National Digital Strategy Advisory Board
Report from July 18, 2006, Meeting

The July 18 meeting of the National Digital Strategy Advisory Board was an opportunity for the members to learn about the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP) advancements and make recommendations for future directions. The meeting opened with updates from key Library of Congress staff after which the advisory board worked to help shape the NDIIPP vision for the future.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington opened the advisory meeting with congratulations and a call for greater effort in digital preservation: "We've come a long way. We have 67 partners in a committed network preserving a collection of national digital materials that are at-risk." But he also emphasized the need to "get more public institutions, private corporations and research organizations involved in preserving digital information to ensure the record of our intellectual productivity will be available for future generations – and to ensure America's economic competitiveness, medical development, as well as our country's ability to inspire and help to the rest of the world."

Laura Campbell, associate librarian for Strategic Initiatives, informed the group about recent NDIIPP efforts, including the success of "the first phase of investments in which we were working with challenging new formats. We've managed to save 245 terabytes of carefully selected and preserved digital content." She mentioned the second phase of NDIIPP, which is under way, in which "our investments will expand the partnerships, promote tools, services and architecture that serve the network, identify additional business models, and identify further needs for the network and fill in the gaps."

Mary Rasenberger, director of NDIIPP, led the group in a discussion of the goals and outcomes in the strategic plan for the future of the program. "We're going to expand partnerships, invest in technical tools, services and architecture that serve the network, identify additional business models, and continue policy discussions."

Abby Smith, adviser and consultant to NDIIPP, discussed the overall environment of digital content, with focus on the importance of leveraging "the curatorial practices of communities of knowledge because those communities are better at collecting and selecting valuable content than communities of policy."

Dan Atkins, director of the Office of Cyberinfrastructure at NSF, spoke about the continuing activities and opportunities connected to cyberinfrastructure. His goal "is to challenge stewardship organizations to anticipate the new genres of scholarly information that are emerging – and make preservation a part of that process – to include pointers to the preserved data sets or other material, to create, publish, preserve and share information in a sustainable way."

During an afternoon breakout session, members of the advisory board discussed which management responsibilities should be centralized in a network committed to long-term preservation and sustainability. Members volunteered to review proposals submitted for the second round of investments, and a subgroup was formed to further articulate the direction of future NDIIPP work according to the vision and experience of the group.

Campbell closed the meeting with thanks to the members for their commitment to digital preservation and for their help with NDIIPP. "You are leaders in this vital area," she said. "We very much appreciate your willingness to share your knowledge and experience to help us build a national program that will sustain our digital heritage for us now and in the future."