

Herbarium Digitization/Databasing funding sources (compiled by Ellen Dean, 2013)

National Science Foundation – Directorate for Biological Sciences

Collections in Support of Biological Research (CSBR) and Advancing Digitization of Biological Collections (ADBC) programs. Many herbaria report funding through these programs.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Many herbaria have been successful obtaining funding through this program, especially herbaria associated with larger museums or botanical gardens, because these grants have a large volunteer hours matching component.

Mellon Foundation – The Mellon Foundation has provided funding to many institutions for the imaging and databasing of type specimens through their Global Plants Initiative. However, they have also provided funding to some herbaria for databasing/imaging non-type specimens, sometimes through collaborations with university libraries (ie. the funding actually went to the campus library which was collaborating with various campus collections, including a herbarium).

A number of herbaria have formed partnerships with their campus libraries which have provided many different types of resources, including imaging equipment, scanners, servers, staff time, and sometimes grant money. At least one herbarium (The Freisner Herbarium, Indiana) has received funding through their State Library via federal pass-through monies via the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). They already had a database and needed imaging and web funds, but it is thought that these funds can be for databasing as well. Their Dean of Libraries was willing to identify their Herbarium as a special collection and their herbarium web portal is housed in the library and managed by a digital collections librarian. The awards are more directed toward print media digitization, but natural history collections are eligible, too. The money can be as much as \$20,000 a year for up to 3 years. Good money for smaller collections. These grants may be available in every state through some state agency or entity.

A number of herbaria have formed partnerships with a state/local native plant organization/society that has provided support for herbarium digitization. Funding has ranged from a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars.

Over five years ago, some databasing of particular vascular plant families was paid by a grant from the USDA/NRCS PLANTS database project (\$3,000-\$6,000) (Louisiana and Iowa) to get county-level data into the Plants National Database. This funding may no longer be available.

State Departments of Natural Resources or Environmental Protection have sometimes funded small digitization projects to obtain better data on either rare plants or invasive weeds. These monies are sometimes “year end” allocations that departments make due to a relationship that they have with a particular herbarium. Other times there are actual grant competitions.

Some herbaria have gotten contracts to do floristic surveys for USDA, National Park Service, BLM or Dept. of Defense properties. As part of that funding, there is money for specimen processing which has been used to at least do data entry for those projects (making labels) and perhaps other databasing as well. In other cases, the contract really is just to build a virtual herbarium of historic specimens from a particular park or property, and the funding can be over \$50,000. Having a good relationship with agency staff in charge of particular properties is key here. This is often “end of year” allocations. Similarly, some herbaria have received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation which supports studies on federal lands.

One herbarium was able to obtain money from NASA through their Dean of Science. The same herbarium received an allocation of the NSF Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) funding. The funding was allocated at the state level and divided among universities.

Many herbaria depend on Federal Work-Study money to keep their museums afloat, including databasing efforts.

A few herbaria have received grants from local trusts and foundations such as The Hanes Trust, which has funded the Michigan Small Herbarium Digitization Initiative.

A very few herbaria said that they are able to get USDA – Hatch money grants.

A very few herbaria have obtained gardening or horticultural foundation grants for databasing/curating horticultural herbaria.

Some herbaria ask researchers who will be using herbarium facilities for their grant projects to include money for the herbarium in the research grant, including money for label-making/databasing.