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DISCUS/Academic

Access to knowledge, as manifested through the provision of digital information, that is, electronic versions of journals, books and databases, is a fundamental component of higher education. Many states in the South have realized it is also fuel for the economic development engine that education and research represent. Today many South Carolinians, whether they study in our smallest technical colleges or our research universities, cannot obtain this information. Knowledge in digital form is increasingly expensive, and South Carolina's academic libraries struggle to provide the resources that support quality higher education, a skilled workforce, business growth, and lifelong learning.

DISCUS, a successful initiative of the South Carolina State Library, presently gives all South Carolinians equity of access to an electronic library of general information. DISCUS resources directly benefit higher education, serving some of the needs of entering students. DISCUS/Academic will supply students and faculty with the scholarly information they require to succeed with their coursework and research no matter where they reside and at every stage in the higher learning cycle—undergraduate, retraining, adult learning and graduate. Linking DISCUS and DISCUS/ACADEMIC can facilitate the transition students make from high school to the higher education system. The State Library has endorsed the use of the branded name DISCUS.

DISCUS/Academic achieves significant cost avoidance. Studies in other states have shown that individual academic libraries would need to spend four dollars for every dollar spent statewide.

Specifically, DISCUS/Academic will:

- \*Secure license agreements from digital information vendors to expand DISCUS and add the DISCUS/Academic tier of research and scholarly information for all South Carolina college and university students.

- \* Provide staffing to support DISCUS/Academic: two program officers. One program officer would support the licensing and negotiating effort involved in DISCUS/Academic and the other would support DISCUS training and technical infrastructure.

The request for funding of this project represents the costs for the first year of program operation only. Every state that has developed a program for digital knowledge has done so on a multi-year, continuous cycle.

Current FY 04 Funding	Requested Increase FY 05	Total Funding Request
\$0	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000



# State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

## COMMUNICATIONS & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Virtual Library of Virginia Honored with Statewide Award**

*-- Educational consortium has saved state institutions more than \$100 million --*

**RICHMOND** — The Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA), the consortium of academic libraries serving all 39 public and 30 of the private nonprofit colleges and universities, as well as the Library of Virginia, was honored on Monday, September 22, with the Gold Governor's Technology Award in the higher education category. The award was presented at the Commonwealth of Virginia Information Technology Symposium (COVITS) at The Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center in Roanoke.

"VIVA represents the single most important technological development in Virginia higher education in the past decade; moreover, we believe that VIVA is one of the most significant developments of any kind in Virginia government over this period," said Carl N. Kelly, chairman of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), which oversees VIVA. "We are convinced that recognition of VIVA—for its innovation, its results and its efficiency—is not only long overdue, but also very appropriate at this time, as it enters its tenth year of existence having recently surpassed \$100M in cost avoidance for the Commonwealth."

VIVA's mission is to provide, in an equitable, cooperative and cost effective manner, enhanced access to library and information resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia's nonprofit academic libraries serving the higher education community. VIVA has greatly enhanced access to library materials and electronic databases for nearly 400,000 students and faculty.

VIVA allows member institutions to pool resources and access commercial, on-line publications and databases at rates 20-90% less than what the individual institutions would have paid. VIVA has saved even more resources by employing a distributed approach to managing these collections; consequently, the materials can be provided to member libraries without the need for a large and expensive computing infrastructure specifically for that purpose. In reduced fees for access to these materials alone, VIVA has reduced potential library expenditures by \$103 million since its inception in 1994.

VIVA has also fostered significant savings in interlibrary loan expenditures. Through innovative use of the Internet, users at one college or university are able to obtain copies of research material from other colleges or universities almost immediately, at far higher quality than fax and less cost than commercial providers. This enhanced level of service has resulted in an increase of more than 55% in interlibrary loan rates for books since FY96. Sharing articles and documents by member libraries has resulted in cost avoidance of nearly \$900,000 annually.

At its most recent meeting at James Madison University on September 17, SCHEV recommended additional VIVA funding of \$4.0 million for 2004-06. VIVA received approximately \$8.1 million in state funding for 2002-04.

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