

PROPOSAL

"A Pilot Interlibrary Loan Project
Involving Academic Libraries
in the United States and Mexico"

E.U.

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I. Overview. The purpose of the project is to determine the feasibility and usefulness of a formal program of interlibrary loan service between academic libraries in Mexico and the United States. Such service currently exists, but on a limited basis due to difficulties with the Mexican mail system and a lack of knowledge of library holdings in the two countries.

II. Advantages. A program of interlibrary loan between academic libraries in the United States and Mexico would

- 1) facilitate the exchange of scholarly information between the United States and Mexico;
- 2) promote and enhance scholarly research on both sides of the border;
- 3) improve ties between the library and research communities in both countries.

III. Pilot program. In order to evaluate the feasibility of long-term, formal interlibrary loan service between the two countries, a one-year pilot program of fixed duration is recommended. The suggested test period is calendar 1989.

IV. Objectives. In addition to determining the practicality of U.S.-Mexico interlibrary loan service, the pilot program would have the following objectives:

- 1) to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in terms of cost-benefit, turnaround time, and ability to supply needed library materials;
- 2) to determine the usefulness of the program to scholars;
- 3) to identify the types of library materials most likely to be requested;
- 4) to determine the level of interlibrary loan traffic between the two countries;
- 5) to identify operational problems;
- 6) to refine procedures for handling requests;
- 7) to determine the annual costs of the program.

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V. Loans (books and microforms). During the test period, loans would be between institutions, not individuals. The loan period would be no less than four weeks. Books and microforms sent to Mexico would have to be used in the Benjamin Franklin Library (USIS). Books and microforms sent to the U.S. would have to be used in the requesting institution's library.

VI. Photocopies. Photocopies requested by Mexican libraries would be sent to the Benjamin Franklin Library (Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin or BBF) where they would be picked up by the borrower or a courier from the requesting institution. Photocopies requested by U.S. borrowers would be mailed by the BBF directly to the requesting libraries.

VII. Subject matter. During the pilot project, materials loaned and borrowed would be restricted to those disciplines in the social sciences (including business) and humanities. Requests would not be accepted for science, technology, or medical materials.

VIII. Referral center libraries. The Library at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) would serve as the referral center for requests coming to the U.S. from Mexico. The ILL department of the UTEP Library would identify possible locations among participating libraries and forward the request. The lending library would send each filled request directly to the Benjamin Franklin Library in Mexico City.

The Benjamin Franklin Library would serve as a referral center for all requests coming to Mexico from the U.S. The BBF would identify the holding library and forward the request. The material would be sent or delivered to the BBF which would forward it to the U.S.

IX. Transportation of materials and requests. All materials and photocopies would be transported within Mexico using the U.S. Embassy Courier which regularly delivers mail between Laredo, Texas, USA, and Mexico City. Requests to Mexico would be mailed (using the USIS post office box in Laredo, TX) or faxed directly to the BBF. Requests to the United States would be forwarded to the Library at the University of Texas at El Paso by the BBF using mail or telefacsimile.

X. Request forms. All libraries would use the standard ALA interlibrary loan request form.

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XI. Rules and guidelines. The operation of this project would be governed overall by the provisions of the "National Interlibrary Loan Code" published by ALA in 1980. The Code provides 1) a definition of interlibrary loan; 2) the purpose of interlibrary loan; 3) scope (what types of materials may be lent); 4) responsibilities of borrowing libraries; 5) responsibilities of lending libraries; 6) expenses; 7) duration of loans; and 8) violation of the code.

XII. Fees. The BBF would charge Mexican libraries a small administrative fee for processing requests. The details of this would be worked out prior to implementation. A system of coupons would be developed to pay for photocopying. This would facilitate bookkeeping and minimize problems with the exchange of foreign currency.

XIII. Participating libraries: Mexico. As of this date, the following libraries in Mexico City have expressed interest in participating in the pilot project: the Central Library of Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM); El Colegio de Mexico; Biblioteca Nacional; Hemeroteca Nacional; the Mexico City campus of Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM); and Instituto Tecnológico Autonoma de Mexico (ITAM).

XIV. Participating libraries: United States. Interested academic libraries who are members of the AMIGOS Bibliographic Council would be the U.S. participants.

XV. The future. If the pilot project is successful, then the program would be expanded to include additional libraries in both countries.

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