Digital Collection Highlights and Tips for Browsing
The Library of Congress has issued a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA or announcement) that seeks proposals for creative works under the program areas of interpretation, discovery, and reuse as outlined in Section 2 of the announcement.

The following collections were submitted by LC staff to be considered by applicants as they develop concepts because their copyright status makes a range of uses more permissible and they represent interesting possibilities for activation through the BAA program areas. Concept papers will only be evaluated by the criteria explained in Section 5.1 of the announcement. Applicants do not have to cite a collection featured in this resource, but strong concept papers will cite specific Library items or collections to be used. Items used should be both legally and ethically appropriate for the proposed work and planned distribution.

Some Highlights from the Digital Collections

- **Selected Digitized Books**
  Over 150,000 titles from the General Collections available as text-searchable PDFs including books on sports and leisure, elocution and recitations, cookbooks, and works of fiction spanning four centuries. Most of the materials in this collection were published in the United States prior to the 1930s and are in English. There are also some materials in foreign languages that were published in other countries. A dataset containing full text from a sub-selection of 90,414 books is also available.

- **Early Copyright Records Collection**
  The documents in this collection are the result of the first federal copyright laws in 1790 and 1831 (as amended) and contain the early copyright records and material held by the federal district courts and numerous government offices in Washington, DC. 18th- and 19th-century title pages from the Early Copyright Records Collection offer a uniquely American sensibility and chronicle an industrious new nation and its intellectual pursuits. Some of the titles will be readily recognized, but many were never published or have been lost to history due to their obscurity. The title pages are broadly organized by date and include every type of publication imaginable. Books, sheet music, prints, maps, dramatic compositions, advertising labels, patent drawings and books are represented. Topics include histories, dramatic plays, religious and educational instruction, music scores, science and invention, as well as many fictional works, to name a few. Over 95,600 pages were transcribed by volunteers as one of the Library's By the People campaigns and the transcriptions are fully text-searchable on loc.gov.

- **Free to Use and Reuse Image Sets**
  A perennial fan favorite, free to use and reuse images are continuously curated into thematic albums on topics like disability awareness, dragons, Heritage months, and cats.

- **The Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection**
  The Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection is one of the most important assemblage of books dedicated to the history of graphic design, typography, and illustration in the country. Son of noted philanthropist Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932), renowned for his commitment to African American education (Rosenwald Schools) and art (Rosenwald Fund), Lessing Rosenwald led a life as singular as his collection. His global pursuit to locate what he considered the most important and impactful illustrated books on science, architecture, religion, medicine, satire, private press printing, and modern art is near legend. In 1943, at the height of WWII, Lessing
formalized an unprecedented donation of books to the Library of Congress. Lessing's collection came to the Library in a series of gifts. They began in 1943 and culminated in 1980 when the entire collection was delivered to Washington after his death the previous year. For the Library of Congress, the final donation amounted to over 2,600 exceedingly rare books and a 5,000-volume reference library. Rosenwald collected prints and illustrated books that visually and textually captured seismic events in the history of the Western World: the dawn of printing, the Protestant Reformations, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the rise of the Modern Art Movement, and more. Despite its long chronological scope, the books in the Rosenwald Collection maintain an effortless fraternity based in the historical and technological intersection of text and image. The Rosenwald Collection is part of the nearly 1 million books, broadsides, pamphlets, theater playbills, title pages, prints, posters, photographs, as well as medieval and Renaissance manuscripts that make up the Rare Book Division at the Library of Congress.

- **United States Congressional Serial Set**
  Over 14,000 PDFs and online text representing a compilation of journals, reports, and documents from House and Senate proceedings as well as documents from executive departments and independent agencies. Documents cover a wide variety of topics and may include reports of executive departments and independent organizations, reports of special investigations made for Congress, and annual reports of non-governmental organizations. This is a useful resource for understanding issues that have been investigated by Congress throughout history, including the geographical expansion of the United States, the nature of international affairs, national museum acquisitions, and much more. The Law Library of Congress and the Government Publishing Office are collaborating to digitize Serial Set documents published between the 15th (1817) and 103rd (1994) Congresses, thus making accessible two centuries' worth of American legislative history.

- **Sheet Music of the Musical Theater**
  More than 16,000 pieces of sheet music published between 1880 and 1922. These piano-vocal selections come from musicals, revues and operettas primarily of the American and British stage. The cover art is also an important resource for commercial art of the period, frequently depicting the home and/or social lives of the target consumers of these publications (e.g., salon culture, middle- or upper-class home music-making, etc.). Also commonly depicted are historic events that inspired the creation of the song. On occasion, associated performers were featured in the cover art. The back covers frequently reference other publications by the songwriter or lyricist, or simply complementary works available from the publisher. On both covers, other decorative elements will root these publications in their specific eras and provide visual historic value for studying material culture. This collection is currently available for transcription by volunteers, and searchable text for the collection may be available in 2024.

- **Computing Cultural Heritage in the Cloud Derivative Datasets**
  Each data package on data.labs.loc.gov consists of a bundle of digital files from Library of Congress collections as well as technical documentation about how the dataset was compiled and contextual documentation describing the digitization and collection history of the material at the Library. The technical and humanistic information put together by curators and LC Labs staff is based on feedback from researchers looking to apply computational approaches to Library material.
Tips for Browsing

If applicants are not familiar with the Library’s collections but have a particular subject in mind, they can begin by browsing researcher guides organized by subject. This one on digital scholarship gives a useful introduction to searching the Library’s collections online or using the loc.gov site API.

Our archive of blog posts written by staff and patrons is fully searchable and features many inspirational stories from and about the collections. The Library’s YouTube Channel may be another useful window into the range of research and engagement supported by the Library.

If you want to jump right in and browse the Library’s website, try using the facets on the left-hand side of the results page to refine your search. Collections can also be browsed by format using the drop-down menu beside the search bar. For information on the copyright status of an item or collection, see the “Rights Advisory” or “Rights and Access” fields. For related material, click on any of the hyperlinked subjects, collections or resources featured on the sides of item and collection pages, or scroll down for more suggestions.

Applicants are encouraged to submit questions to our reference staff using the Ask a Librarian service.