



**ALEX PADILLA**  
California Secretary of State

## **NASS IDEAS Award Nomination**

### I. Cover Page

California Secretary of State Alex Padilla

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**Project Title:** California Digital Archives: A Public-Private Partnership with Google

**Project Description:** In 2016, the California State Archives, a division of the California Secretary of State, established a public-private partnership with the Google Cultural Institute to launch the California Digital Archives. This partnership makes the State Archives exhibits available to a global audience online for the first time ever. Ten exhibits and 24,000 online visitors later, the California Digital Archives is making California's archival treasures more accessible to more people in California and around the world.

**General Subject Area of Nomination:** State Heritage

## II. Executive Summary:

The California Digital Archives is a unique and innovative public-private partnership between the California State Archives and the Google Cultural Institute that brings California's archival treasures online for the first time ever. Before its launch, seeing these exhibits would require a trip to Sacramento. Now, our archives have gone global. Featuring a blend of cultural, political and environmental history, the Digital Archives' ten exhibits showcases California's diversity, beauty and history like never before. Californians and people around the world are able to enjoy and learn from these exhibits from the comfort of their laptops, tablets or smartphones. Digitizing records is an important way to increase public access to public records. Digitization opens the door to making more records with enduring value available to the public.

The California Digital Archives currently includes the following digital exhibits:

- [California Missions: Decline and Revival](#) (September 7, 2017)
- [California Memoirs: The William M. McCarthy Photograph Collection](#) (July 17, 2017)
- [California Goes to War: World War I and the Golden State](#) (April 24, 2017)
- [The California Legislative Black Caucus: Celebrating the Past, Working Toward the Future](#) (February 21, 2017)
- [A Visit to the Pacific Shore: California in the Age of Lincoln](#) (February 15, 2017)
- [Home Front: California During World War II](#) (February 6, 2017)
- [Spanning the Bay](#) (December 18, 2016)
- [California Road Trip Exhibit](#) (August 30, 2016)
- [California State Parks Exhibit](#) (June 28, 2016)
- [To Keep, Protect, and Preserve: The Office of Secretary of State and Essential Functions of Government](#) (June 28, 2016)
- [Whitaker and Baxter Campaigns, Inc. Exhibit](#) (June 28, 2016)

Each exhibit is developed meticulously to present an accurate depiction of California history. First, there is a conceptual planning phase which involves research, copyright considerations, exhibit outline, timeline and first draft. Next, is the design and digitization phase which plans the "look" and style of how to tell the story. Our staff selects items and prepares for digitization and display and develops layout. Third, we create metadata. Finally, we upload that metadata along with images and captions to the Google Cultural Institute platform. This process happens at no additional cost to the public. Google will not charge fees for, display advertisements alongside, or otherwise monetize the content on the Cultural institute websites.

The California Digital Archives have been met with resounding acclaim and success. National, statewide and local publications have featured many of the exhibits, helping spread the word and increase our reach. In addition, the National Archives, state parks and others interested in the history of the exhibits we produce share our content via their social media channels.

The Digital Archives' goal is to digitize more material and share it with the people of California and the world. Amazing photographs, colorful trademark specimens, and other original documents reveal past events. Some may shed an unflattering light on past actions but our goal is to present an accurate reflection of history. This will allow us to learn from the past and understand how it evolved into the realities of the present.

The California Digital Archives is just getting started. Our staff continues to examine our existing archival inventory to curate new, interesting and creative exhibits for the public to enjoy.

### **History:**

In April 2015, Secretary Padilla and then Assistant Chief Deputy Secretary of State Jackie Kinney met with individuals from Google who introduced them to Google Cultural Institute and the potential for

Google Cultural Institute becoming the platform for hosting digital exhibits of materials from the California State Archives' collections. Over a number of months, through meetings with Google and Secretary of State staff, a partnership agreement was developed. The State Archives had started digitizing materials from recent physical exhibits that had been displayed in the State Archives Research Room. Archives staff proposed using the materials from the prior exhibits to be the initial online digital exhibits. The first three exhibits were launched in June 2016.

In April 2017, Archives staff developed the first exhibit that had never been seen before, "California Goes to War: World War I and the Golden State," an exhibit concerning World War I, commemorating the centennial of United States' entry into World War I. In the course of researching materials for the online exhibit among the State Archives' military records, archivists found a previously unknown collection of photographs taken by Californian Stanley Cundiff who served with the 332nd Field Signal Battalion of the U.S. First and Third Armies, Cundiff apparently became his unit's de-facto historian, gathering hundreds of photographs, letters, postcards, maps, and other ephemera documenting the 322nd's time in war-torn France and, subsequently, occupied Germany. The Cundiff photographs provide a dramatic, first-hand account of military life during World War I. These photographs would continue to be largely unknown if not available online in digital form.

#### About the California State Archives:

California's first legislature, meeting in 1849-50, charged the Secretary of State to receive "all public records, registered maps, books, papers, rolls, documents and other writings...which appertain to or are in any way connected with the political history and past administration of government of California." The California State Archives, a division of the California Secretary of State's office, continues to serve in the spirit of those early instructions, providing a repository for the state's permanent governmental records as well as other materials documenting California history.

#### About the Google Cultural Institute:

Since its launch in 2011, the Google Cultural Institute has worked closely with museums, foundations, archives and others – from Carnegie Hall to the Musee D'Orsay in Paris to the British Museum in London. The Google Cultural institute now has more than 1,000 partners from over 70 countries making a total of 6 million artworks, photos, videos, manuscripts and other documents of art, culture and history accessible to all online and by doing so, preserving it for future generations.

#### **Significance:**

Prior to the beginning of the Google partnership, less than 1% of the State Archives' collection of previously transferred materials (both paper and digital) was available online, making most of the State Archives' holdings inaccessible to all but those individuals who come to Sacramento or who order copies of archival records. The partnership with Google has demonstrated the potential and possibilities for making more records available online. In essence, the partnership has helped to "open the door" for researchers throughout the world to see materials from the California State Archives.

#### **Impacts/Results:**

More than 26,000 online visitors have viewed our Digital Archives exhibits since we launched in 2016. These numbers equal and now exceed the annual number of in-person researchers which averages about 12,000 researchers per year. In addition, our exhibits have been shared on social media by the National Archives, Yosemite National Park, state and local agencies, and other organizations interested in the content. Our exhibits have also received significant national, statewide and local media coverage. In the supporting materials below, please find notable articles and pull-quotes that highlight the earned media coverage we received:

#### III. Supporting Materials:

KCRA: CA archives accessible online with new
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<a href="http://www.kcra.com/article/ca-archives-accessible-">http://www.kcra.com/article/ca-archives-accessible-</a>
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Google partnership	<a href="http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article87303612.html">online-with-new-google-partnership/6429351</a>
Daily Mail: State archives accessible online with new Google partnership	<a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3664914/State-archives-accessible-online-new-Google-partnership.html">http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3664914/State-archives-accessible-online-new-Google-partnership.html</a>
Sac Bee: California State Archives now in the cloud	<a href="http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article87303612.html">http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article87303612.html</a>
BakersfieldNow: State archives accessible online with new Google partnership	<a href="http://bakersfieldnow.com/news/local/state-archives-accessible-online-with-new-google-partnership">http://bakersfieldnow.com/news/local/state-archives-accessible-online-with-new-google-partnership</a>
Sacramento Bee: California State Archives now in the cloud	<a href="http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article87303612.html">http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article87303612.html</a>
Sierra Sun Times: State Archives Releases 'California Road Trip' the Latest Digitized Exhibit on Google Cultural Institute	<a href="http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/7702-state-archives-releases-california-road-trip-the-latest-digitized-exhibit-on-google-cultural-institute">http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/7702-state-archives-releases-california-road-trip-the-latest-digitized-exhibit-on-google-cultural-institute</a>
The Washington Post: Google's latest online collections show American politics has always been a glorious mess	<a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2016/07/13/googles-latest-online-collections-show-american-politics-has-always-been-a-glorious-mess/?utm_term=.ed9b03f5a828#comments">https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2016/07/13/googles-latest-online-collections-show-american-politics-has-always-been-a-glorious-mess/?utm_term=.ed9b03f5a828#comments</a>
KTVU Fox 2: Flashback Friday: Construction of the Bay Bridge	<a href="http://www.ktvu.com/entertainment/flashback-Friday/flashback-Friday-construction-of-bay-bridge">http://www.ktvu.com/entertainment/flashback-Friday/flashback-Friday-construction-of-bay-bridge</a>
Capital Public Radio, Julia Mitric, Food and Sustainability Reporter	<a href="http://www.capradio.org/86422">http://www.capradio.org/86422</a>
Google Arts and Culture, Twitter post regarding "Spanning the Bay,"	<a href="https://twitter.com/googlearts/status/819229637201039361">https://twitter.com/googlearts/status/819229637201039361</a>
SF Bay: Bay Bridge construction celebrated in online exhibit	<a href="https://sfbay.ca/2016/12/12/bay-bridge-construction-celebrated-in-online-exhibit/">https://sfbay.ca/2016/12/12/bay-bridge-construction-celebrated-in-online-exhibit/</a>
Village News: Online exhibit explores California in Age of Lincoln	<a href="http://www.villagenews.com/story/2017/02/28/public-education/online-exhibit-explores-california-in-the-age-of-lincoln/49456.html?m=true">http://www.villagenews.com/story/2017/02/28/public-education/online-exhibit-explores-california-in-the-age-of-lincoln/49456.html?m=true</a>
Santa Clarita News: State Archives Launches California Legislative Black Caucus Exhibit	<a href="https://scvnews.com/2017/02/22/state-archives-launches-california-legislative-black-caucus-exhibit/">https://scvnews.com/2017/02/22/state-archives-launches-california-legislative-black-caucus-exhibit/</a>
LA Weekly: Take a visual tour of 20 <sup>th</sup> -Century California with these vintage summer road trip photos	<a href="http://www.laweekly.com/slideshow/take-a-visual-tour-of-20th-century-california-with-these-vintage-summer-road-trip-photos-8440689/25">http://www.laweekly.com/slideshow/take-a-visual-tour-of-20th-century-california-with-these-vintage-summer-road-trip-photos-8440689/25</a>
Sierra Sun Times: State Archives Launches Digital Exhibit on California Missions	<a href="http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/11099-state-archives-launches-digital-exhibit-on-california-missions">http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/11099-state-archives-launches-digital-exhibit-on-california-missions</a>
Slate: A Trove of Newly-Digitized Trademarks Offers A Capsule History of Late-19 <sup>th</sup> Century California	<a href="http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_vault/2016/04/22/history_of_california_as_seen_in_the_labels_registered_with_the_trademark.html">http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_vault/2016/04/22/history_of_california_as_seen_in_the_labels_registered_with_the_trademark.html</a>
San Francisco Chronicle: Newly digitized photos show what Lake Tahoe looked like in the early 1900s	<a href="http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Here-s-what-Lake-Tahoe-looked-like-in-the-early-12445034.php">http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Here-s-what-Lake-Tahoe-looked-like-in-the-early-12445034.php</a>
The Tribune (San Luis Obispo): From 1905-1938, they traveled California with a camera. Now, their photos are online	<a href="http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article190674174.html">http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article190674174.html</a>
Curbed-SF: Rare photos show San Francisco days before 1906 earthquake	<a href="https://sf.curbed.com/2017/12/20/16803000/1906-san-francisco-photographs-before-earthquake-mccarthy">https://sf.curbed.com/2017/12/20/16803000/1906-san-francisco-photographs-before-earthquake-mccarthy</a>
Sierra Sun Times: California State Archives Releases Nearly 3,000 Newly Digitized Photos of Early 20th Century Life and Landmarks	<a href="http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/12291-california-state-archives-releases-nearly-3-000-newly-digitized-photos-of-early-20th-century-life-and-landmarks">http://goldrushcam.com/sierrasuntimes/index.php/news/local-news/12291-california-state-archives-releases-nearly-3-000-newly-digitized-photos-of-early-20th-century-life-and-landmarks</a>

KCRA 3: Thousands of photos share unique view of California history	<a href="http://www.kcra.com/article/thousands-of-photos-share-unique-view-of-california-history/14475619">http://www.kcra.com/article/thousands-of-photos-share-unique-view-of-california-history/14475619</a>
Central Valley Business Times: State Archives releases nearly 3,000 photos of early 20th Century California	<a href="http://www.centralvalleybusinesstimes.com/stories/001/?ID=33867">http://www.centralvalleybusinesstimes.com/stories/001/?ID=33867</a>
Smithsonian Magazine: Cache of Newly Digitized Travel Photographs Will Transport You to 1900s California	<a href="http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/check-out-these-photos-early-20th-century-tourism-california-180967667/#REbYYwYTTQqku4v.99">http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/check-out-these-photos-early-20th-century-tourism-california-180967667/#REbYYwYTTQqku4v.99</a>
Sacramento Bee: State Archives showcase McCarthy family photos of 1900s California	<a href="http://www.sacbee.com/entertainment/article159610224.html">http://www.sacbee.com/entertainment/article159610224.html</a>

### In the Press:

Smithsonian.com

"The California Secretary of State recently digitized the photos and put them online, letting modern armchair tourists get a look at some of our favorite tourist attractions in the early days."  
- December 29, 2017

San Francisco Chronicle

"Photographing the natural beauty of the state seems to have been a favored hobby for the couple in the early 1900s, as over 3,000 photos in newly digitized albums collected by the office of California's Secretary of State Alex Padilla reveal."  
- December 20, 2017

LA WEEKLY

"Journey through Southern California's past in these vintage photos from California State Archive's latest online exhibition, California Memoirs. The McCarthy collection features more than 3,000 photos... which include the couple's stops in Santa Monica, Palm Springs, and San Diego."  
- July 21, 2017

The Washington Post

"Google's latest online collections show American politics has always been a glorious mess."  
- July 13, 2016

techwire

"The California State Archives is partnering with Google to present some State Archives exhibits in digitized form to a worldwide audience online."  
- June 29, 2016

THE SACRAMENTO BEE

"California residents can now enjoy access to state historical records from the comfort of their homes thanks to a partnership between the California State Archives and tech giant Google."  
- July 4, 2016



### Digital Exhibits:

