DAN COHEN NAMED FOUNDING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY OF AMERICA

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Cambridge, MA—The [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA) announced today the appointment of Dan Cohen as the DPLA's founding Executive Director. Cohen, currently a tenured professor in the Department of History and Art History at George Mason University and the Director of the [Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media](#), brings to the DPLA more than a decade of experience in digital humanities and a deep commitment to the future of libraries, archives, and museums. Cohen will begin his tenure on April 18, 2013.

"Dan Cohen's appointment is exceptionally good news for the future of the DPLA," said John Palfrey, President of the DPLA Board of Directors. "Dan's contributions to the field of digital humanities and to libraries are already extraordinary. He has led major open source development projects, helped to digitize important works of culture, supported teachers and students in accessing fantastic digital materials, and written about the importance of libraries, archives, and museums in a digital age. We are very fortunate that he has agreed to lead the DPLA as the founding executive director."

As the Executive Director, Cohen will work to further the DPLA's mission to make the cultural and scientific heritage of humanity available, free of charge, to all. He will manage the day-to-day operations of the new organization, will serve as the DPLA's spokesperson, and will advocate for partners within and outside the larger DPLA community, among a range of other critical duties.

"I am so honored to be entrusted with leading the team that will take the next steps in making the wonderful idea of the Digital Public Library of America a reality," said Cohen. "The notion of a large-scale open digital library for all, which will connect everyone to the riches of America's libraries, archives, and museums, is profoundly important. I am deeply thankful for the hard work and tremendous vision of the DPLA's Secretariat, Steering Committee, and Board of Directors, Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society, and the thousands of Americans who have participated in the DPLA's planning process. I look forward to building upon this incredible foundation,

and to partnering with people and institutions across the country to build a new library for the twenty-first century."

Cohen currently serves as an Associate Professor in the Department of History and Art History at George Mason University, where he is the Director of the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media. At the Center, Cohen has overseen projects ranging from new publishing ventures (PressForward) to online collections (September 11 Digital Archive) to software for scholarship (the popular Zotero research tool). His books include *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (with Roy Rosenzweig) and *Equations from God: Pure Mathematics and Victorian Faith*. Cohen was an inaugural recipient of the American Council of Learned Societies' Digital Innovation Fellowship. In 2011 he received the Frederick G. Kilgour Award from the American Library Association for his work in digital humanities, and in 2012 he was named one of the top "tech innovators" in academia by the *Chronicle of Higher Education.*

Cohen was nominated by the DPLA Search Committee from a deep and competitive pool of candidates from around the world and across the public and private sectors. The Board of Directors gratefully acknowledges those who nominated others or themselves for the position, as well as the hard work of Michele Haertel and Jim Citrin at SpencerStuart for their work to identify and assess a wide range of candidates. The Board also thanks the Search Committee, composed of Robert Darnton (Steering Committee), Laura DeBonis (Board of Directors), Carla Hayden (Steering Committee), Maura Marx (Steering Committee/Secretariat), John Palfrey (Board of Directors), and Doron Weber (Steering Committee), for their valuable contributions to the search process.

"We conducted a comprehensive and intensive search for the right person who could serve as the DPLA's first head—a historic appointment for a history-making organization—and Dan really impressed us with his unique combination of smarts, experience, passion, and vision," remarked Doron Weber, Vice Chair of the DPLA Steering Committee. "He is a scholar and blogger who knows the digital world as well the library world, and a teacher and manager who understands the value of building consensus and community—as well as an effective fundraiser, marketer, and communicator—and we are fortunate to have him lead DPLA towards the fulfillment of its grand, unifying vision."

"Dan's appointment as the founding Executive Director of the DPLA is a significant and exciting milestone in the history of the project," said Director Laura DeBonis. "Dan's extensive managerial and research experience will be a truly indispensable asset to the development of the DPLA as an essential, sustainable national digital resource."

Cohen holds a B.A. in Religion and History of Science from Princeton, a Masters in Theological Studies from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in History from Yale University.

ABOUT THE DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY OF AMERICA

The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) is taking the first concrete steps toward the realization of a large-scale digital public library that will make the cultural and scientific record available to all. This impact-oriented research effort unites leaders from all types of libraries, museums, and archives with educators, industry, and government to define the vision for a digital library in service of the American public.

Over the past two years, the DPLA has partnered with a wide range of organizations— including the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation; Arcadia Fund; Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco Public Libraries; Digital Library of Georgia; Harvard University; Institute of Museum and Library Services; Internet Archive; John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; National Archives and Records Administration; National Endowment for the Humanities; Mountain West Digital Library; and South Carolina Digital Library—to develop the infrastructure for a national digital library. More information can be found at http://dp.la/.

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