to our goals and requirements, we generally expect to receive no more than 50-60 serious proposals. If that estimate is accurate, we hope to make R&D selections four-five months after the submission deadline.

MR. PACK: The R&D phase will most likely be the slowest. It should move more quickly after we get that first round awarded. Once the R&D grants are made, the field narrows considerably because those R&D awardees will represent the pool henceforth.

Q: Ira Klugerman, Educational Film Center. The RFP clearly calls for technology partnerships. But what's not clear is once the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Public Broadcasting's needs are fulfilled, what about the rights to the other ancillary products, which will be part of this project?

MR. PACK: The rights question is tricky; please look closely at the rights section in the RFP. Our goal at CPB always is to share in revenues in a way that is fair to public broadcasting but that does not unduly restrict applicant's ability to make business deals that can sustain the project on a commercial basis. The many rights issues will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

MR. DENTON: I hope it's also clear in the RFP that we believe the direct involvement, a better word might be "investment," by the tech community is important, perhaps essential for us to succeed in the long term. We hope that the tech community

will see this project as an opportunity to make substantial inroads into schools that will potentially lead to substantial profits. To achieve our goals, we understand that the commercial tech sector will expect a return on its investment and we will facilitate that.

Q: I'm Richard Hezel of Hezel & Associates. I'd like to ask a question about evaluation. You're going to hire your external evaluator for the entire program. And I assume that that organization will do some of the evaluation on the impact of the project overall. And I'm wondering about the kinds of rigor that you're looking for from each project, and whether or not the rigor of the evaluation has to adhere to what the--for example--the U.S. Department of Education calls its gold standard of evaluation. And rather, you're looking for the evaluation of each project to be more a summative evaluation of sorts--experimental kinds of evaluation--whether it's to be more formative--summative, or just formative?

MR. PACK: The formative research will be done by the applicant. For example, you may want to hold focus groups with teachers and/or students that will enable you to refine the concept on an ongoing basis. We expect formative research to be part of your proposal. Our thinking is it's your project, you know what needs to be tested. You are the best able to integrate the results of that kind of research into your creative process.

On the other hand, we will contract with an outside firm to do the summative research, because that needs to be independent and trustworthy. We are in the process of selecting a group--the result of a limited and focused RFP. Since we haven't made our final selection of the company, we can't say what their methodology will be. Most of those we are considering seem to use what the Department of Education characterizes as an experimental approach--as far as I understand it all. We are seeking the greatest rigor possible in the research techniques.

Q: So the evaluation internally is going to be more formative and more aimed at the continuous improvement of the product, rather than at testing the actual outcomes and what happens to the --

MR. PACK: Yes, internally, you are responsible for the formative research. While an outside group will conduct the summative research, we still expect each applicant to describe the kind of summative research they think would work best--how they think their project's effectiveness should be measured.

Q: How do you feel about an existing pilot program, which is already working with students in schools and integrating new technology, interactivity, and a broadcast component to programs that already exist and have a proven track record? Is that a good thing or a bad thing in your mind?

MR. PACK: I'm sure we will get applications that build on existing programs, and that's fine. But the same burdens of proof will apply. We don't want to simply add a website to an existing program; we don't want to just add another layer. We are assuming, because there is a big problem in American education that is not being

addressed, that new approaches are necessary. A genuinely new approach can be built on an old program--that is true--but we don't want simply an old program dressed up with additional bells and whistles.

Q: Tom Phelps, with the National Endowment for the Humanities. I have a question that again goes back to this business of broadcast. When you're looking at broadcast elements to go out from these projects at a later time, how much partnership, how much interaction do you want from these proposals with PBS itself? Because if you don't have that, this won't get on the air.

MR. PACK: At the R&D phase, you don't have to prove that your television component will be broadcast via PBS. All you need to do is suggest why your program would make a good addition to the schedule. We have been in touch with PBS, of course, and they have been supportive. Historically, CPB funded projects have a good track record being broadcast on PBS.

At the R&D stage, and throughout, our primary concern is that your content is needed by teachers, responds to their curriculum needs, and has a strong interactive component--in other words, that teachers and their students will use it--that is will measurably increase learning. Unless it's integral to those primary concerns, the details of the television broadcast are likely to be a secondary concern. In any case, the television program you produce would have to be offered to PBS, as is required of all CPB funded projects.

Q: Two questions. First, regarding co-funding possibilities--is it more informal or do you think there will be some restrictions with other federal dollars like NEH or TAH or so on?

MR. PACK: One impetus for us to launch the project in the first place was that there are a variety of likely sources of funding--including commercial partners and more traditional public television underwriters: federal and state agencies, foundations, and corporations. For example, the goals of the NEH's *We the People Initiative* are very compatible with our goals and we've been in close touch with the NEH. We assume that some projects will successfully funded by both the NEH and our initiative. While we welcome, and indeed encourage government and non-profit foundation support, please be mindful that we also place high value on commercial investment as an early indicator of the project's long term financial sustainability.

Q: A second question--since history is both national and local, you've been talking about a national rollout, but could you conceive of collaboration among states for a national impact at local levels?

MR. PACK: All projects must be national in scope in the sense that the project's content has to be applicable and versionable nationwide. This means that the American history that is featured in a given project's content must be applicable to the American history curriculum taught in comparable classrooms nationwide. For example, it follows

that a project on Pennsylvania's history per se would probably not be appropriate to an American history curriculum in other state and therefore would be ineligible. There are a lot of great public television state networks that are doing great history programs about that state. That's a good thing, but it hits a different audience with a different curriculum requirement.

On the other hand, if your project is about World War II--or is an entire year's course in American history--you could begin by rolling it out in California, for example, and then later plan to take it to other states across the country.

Beyond that, I'm not sure how individual states would collaborate. In general, the more local involvement, the better.

Q: Eugenia Kemble, The Albert Shanker Institute. How much up-front discussion are potential grantees encouraged to have with CPB? We've been awarded some NEH funds for our civics and democracy work. They like the approach where you meet in advance to discuss our ideas and we discuss next steps regarding, for example, how to proceed and what kinds of advisors you might include in your group. NEH recently published a RFP on history, which requires potential grantees or grantees to meet four times a year to discuss the initiative. What are your intentions with respect to the interaction with applicants during the application process?

MR. DENTON: The inherent conflict is that, on the one hand, CPB wants to encourage and support individual applicants, and on the other hand, we have an obligation to be transparent and ensure all potential applicants can play on a level field without any favoritism. Also, for now, we are also a staff of two with hundreds of interested potential applicants. So, for various reasons, the degree to which we can interact with applicants is limited.

To reply more directly to your question, we promote and explain the program, our objectives and priorities to potential applicants by conducting this series of pre-proposal meetings across the country. We will expand the reach of these meetings beyond the attendees by transcribing and posting the transcripts of several of these meetings on CPB's project website. This should allow everyone more or less equal access to our comments regarding the initiative. Once these transcripts start being redundant, we'll stop putting them online.

Maybe I'm going out on a limb here, but it is in CPB's interest to get strong proposals. So, if someone called and asked for a meeting to discuss the initiative--we would not be open to a brainstorming or freelancing meeting. If, however, someone from the Shanker Institute asked to come by CPB to discuss a reasonably well developed concept, and Shanker wanted to bring along their partners from, hypothetically, the DC school system, Intel, and let's say bring Bill Gates along--well, this is not exactly freelancing or brainstorming. Under these conditions--where you have a serious concept and serious partners more or less in place--we would be more inclined to meet to discuss your concept and help you refine it to be consistent with our published set of objectives

and guidelines. But, please understand, we'd be careful not to help a partnership design its program but rather to let the partners know if their concept fell within our guidelines, criteria and met the expectations which we have previously outlined in print and in these pre-proposal meetings. In addition, if questions came up in these meetings that were appropriate to a FAQ, we would publish it in the interests of the "level playing field" syndrome I referred to already.

There could be other staff-applicant interactions during the proposal development and review process. For example, once the staff begins to review proposals after the submission deadline, we may contact the Managing Partner to clarify aspects of their proposal. In addition, if a proposal is selected for outside review, the partnership will likely be invited to CPB to "pitch" their project. Typically, at the conclusion of these "pitch" meetings we invite the applicant to submit any modifications or explanations that they may wish to add to the record based on the pitch meeting discussion.

Q: Robert Rupp, West Virginia Wesleyan College. Funders often urge applicants to "go outside the box" and then suddenly a box appears when we're all the way out here. Can you reconfirm that you want us to go outside the box?

MR. PACK: Absolutely. This initiative, by definition, requires experimentation and "out of the box" thinking. Through this initiative, we are trying to help solve a national educational crisis by linking partners who now operate in different universes.

MR. DENTON: Michael always wants to get the hook out when I say this, but with respect to outside the box thinking, given the crisis we are trying to help solve, I personally would welcome a concept that could be called revolutionary. Having said that, we are not looking for revolutionary for the sake of being revolutionary. We want to see a concept with the right partners behind it--but a concept and a businesslike plan and strategy that will work. In order to solve this nagging national crisis in learning, we need a new and different approach. As you can see from the RFP, we believe that interactivity can play a key part in solving this learning crisis, but it will require experimentation and out of the box thinking to get them into education as we envision.

Q: Julie Benyo, WGBH. Well, there's revolutionary and then there are standards and high-stakes testing, and I'm wondering if there are particular standards--NCSS standards or the American History standards or reports or other things that you're particularly looking at and find are good guidelines for us?

MR. PACK: The RFP states that applicants don't have to follow any particular set of standards. But you have to prove that teachers want the program and that it will fulfill their needs--many of which are tied to the need to meet standards. So each applicant has to address the standards question in way that is appropriate for the specific project.

Let me add that I don't think there is necessarily a tension between being revolutionary and addressing standards. The teaching methods might be revolutionary,

the partnerships might be revolutionary--the historical content might not be revolutionary.

Just take a case in point--Abraham Lincoln is in every American history standard. So, Abraham Lincoln's place in American history is a given. That doesn't mean you have to teach his story in a standard, dull way. One can be imaginative about that. Lincoln's life, the Civil War--is a fascinating period and there are lots of ways to teach it to middle and high school students. You can be imaginative within the standards and the needs of teachers. There is no real conflict there.

Q: Sonny Izon, Independent Producer. Given that one of the long-term objectives of this initiative is to have it funded by private corporations, once CPB and PBS monies are withdrawn, we need to address how we can attract not just donors but also investors as you say.

I have a PBS national program premiering next month. In fact, 90 percent of my budget is from CPB. But because of the contract that we had to sign, my hands are tied in terms of being able to get any other kinds of monies beyond that, and in terms of marketing it to other sources. I think perhaps if there's other ways we could look at it in terms of, if the eventual aim is to really get it out as broadly as possible, perhaps some way that maybe if other people came in, CPB could be compensated in some form or other. What are your thoughts on that?

MR. PACK: I'm surprised to hear that your CPB funding makes it impossible for you to seek non-CPB funding. In my experience, that never happens. I would suggest that you talk further with our office of business affairs.

For production contracts, the standard policy of CPB has typically been that we ask for 50 percent of our pro rata contribution. So, if your budget is a million dollars, and CPB provides half that budget, CPB would receive half of its percentage back--that would be a quarter of the ancillary revenues. These issues are negotiable on a case by case basis, depending on circumstances. With respect to the History and Civics projects, we expect that as time passes, our ownership and revenue share will decline, as additional funders enter. For example, if CPB puts in a million dollars into a project, then later a gaming company invests \$20 million, CPB understands that its position will be diluted.

We've had extensive discussions with business affairs, and they are cognizant of this project's critical need to attract investors. And, while we are all aware of the need to compensate CPB fairly, we are anxious to work with you to attract and keep private investment.

MR. DENTON: Continuing along that line, obviously while we will protect CPB's investment, we don't want to create a disincentive that might deter a corporate investor.

A related question that comes up occasionally from the commercial or corporate

side goes something like this-- "Why would we corporate types need CPB? You'll just slow us down, get in the way." The gamers explain that they have the resources to get into the schools on their own. Generally, I respond--and since I'm a consultant I can say things like this, I'm not CPB staff and don't speak for CPB--you know, why not use public television as a Trojan horse to get into the school system? It's one thing to approach the schools as a commercial vendor. It's another thing to approach the schools as part of a public-private partnership that is working together to solve a great national crisis. The corporate representatives with whom we have spoken seem receptive to that.

Q: Karen Goodwin, Fifth Avenue Productions. I have two questions. One regards the restrictions of a Managing Partner submitting more than one proposal. Can a Managing Partner be a Key Partner in one project and a Managing Partner in another?

MR. PACK: Yes. You may participate in multiple partnerships as a Key Partner. But, you can only participate as a lead or, Managing Partner, in one proposal.

Q: Dave Witzel, Forum One. Pushing on the commercial investment question a bit more, what about things that are marketing/advertising driven, and how does that match with the constraints and restrictions at PBS, for example. We're put on broadcast -- what will likely give you guys heartburn?

MR. PACK: That's a good question. This has to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Our basic principles are that all our products should be available to all students and that their fundamental purpose must be to serve the public's needs. That's the justification for public service media. On the other hand, we are mindful that commercial partners need a way to recoup their investment through revenue streams such as advertising on the internet. We will try to work with you on an individual basis. However, we ask that all applicants make sure their plans meet PBS's guidelines.

MR. DENTON: Correct me if I'm wrong, Michael, but I recommend that the applicants propose anything that makes sense to them with respect to their concept. If they have a terrific proposal, but within it there is something that doesn't quite work for us, we'll discuss it. We're not going to reject a proposal because something didn't quite work if otherwise your proposal is dynamite.

Q: Chris Gergen, K12. I want to go back to the question about boxes. It's clear throughout the RFP that the highest priority and key objective is to move the needle in terms of student achievement, knowledge, and understanding in American history.

It's also clear that the project must include a public television broadcast component. If you feel that that highest return on the investment, in terms of moving the needle, does not necessarily involve a public television broadcast in the conventional sense of a half-hour or hour-long program, but rather consists of a series of guided suggestions to go to a higher impact source. So if you make 30-second blurbs to direct people to an interactive website, a curriculum that can be implemented in schools, etc. Could that satisfy the public broadcast component? Or, is that too far "out of the box"

with respect to the requirement to incorporate a public television broadcast into the concept?

MR. PACK: I gather you refer to interstitials of some sort. Yes, that would qualify as a public television broadcast, in my opinion.

On the "out of the box" question, now it's my turn to push back to the audience a bit. We frequently ask for things that are "outside the box," we seldom get them. In practice, it's not the producers who have bold, imaginative ideas that we're rejecting. We just went through, as Jim said, 440 applications for America at a Crossroads. That experience confirms my sense that out-of-the-box ideas are rare; you just don't see them too often.

MR. DENTON: It's difficult to understate this. But, by definition, this initiative is out-of-the-box. If your concept isn't out-of-the-box, it's likely that you needn't apply because the partnerships and relationships we are trying to catalyze, and the goals that join them, don't really exist today as we envision them. By itself, that requires an out of the box approach. When I said "revolutionary" before, I didn't mean revolutionary content. Nor are we asking for revolutionary technology, the technology and content are there. We are looking for revolutionary methods, partnerships and means to help young people learn.

Q: Skip Coblyn, the National Visionary Leadership Project. What are your intersections with the public radio? We've been doing work with high school students and a lot of them don't watch public TV. They listen to radio, or they have iPods – podcasting is getting to be big. So I'm wondering if, when you're saying public broadcasting, could that include public radio approaches? You know, three years from now NPR could be podcasting. So I'm wondering what part of the box is that?

MR. PACK: Radio would be appropriate to include in a proposal. For the purposes of the RFP, radio is just another media. Surely, you could include podcasting, as well as any other new technology that can help kids learn.

Q: Barbara Halpern, Marketing Momentum. The way I interpret this RFP is if you're asking for outside-of-the-box approaches and integration of media and mediums, I'm looking at this as kind of like a demonstration project to see if it will work. If I propose a concept and an implementation strategy, let's say there is something in the proposal that doesn't sit 100 percent with CPB. Would CPB still consider the project potentially viable if you like the overall concept except perhaps for a detail or two? Do you see this R&D phase as an opportunity to demonstrate viability, before deployment and full execution?

MR. DENTON: That's one reason we have the R&D stage in the grant making process.

With respect to your question regarding the situation where CPB likes the overall

approach but with reservations. Generally, if yours is a competitive proposal within the universe of proposals being evaluated, CPB would discuss its reservations during the review process, most likely, during the pitch meeting. We are only guessing, but we expect 30-40 History and Civics proposals to be advanced to that "pitch meeting" level of review. The teams selected to participate in a pitch meeting--meaning those partnerships who have submitted the most competitive proposals according to the internal and external reviewers--will meet CPB reviewers here, individually, to discuss their proposals. Generally, it's an opportunity for us to ensure we understand each other. And, as we mentioned earlier, the Managing Partner, on behalf of the partnership, will be invited by Michael to submit a post-pitch meeting proposal addendum to clarify, modify or refine their proposal, as that partnership deems appropriate, based on the pitch meeting discussion.

As you know, this is a somewhat high risk, experimental initiative. However, given CPB's educational mandate and the nature of the educational crisis in our schools and the relentlessly negative trends, we think interactive technology that kids are swimming in 24-7 represents an opportunity to help solve the crisis. The R&D stage is also a mechanism that allows us to make incremental grant awards in a way which reduces our financial exposure for any individual project. It allows us to test strong concepts, and interact and work with the grantees without making a major multi-million dollar commitment prematurely.

This brings me to another point. While being mindful of our obligation to operate within the confines and restraints of a public competition, we see ourselves as your partner. If the strongest partnerships and concepts don't succeed, we do not succeed. So, we see the R&D stage as an opportunity to reduce risk and maximize opportunity. So, we intend to support those strong partnerships that come in with creative and dynamite ideas that offer likely solutions that can help solve this problem in our schools.

Q: Tom Phelps, NEH. Would you comment on the content of the production? When you put different content pieces together, up on the web and for broadcasters, you've got to pay for these rights. Now this won't likely occur in the first stage of the initiative. It might be an issue, however, if it's archival material which is not free. The archives are now charging to air. So are costs like that going to be covered in the funding of these particular projects?

MR. PACK: Yes, archival costs would be an appropriate budget line. Applicants should anticipate rights costs and put them in the budget as appropriate and necessary. In prototype development, there might be a rights costs--but likely not during R&D.

Q: Cameron Clarke, Vodium. I'm curious as to the nature and quantity of the content you expect. For example, do you have any idea how long these programs would be. Does it matter?

MR. PACK: The length and quantity of content depends on your overall concept, your objectives, and the scope of your project. We have no fixed ideas.

MR. DENTON: I'd like to clarify that the content that is designed for broadcast in the public television component of an individual project must relate and, I expect, will reinforce the learning that takes place in the overall proposed concept. However, the television broadcast content would likely not be the same content used in the interactive component. For example, the content intended for broadcast on an interactive website, or in a game, or a cell phone--whatever--will be different from the content broadcast on public television, of course. But, all the content will need to relate and be part of an integrated whole. The content will likely be quite different and more intensive, for example, in the interactive component of the project.

Q: Is it your plan to cover, for example, all of American history or sort of segments of it. Does it matter?

MR. PACK: That's up to you. We are open to all variations.

One of the biggest questions will be--do teachers want and need your product? Do they want products that cover the entire curriculum? Are they looking for products that are topic specific? The concept, strategy, and plan have to be tied to what teachers want and will use. Each proposal must provide evidence that there is a big enough pool of teachers who need their product to justify it.

MR. DENTON: Your question on the design of your individual concept. You could, on the one hand, try to do what a textbook does and do an entire semester or year. On another hand, you may want to do a Civil War section. There are two things that I would mention here. One, your product and concept must move the needle. And second, a piece of advise really, don't submit a proposal if you haven't spoken to any middle or high school teachers. Make the effort. In designing this initiative and the RFP guidelines --we found teachers' input to be very, very valuable. A word to the wise--go into some local schools, speak to the teachers and principals in the trenches. If they can't use your concept, if it doesn't speak to their needs, if it doesn't relate to their needs, don't submit. Close the loop with the teachers.

MR. PACK: Let me underline that. We had and have some personal opinions about what teachers need, and we have our opinions about what middle/high school students might find interesting. But, it did not take long to discard some of our assumptions after visiting teachers and classrooms. Our review process will solicit teachers' opinions to ensure that proposed projects actually serve the needs of teachers and students. It's one of the big challenges we all face in this room. We all have assumptions about what teachers want, what teachers need, what middle and high school students will find interesting, engaging and cool. But, be sure to test those assumptions with real students and real teachers.

MR. DENTON: One question I was asked the other day--can we design a concept that could be integrated into the actual curriculum? The answer is: yes. In such a case, it would suggest of course, that your partnership would include a school, a cluster of

schools, a school system--perhaps a state school board.

Q: Maura Daly Phinney, Bluevista Productions. And I guess I sort of wanted to answer at first why you don't think you get a lot of proposals out of the box because, as a content producer in sort of a post-Bustergate era, you know, we're sitting in Washington, DC at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which clearly has some political influence on it. And I think it's not disingenuous but a little unrealistic to believe that you can do both of the things you're trying to do with this RFP. You want something that teachers are going to want, but then you want something that teenagers are going to like. And I think those are really two distinctly different things.

I'm not saying it can't be done. I do have a question. I'm not just ranting. The question is could you submit a proposal that actually addressed those two things separately--materials for teachers and then, as a separate supportive thing, something that was maybe a little bit irreverent and might push the boundaries of some people in this town who wouldn't necessarily like it because history is open to interpretation as is civics. And I think, you know, using your Abraham Lincoln example--a recent book speculated whether he was gay. Now, that's not what I want to do a show on, but I think we need some assurance that you really do want that level of irreverence that's going to attract teenagers.

MR. PACK: Let me answer the first part of your question first. If your proposed product is going into the classroom, teachers as well as school administrators are gatekeepers. You've got to actually pass through the gatekeeper to enter the classroom. That is one of the challenges. The good news is that teachers also want things that engage their students. We've visited the classrooms of teachers who use media in intelligent, innovative ways. They all look for media that their kids like and find entertaining. However, I'm not sure that teachers want "edgy" material. So, you have to find the balance. But, if you give them a tool that engages their students, the teachers will be happy.

This initiative is not focused on teacher training, per se. We are not looking for products designed solely to train teachers. Students are the end users, but you have to engage teachers as well. How you do that is your decision. It is also your responsibility to make sure that your products are used properly--which might justify a teacher training portion of the proposal.

Finally, as we have said, we do urge applicants to think out of the box--limited only by the needs of teachers and students. We are very serious about wanting material that will engage middle and high school students. And we are very deeply committed to that.

Q: Joe Geraghty, Close Up Foundation. I have a specific IT school in mind for a partner. Would that -- if you put them as a key partner on the proposal, would that-- would you consider that biased if you went to them for critiquing and getting feedback if they are an actual partner involved in the proposal?

MR. DENTON: If I understand your question correctly, yes, it is acceptable for a Key Partner to have an evaluation role in your project. The applicant is responsible for formative research, so I am assuming this is the kind of research and evaluation you are referring to.

In terms of summative research, the RFP guidelines require that applicants develop and describe a method to evaluate their project results--that is, the learning that takes place. It's required for several reasons. One, it will give CPB and our outside reviewers a fuller appreciation of the applicants' thinking. The applicants' proposed system to evaluate their results will tell us a lot about what they're trying to achieve, as well as how they will achieve and measure it. It will help us understand their goals and their definition of success when they explain how they will measure and evaluate results. And, I expect the individual evaluation systems will offer some insight into the depth of seriousness the applicant is on producing and demonstrating hard and tangible results.

In addition, CPB will have an independent evaluator who will help us evaluate proposals. And, once we begin to award grants, this evaluator will design and implement a methodology to independently evaluate the History and Civics grantees' results.

MR. PACK: We assume that whoever is helping you with formative research, such as focus groups, is essentially on your team, whether or not they are formally a Key Partner.

Q: Malkia Lydia, independent producer and also a volunteer with young people in after-school settings. My question is, looking at what you all identify as the need that you want to address, if a project proposal is to deal with skills as much as content in terms of historical analysis and young peoples' confidence in terms of civic participation and understanding of how to insert themselves in that process, do you all--would that proposal be as competitive as one or as others that deal more in terms of a specific, you know, period of time or content in that sense. So what I'm sort of saying is that I will put out there that the need is as great in terms of skill and abilities for young people to actually do historical research and understand history, excuse me, in an experiential way. And if I could show evidence that there's a market for that, is that sort of too far outside what you're trying to address or not?

MR. PACK: With regard to the skills versus facts issue, we defer to what the market wants. If there is something that will move the needle, that teachers need and students will use, it's fine. My understanding is that most history curricula have some focus on reasoning and historical research abilities. In practice, the distinction between skills and facts tend to vanish because, for example, you can't develop methods of historical research without researching something in particular. Civic participation is also a fine goal for a project.

MR. DENTON: You can submit a project which focuses on either American history and/or civic participation. Both need not be included in an individual proposal. If

you are submitting a proposal on delivering American history and retention of American history, be mindful that you're competing with maybe a hundred other proposal concepts. Even though a proposed concept is within our broadest guidelines, we will most likely select those projects that most closely address our goals and move this needle.

MR. PACK: Let me say that with respect to civics-oriented proposals we have the same standards and criteria as we do for history-oriented proposals. We expect the proposed products to be useful to teachers of civics, to help them achieve their curricular goals. Again, program concepts should be based on, and consistent with, what teachers and students need.

Q: Dick Hezel, Hezel Associates again. With regard to the evaluation, are you looking to set guidelines on the amount of money or the proportion of money being spent on the evaluation--for example, NSF proposes 10 to 15 percent on evaluation--or are you including, you know, in your bigger evaluation some proportion?

MR. DENTON: For the formative research that the applicant is conducting, we have not specified how much the applicant should spend or even what proportion of the total grant should go to this kind of research. It is up to the applicant to determine the appropriate kind of research, how much research to conduct, and what it should cost. For the summative research, we will negotiate a fee with the outside independent company we hire. To some extent, that expense will depend on the number of proposals being evaluated.

MS. MAHER: If you want to reach us, the address is [History.Civics@cpb.org](mailto:History.Civics@cpb.org).

MR. PACK: Thanks, Melissa. We thank you all for coming. You're a great group. Good luck and we look forward to working with you.

(END)