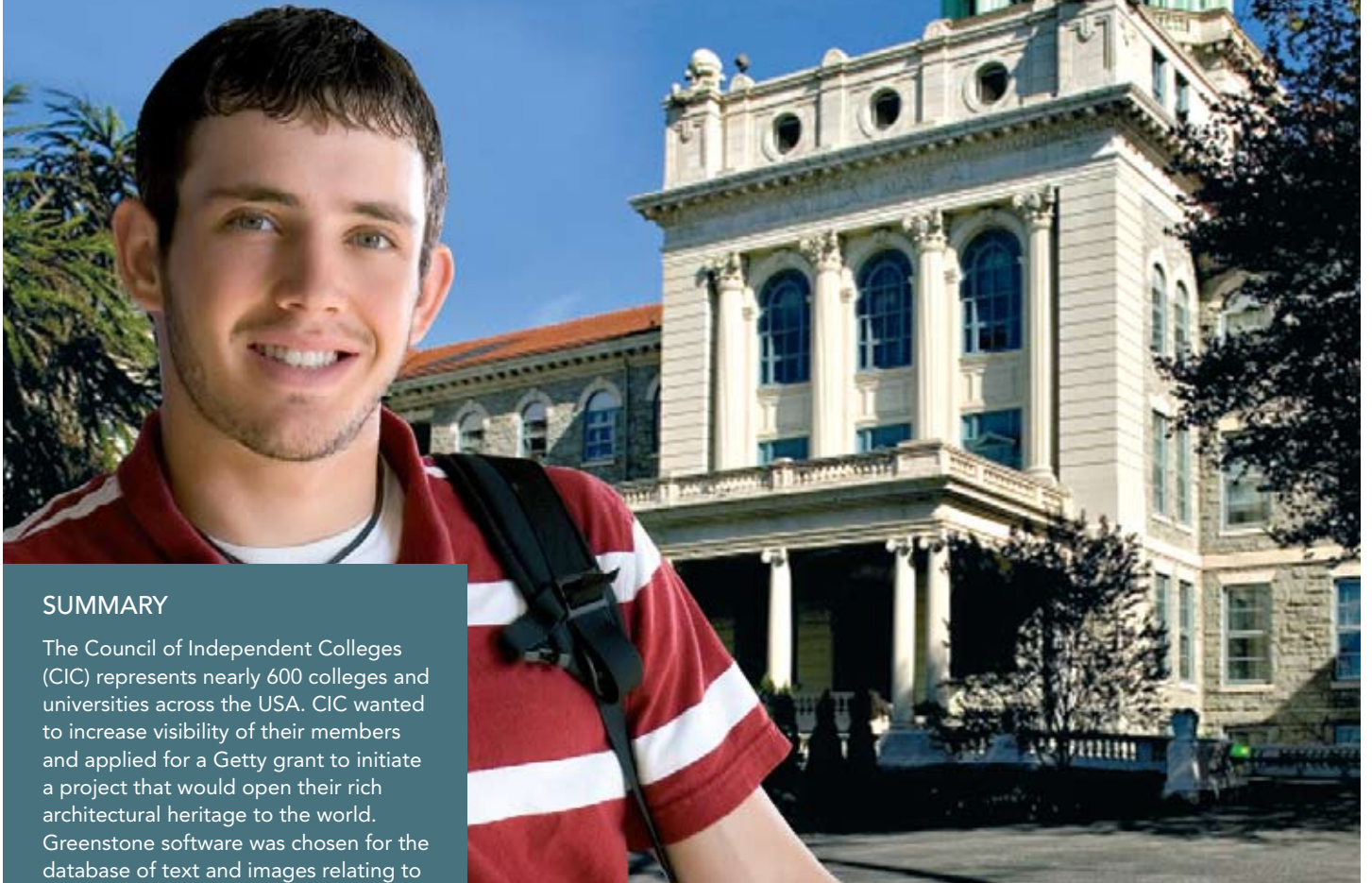


# CIC Historic Campus Architecture Project



## SUMMARY

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) represents nearly 600 colleges and universities across the USA. CIC wanted to increase visibility of their members and applied for a Getty grant to initiate a project that would open their rich architectural heritage to the world. Greenstone software was chosen for the database of text and images relating to historic building sites and landscapes and the information made available through a public access website, <http://www.cic.edu/hcap/>

"The project was a tremendous success. Not only did it draw prospective students, it was also popular with academic administrators from all disciplines as they sought to understand the importance of their campus architecture and landscape history."

Barbara Christen, HCAP Project Director.

## CUSTOMER

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) is an association of nearly 600 small to medium-sized independent liberal arts colleges and universities in the USA.

Founded in 1956, CIC endeavors to support college and university leadership, advance institutional excellence, and enhance private higher education's contributions to society.

CIC is the major national service organization for all small and mid-sized, independent, liberal arts colleges and universities in the U.S. The Council provides services such as conferences, workshops and programs to support campus leaders in improving the educational programs of their institutions.

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## BUSINESS ISSUES

One of the ongoing challenges facing CIC was increasing the visibility of their member colleges' campus landmarks and architectural sites among the general public; as well as digitally preserving these sites and making such in-depth documentation available to scholars, researchers, and the higher education community. CIC understood that digital technologies could be used to open their members' rich architectural heritage to the world.

Aware of this wealth of architectural history associated with many of the colleges and universities, and with no project existing to capture this historical information, CIC submitted a proposal to the Getty Foundation's Campus Heritage Initiative for funding to facilitate the collection and presentation of such material.

The Getty Foundation provides grants that advance the understanding and preservation of the visual arts. Its interest in US higher education and their concerns surrounding preservation of historic building sites and landscapes led to the formation of the Campus Heritage Initiative in 2002.

The initiative was designed to provide financial grants to assist colleges and universities in the United States in managing and preserving the integrity of their significant historic buildings, sites, and landscapes.

The proposal submitted by CIC was accepted and the initiative named the Historic Campus Architecture Project (HCAP).

HCAP was guided by an advisory committee and developed by the coordinated efforts of a team of project staff, CIC staff, and several independent professionals with whom CIC contracted for specific services.

Architectural historian Barbara Christen worked as HCAP project director, and explains "The project was a valuable opportunity for CIC to not only raise awareness of such rich architectural history, but also to use the impressive physical nature of the campuses as a marketing tool for potential applicants."

"It also allowed these colleges to gain an in-depth understanding of how they can gain better control of their archival materials", says Barbara.

To make HCAP a success, CIC needed to find the most effective way to organize and present the archived material online.

## SOLUTION

Initial project activities included a survey to CIC member colleges and universities to create an inventory of places with significant historical interest in architecture and landscape.

With survey responses from more than 350 colleges and universities, CIC set about searching for appropriate software to build and manage the large database of images and information that had been collected. CIC needed a solution with the flexibility to accommodate data sets that had multiple images associated with one record. Most off-the-shelf options, however, were designed as "shoe-box" filing systems based on a one-to-one relationship between images and information, and therefore did not fulfill the project's needs.

"An associate from the Digital Library Federation suggested we look into an open source solution such as Greenstone, rather than tailor an off-the-shelf system which would be costly. He explained that in many open-source software solutions you can manipulate the one-to-many relationships a lot more flexibly than off-the-shelf solutions."

CIC let the data dictate what kind of structure to use, rather than using software just because it had been successful in other university projects. "Greenstone software was chosen because it is open source and we were able to manipulate the data to make the most efficient use of the information we had collected", explains Barbara. A contract was set up with the original developers of Greenstone - the University of Waikato in New Zealand. Soon after, as key Greenstone developers moved to work at Digital Library Consulting, the contract was transferred and Digital Library Consulting continued to work with the CIC for the duration of the HCAP initiative.

Development of the website began in 2005, funded by a second two-year grant from the Getty Foundation. Activities during this phase involved creating an online database, to be presented through the website that would contain all of the collected historic campus architecture images and survey information.

The online database and website were completed in November 2006 and opened to the public. Barbara explains, "The project was a tremendous success. Not only did it draw prospective students, it was also popular with academic administrators from all disciplines as they sought to understand the importance of their campus architecture and landscape history."

"Many of the colleges that participated in HCAP do not have the staff or resources to pull together an application such as this. Colleges have also used the project to convey to alumni what their campuses look like now, compared with when they attended."

## OUTCOME

The online database includes nearly 5,000 images of 2,100 places of historical significance as well as extensive information about buildings, landscapes, campus plans, and heritage sites of US colleges and universities. Nearly 400 institutions have participated in the project to date.

Through the website, web users can browse the broad collection of institutions; find those in a particular state or region; seek information about a specific type of architecture, designer, or time period; or gather data for future research.

The database makes possible cross-referencing between institutions regarding architectural styles, time period, geographic location, and numerous other criteria. Through a user-friendly search engine and a rich set of bibliographic materials, it also guides viewers to a wide variety of sources that they can use for further study.

"The comprehensive bibliography provides a rich resource for scholars, architectural historians, and planning professionals. It's a truly centralized body of information for research into campus architectural history", says Barbara.

Barbara explains that Digital Library Consulting developed a great working relationship with CIC, "Digital Library Consulting was terrific, and it was such a pleasure to work with them. They were so clear about what the issues were that we had to deal with as we were fine-tuning and developing the website that it was really a wonderful experience on many counts. They were extremely professional."

CIC plans to update the site periodically with new and updated campus architecture information and images.



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