

**Universal Access Digital Library Summit:  
National Interests, Common Goals**  
September 25, 2008 • Boston



*Presented by the Boston Library Consortium, Inc.  
and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation*

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### *Meeting Overview*

#### Purpose

Raise awareness of public interest issues related to the digitization of materials. The Summit is planned as the first step to a “call to action” to address issues regarding access to information in the public domain and made available through educational, cultural and historic institutions.

#### Background

The advent of mass digitization efforts garnered the interest and investment of private for-profit entities that threaten to restrict access to the materials and documents that are the underpinnings of scholarly consideration and public knowledge. Some of these issues pose an irreversible threat to the overarching philosophy behind the idea of a global digital library: universal access.

The Universal Access Digital Library Summit will provide a forum for discussion and the collaborative, coordinated planning of our efforts to ensure that academic freedom and knowledge that benefits the public good remain in an open and accessible place and will serve future generations in scholarly pursuits and public discourse.

#### Outcome

The first of a proposed series, this Summit will help identify issues needed to coordinate access to information in the public domain, identify milestones needed to chart progress.

#### Summit Funding

The Alfred B. Sloan Foundation funded the Boston Library Consortium’s (BLC) proposal to host the Summit.

## About the Boston Library Consortium

The BLC, an association of 20 academic and research institutions located throughout New England, is the first consortium to self-fund a mass digitization project. Founded in 1970, the Consortium membership includes: Amherst College, Boston College, Boston University, Boston Public Library, Brandeis University, Brown University, MIT, Northeastern University, Tufts University, State Library of Massachusetts, Marine Biological Laboratory Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, University of Connecticut, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Massachusetts-Boston, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, University of Massachusetts-Lowell, University of Massachusetts Medical Center, University of New Hampshire, Wellesley College, and Williams College.

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