

OUTREACH INCENTIVE GRANT FUNDING: END-OF-YEAR PROJECT REPORT

Title of Proposal: Knoxville and the Built Environment: An Oral History

Your Name: Liz Teston Project Date: 2015

Additional project support received from other university or external sources:

Source	Amount	Title
Start-up Funds	\$1665	

Please use this sheet to answer each of the following questions about your project (1-2 pp total)

1. ASSESSMENT: How did this project document or assess its engagement with the community?

The *Knoxville and the Built Environment* online archive documents the connectivity within design and culture by creating a repository for images, recordings and transcriptions of Knoxville's Market Square and downtown areas. Our formative memories of everyday architecture inform contemporary design. This collection of primary source narratives bridges the gap between academia and practice. The archive directly benefits the Knoxville community at-large by building bridges between the design community, students and seniors. This community based project benefits many senior Knoxville residents in that they are able to express themselves and continue to contribute to the collective community.

2. PARTNERSHIP/RECIPROCITY: How did the university and community work together?

The website was developed with input from organizations such as the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, International Interior Design Association, American Institute of Architects, and University of Tennessee Libraries. The project team also reached out to Knoxville seniors and leadership at senior care facilities for continued conversations and archive development. The archive impacts the design community, historians, students and Knoxville seniors by providing a network of engagement.

3. BENEFITS: What were the benefits (University/community) of this partnership?

The primary benefit is a documentation and analysis of cultural identity and memory's impact on our built environment. The shared benefits of the University-community partnership provide exposure to the interior design program while giving Knoxville seniors purpose and design historians and students access to new primary source historical material. Archiving and providing access to these memories is an act of historic preservation – the most sustainable type of design.

4. SHARED DECISION-MAKING: Did the community have a "voice" or role for input into this project?

The project team worked with external collaborators to determine the best organization for the online archive.

5. SCHOLARSHIP: Are there any examples of faculty scholarship that will be informed by this project?

Liz Teston presented a paper at the recent *Journal of Interior Design Symposium* on the cultural and design impacts of memory spaces. The online archive can be found at knoxhistories.org and features interviews, images and diagrams analyzing the information discovered in the conversations.

6. CONCLUSIONS: What conclusions and best practices can be drawn from the partnership?

Knoxville and the Built Environment: An Oral History provides a platform for those interested in the history of Knoxville's built environment. Archiving memories and providing community access allows these memories to endure. Best practices for future development of this work should include regular and continued contributions from a variety of people from the area so the archive can expand as Knoxville grows.

7. **FUTURE PLANS:** What are the future plans for this partnership?

We will continue to develop the archive and seek contributions from people with ties to Knoxville and Market Square. The archive will be used in forthcoming research projects in design history courses at the University of Tennessee and we are seeking contacts within local K-12 schools. Additionally, copies of the transcriptions and audio files have been donated to the University of Tennessee Libraries for inclusion in the library's digital collections, which is also a component of the Digital Public Library of America. If you are interested in contributing your story to *Knoxville and the Built Environment: An Oral History*, please visit knoxhistories.org.