



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Conference to Create a Blueprint for a National Digital Public Library to Convene at Los Angeles Public Library November 15 – 17, 2011**

#### ***Conference organized by LAPL, OCLC and IMLS***

**LOS ANGELES** (October 21, 2011) – The Los Angeles Public Library will convene a conference of 60 leaders from academic and public libraries, foundations, digitization support organizations and technology firms to review and address the future of public libraries in the digital age and, ultimately, create a blueprint for a national public library digitization program.

The Los Angeles Public Library is hosting the conference at the Richard J. Riordan Central Library from November 15 – 17, 2011, in partnership with OCLC Online Computer Library Center with support from a federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS) secured through the Library Foundation of Los Angeles.

Among those attending the invitation-only conference will be representatives from Boston, Denver, New York and San Francisco public libraries as well as UCLA, USC, Harvard and Yale academic libraries. Also participating will be the California State Library, the Library of Congress, the Public Library Association, Digital Public Library of America, the Digital Library Federation and the organizing institutions.

“One of the most pressing challenges facing library leaders today is ensuring equal, sustainable access to digital content, especially unique local content,” said Martín J. Gómez, the Los Angeles Public Library General Manager and City Librarian. “While academic, research and special libraries have made strides in this area, many public libraries are falling behind. Without coordinated urgent action, the unique local content of many public libraries could increasingly go undiscovered and even unpreserved. It is essential that working together we develop a blueprint for a national digital public library.”

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**Peter Persic**, Public Relations & Marketing Director

During the conference, participants will examine a wide range of issues including the current state of library digitization projects, a technical perspective of the “digital landscape,” the challenges faced by public and academic libraries in pursuing digitization projects and the need for public and private investment to preserve and make materials available for the future.

After the conference, OCLC will publish a white paper summarizing outcomes from the conference and highlighting future challenges and opportunities for public library digitization projects. Findings will also be presented at the annual American Library Association conference in June 2012 and will inform the IMLS about the needs of public libraries.

For more information about the Creating a Blueprint for a National Digital Library conference, contact Martín Gómez at *mgomez@lapl.org* or (213) 228-7515.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute’s mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas.

OCLC is a nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world’s information and reducing library costs. More than 72,000 libraries in 170 countries have used OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend, preserve and manage library materials.

The Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, more than six million books, and state-of-the-art technology accessible at *www.lapl.org*, provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

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