Cover Sheet for Proposals	**VRE Programme**

Name of Call Area Bidding For:
VRE2 Extension

Name of Lead Institution:	University of Oxford

Name of Proposed Project: Embedding the VRE-SDM tools

Full Contact Details for Primary Contact:
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Length of Project:	5 months		
Project Start Date:	1/6/09	**Project End Date:**	31/10/09

Total Funding Requested from JISC: £50,000

Funding Broken Down over Financial Years (April - March):
April 09 – March 10   £50,000

Total Institutional Contributions: £26,924

Outline Project Description:

The aim of the project extension is to embed VRE-SDM by:

-User community involvement through increased visibility and added value

-Sustainability through porting to the OpenSocial API and interoperability with the university VLE

-Rollout through Archaeology strand of EPSRC-funded e-Research South Platform project

-Dissemination through DRHA and participation in Bamboo project

Embedding the VRE-SDM Tools

Project Aims:

The aim of the project extension is to embed VRE-SDM both at Oxford, nationally and internationally by the following means:

- User community involvement through increased visibility and added value, by incorporating VRE-SDM in a new on-line resource supporting digital humanities researchers at Oxford throughout the project life-cycle (Workpackage 1)

- Sustainability through porting VRE-SDM tools to the OpenSocial API allowing interoperability and embedding within Oxford's VLE (See Workpackage 2)

- Rollout through links with the Archaeology strand of EPSRC-funded e-Research South Platform project (See Workpackage 3)

- Dissemination nationally through the Digital Resources for the Humanities and Arts (DRHA) and internationally through participation in the Bamboo project (See Workpackage 4)

Project Plan - Workpackages:

Workpackage 1 - User community involvement through increased visibility and added value:

Description: This will incorporate VRE-SDM in a high-profile, on-line resource supporting digital humanities researchers at Oxford from postgraduate students upwards, throughout all the stages of their project life-cycles. Work is already under way at the OeRC, with the help of the Oxford Research Archive (ORA) institutional repository and the JISC-funded BRII project, to build up a comprehensive knowledge base of projects, people, support and events in the digital humanities, as a basis for planning, to promote collaboration and exchange, and to raise the profile of the activities.

Extension funding would allow us to incorporate access to and documentation on VRE-SDM in this resource, and to extend the knowledge base to provide systematic support information for digital humanities research projects from the planning stage through to deposit of data, where appropriate, within ORA. This development would be based on the user needs information gathered by the Oxford VRE1 project, 'Building a Virtual Research Environment for the Humanities' (BVREH). The on-line resource would be developed in collaboration with the key Oxford stakeholders: Oxford University Computing Service (OUCS), Oxford University Library Services (OULS) (including ORA), and the Humanities Division. It will aim to become the standard point of departure for all researchers in the university using advanced ICT for arts and humanities research in which text- and image-data for documents and manuscripts of all kinds and from all cultures and periods is of vital importance . As well as promoting the use of the VRE-SDM, the on-line resource will promote awareness and use of the wide range of facilities, services and tools available in Oxford and nationally to users of ICT for arts and humanities research. It will also play a key role in building communities of practitioners, of

whom there are a great many in Oxford, but who are typically dispersed and in varying degrees isolated from one another. The project will benefit from the input of 0.5 days per week of David Robey's time and 1.5 days per week of Martin Wynne funded by the Digital Humanities at Oxford project.

Deliverables: A set of web-pages as described previously, jointly owned by the above stakeholders and incorporating information about and access to VRE-SDM and systematic information resources about the use of ICT in arts and humanities research.

Outcomes: Increased uptake of VRE-SDM; enhanced awareness and use of ICT methodologies, resources (local and national) and good practices on the part of Oxford humanities researchers; support for more effective planning, and encouragement of communities of practice, in the digital humanities.

Workpackage 2 - Sustainability through porting VRE-SDM tools to the OpenSocial API:

Description: This workpackage will work on porting the tools developed by the VRE-SDM project to work within a Google gadget/OpenSocial environment. Currently, the VRE-SDM image viewer, annotation and search tools are implemented as JSR-168 portlets which have been embedded within uPortal. The Google gadgets/OpenSocial API is a newer mechanism which combines multiple components in a web environment. This approach has increasing take up, and is being implemented or considered for implementation by upcoming versions of Sakai and the Bamboo project infrastructure. During this workpackage the team will convert the VRE-SDM tools to operate as OpenSocial components, allowing us to make use of the better interactivity and JavaScript support as compared with the JSR-168 standard. This will both improve the user experience of the tools, and help ensure their sustainability by making them easier to embed within a wider number of frameworks, including systems such the Oxford VLE (based on Sakai) and future Bamboo Project infrastructure.

This work will be undertaken by the Technical Manager along with some effort from outside contractors (including Katie Portwin who has experience from working previously on the VRE-SDM project). All software components will be made available to the community via the VRE-SDM website under an OSS license.

Deliverable: Version of the VRE-SDM code better suited to embed within systems other than those based on JSR168 standards and a case study detailing our experiences porting JSR-168 to the OpenSocial API.

Outcomes: VRE-SDM tools which are better suited to integration with institutional systems such as the VLE

Workpackage 3 - Rollout through links with the Archaeology strand of the EPSRC-funded e-Research South Platform project:

Description: The project will investigate interoperability between the VRE-SDM project and the eResearch South, English Landscapes Project which aims to cross-search and visualise multiple sources of archaeological and GIS data to aid the researcher at the highest level, continuously querying context, dating and finds information as the research evolves, and also offering to those with a less specialised archaeological knowledge. Through the XDB-Arch collaboration with the VERA project, the VRE-SDM project has already explored the possibilities of cross searching an archaeological and a classical inscription database and as such there is obvious potential for the reuse of components from VRE-SDM within this e-Research South strand. This work package will allow the project to further extend its links within the Archaeology Sub-Faculty at Oxford with the intention of rolling out VRE-SDM components where applicable as the English Landscapes project progresses.

Deliverable: Report detailing how the VRE-SDM will fit within the emerging English Landscapes Project

Outcomes: Understanding of opportunities to reuse VRE-SDM components within the Archaeology Department at Oxford

Workpackage 4 - Dissemination nationally through the DRHA and internationally through participation in the Bamboo project

Description: This Workpackage will include attendance at the DRHA to disseminate and promote VRE-SDM project outcomes nationally along with preparation for the use of VRE-SDM tools within Oxford's Bamboo project involvement at an international level.

Deliverable: Report of interoperability options for VRE-SDM to be included in Oxford's Bamboo report.

Outcomes: VRE-SDM representative attends the DRHA to disseminate project results. VRE-SDM developer attends Bamboo planning meeting to ensure that VRE-SDM tools are represented and fully embedded within the upcoming Bamboo proposal.

Directly Incurred Staff	Jun 09 – Oct 09	Total
Project Manager (R. Kirkham), Grade 8, 1.2 person months	£4,794	£4,794
Technical Manager (J. Pybus), Grade 8, 1.6 person months	£6,538	£6,538
Research Assistant, Grade 6, 4 person months	£10,743	£10,743
Total Directly Incurred Staff (A)	**£22,075**	**£22,075**
Non-Staff		
Travel and expenses	£3,000	£3,000
Consultancy (Katie Portwin, Neenar Ltd)	£7,695	£7,695
Consultancy	£10,000	£10,000
Total Directly Incurred Non-Staff (B)	**£20,695**	**£20,695**
Directly Incurred Total (C) (A+B=C)	**£42,770**	**£42,770**
Directly Allocated		
Principal Investigator (A Bowman) 1 hr pw	£1,242	£1,242
Co Investigator (C Crowther) 1 hr pw	£665	£665
Estates	£3,515	£3515
Directly Allocated Total (D)	**£5,422**	**£5422**
Indirect Costs (E)	**£28,732**	**£28,732**
Total Project Cost (C+D+E)	**£76,924**	**£76,924**
Amount Requested from JISC	**£50,000**	**£50,000**
Institutional Contributions	**£26,924**	**£26,924**
Percentage Contributions over the life of the project	**Partners: 35%**	**Total 100%**

	JISC: 65%	
No. FTEs used to calculate indirect and estates charges, and staff included	**No FTEs** **1.413**	**Which Staff** Bowman, Crowther, RA, Kirkham, Pybus