

The Ten Thousand Rooms Project

廣廈千萬間項目

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... If I could get a mansion with a thousand, ten thousand rooms,
A great shelter for all the world's scholars, together in joy,
Solid as a mountain, the elements could not move it.
Oh! If I could see this house before me,
I'd happily freeze to death in my broken hut!

安得廣廈千萬間
大庇天下寒士俱歡顏
風雨不動安如山
嗚呼何時眼前突兀見此屋
吾廬獨破受凍死亦足

杜甫《茅屋為秋風所破歌》

Du Fu (712-770), "Song of My Cottage Unroofed by Autumn Gales" (trans. Burton Watson)

Summary:

The Ten Thousand Rooms is our concept for an open-access platform to enable collaborative research on pre-modern Chinese sources (~13 c. BCE to the 20th century). Building on the Mirador Viewer (formerly Canvas Viewer or Shared Canvas) developed by Stanford University with support from the Mellon Foundation, the platform would allow users to upload images of sources and organize projects around their transcription, translation, and/or annotation. Both as a workspace for crowdsourcing core textual research and as a publishing venue for scholarly contributions that are less well suited to conventional book formats, the Ten Thousand Rooms Project would aim to establish an international online community of sinologists committed to making the Chinese textual heritage more accessible to a wider audience.

We are currently seeking a \$430,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation for a period of three years, to begin in October.

The proposal:

The project has two parts: the technical development to create the Ten Thousand Rooms platform (Years 1–2), and the community development to advertise the site and encourage the participation of the international sinological community (Year 3).

Technical development would be the responsibility of the Yale Digital Collections Center (YDC2) at Yale University and would consist of three major components: (1) the creation of the Ten Thousand Rooms website using the Liferay Portal; (2) various enhancements to the Mirador Viewer, including internationalization of the user interface and a tool for representing rare characters; (3) the development of an International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF)-compliant manifest builder for publishing images and metadata to the platform. (Looking ahead, our adoption of the IIIF standard would one day allow users to browse digital images of sources held in collections outside of Yale and then initiate projects around those sources, all via the Ten Thousand Rooms platform.)

Community development would consist of: (1) ten honorary grants (\$2,000) to a select group of senior scholars to publish their textual research on the platform; (2) 15 competitive mini-grants (\$600) to junior scholars and/or graduate students to publish their research on the platform; (3) advertising the Ten Thousand Rooms at the 2017 meeting of the Association for Asian Studies; (4) organizing at least one collaborative research seminar between Yale and at least one other institution in the spring of 2017; (5) traveling to the top research universities to give presentations on the project. We have also convened an advisory committee to help with the implementation of the platform and, at a later stage, to oversee the governance of the online community.

In addition to being a research and publishing venue, the Ten Thousand Rooms would also be a legal space for open-access digitized texts that conform to both Chinese and US copyright law. In the event that a project editor could not secure permission to publish a copyrighted source to the website, s/he would have the option of uploading that source and permanently restricting access privileges only to the project contributors. Any original work based on those images would then be viewable by all users of the site.