Parts of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the narrative portion of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and applicants are urged to prepare a proposal that reflects their unique project and aspirations.

Prospective applicants should consult the application guidelines at https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/neh-mellon-fellowships-digital-publication for instructions.

Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Research Division staff well before a grant deadline.

This attachment only contains the narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

The application format has been changed since this application was submitted. You must follow the guidelines in the currently posted Notice of Funding Opportunity (see above link).

Project Title: *Italian Songs from the Time of Christopher Columbus: A Critical Edition*

Institution: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Project Director: Anne E. MacNeil

Grant Program: NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication

Italian Songs in the time of Christopher Columbus: A new breed of critical edition

Research and Contribution
Since the mid-18th century, scholars have been accustomed to thinking of musical works of art as embodied in their notation. The restrictions of print culture on the publication of critical editions has perpetuated and entrenched this line of thinking. But with the vastly increased resources afforded by digital humanities, I am creating a critical edition of the late-15th- and early-16th-century repertory of Italian songs known as *frottole* that displaces this notion and relocates the object of study in music as a sounding work of art. While I and my team are rigorously evaluating, analyzing, and critiquing the materials and resources in this new edition, thereby providing users with expert editorial perspective, our goal is not to establish a single authoritative version of a given sounding text, nor to render texts in modern notation, but rather to provide users with experiences and tools to make sense of the music, poetry, and sources for themselves. Our unique perspective provides scholarly information to a wide audience of users who may or may not be able to read music notation. Significant new ways of presenting curated material in this edition include written analyses and transcriptions that are synchronized with audio recordings of the music; audio critiques to accompany video screen captures of visual sources; documentary film (a description of and link to my recent film, *Ad tempo taci: Songs for Isabella d'Este* resides on the American Musicological Society's [website](#)); analyses of musicians' and poets' compositional habits through data mining of the entire repertory of ca. 2,000 songs; and visual deconstruction of historical sources to show patterns of work not possible to study even with an original source in hand.

Although the composition and performance of *frottole* occupied a crucial time in Italy's history, they are little studied and rarely performed. This is in part because they present serious analytical challenges. Yet thousands of *frottole* found their way into manuscripts and prints in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, demonstrating a flourishing of artful human expression in an era of intense cultural change – a time of war in Italy, involving the great superpowers of western Europe (the Italian Wars, 1494-1559), but also a time of scientific discovery and the exploration of the New World. Contemporaries of the composers and poets of *frottole* include Christopher Columbus, Nicholaus Copernicus, Aldus Manutius, and Leonardo Da Vinci. Many *frottole* speak to wartime concerns (like keeping silent in the face of an unknown enemy or heralding advancing troups), and the repertory as a whole represents a rejection of French domination over the Italian peninsula in favor of the Italian language, its ancient poetic forms, and traditional practices of singing and reciting to the lyre. They offer a glimpse into Italy's ancestry and deep connections to the Kingdom of Aragon, and they give expression to Italian humanism. Moreover, *frottole* came into being at a time when conceptions of music were changing radically. A revolution in the way music was composed and in music aesthetics – innovations analogous to the discovery of perspective in art – were enunciated for the first time by Ugolino of Orvieto around 1430, who combined the previously separate perspectives of music as a speculative study (*musica speculativa*) and music as a practical study (*musica practica*) as essential elements of a comprehensive understanding of music.

But *frottole* are a difficult repertory to comprehend. Even in their beautiful representations in the books of the first music printer Ottaviano Petrucci, their cyclic structures, repetitions, and the ordering of musical phrases are not clearly defined, the authors of the poems are not attributed, the syllables of poetry are not aligned to notes in the music, and the printer's design of the books in choirbook layout seems to be at odds with their content. Some of Petrucci's books were intabulated into notation for voice and lute by Franciscus Bossinensis, which adds a layer of complexity to their music analysis. My digital critical edition of this repertory – an edition that highlights the empirical experience of *frottole* as both *musica speculativa* <u>and</u> *musica practica* – resolves these issues, re-

focuses attention on the sounding work of art, and aligns this repertory with the prevailing aesthetics of its time.

Preservation and access of the *frottola* repertory is an important consideration. The entire repertory survives in approximately twenty manuscripts and about twenty printed books. The main holdings of printed *frottola* books are at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich and at the Österreichesche Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. Individual exemplars of Petrucci's printed *frottola* books in Paris, Chicago, Milan, Regensberg, Madrid, and Seville are available only to visitors to those libraries. Although Christopher Columbus' son Fernando purchased all eleven of Petrucci's books of *frottole* and all three volumes of Bossinensis' intabulations in the decade 1521-1531, (the Fugger family in Augsburg – bankers to the Holy Roman Empire – also purchased Petrucci's *frottola* books), in the world today, as far as we know, the most number of copies of any of these *frottola* books to survive is four. Petrucci's fourth, seventh, eighth, and eleventh books survive in only one copy each, and book ten no longer exists at all. A catalogue raisonné of Petrucci's entire output was published by Stanley Boorman in 2006. Existing critical editions of the repertory comprise Rudolf Schwartz's edition of Petrucci's *frottola* volumes one and four (1935) and Gaetano Cesari's, Raffaello Monterosso's, and Benvenuto Disertori's edition of Petrucci's first book of *frottole* with additional notes about books two and three (1954). More recently, though, the University of Padua has issued meticulous print editions of some of Petrucci's *frottola* books under the leadership of Francesco Luisi (1997, 1999, 2004, 2006, and 2013), which series as yet lacks editions of Petrucci's second, third, fourth, and fifth books of *frottole*. The three volumes of Bossinensis' intabulations of *frottole*, also printed by Petrucci, are not planned for inclusion in that series or any other. English translations are not included in any of these editions. The volumes missing from the Padua series account for a general lack of information concerning Petrucci's second editions of *frottole*, which were issued for books two, three, and four, and for Bossinensis' first book of intabulations.

Methods and Workplan
Although my long-range plan for this digital critical edition encompasses all books of *frottole* published by the printers Petrucci, Andrea Antico, and Valerio Dorico, together with approximately twenty manuscript sources of *frottole*, I will spend my fellowship year in Durham, NC, curating the books by Petrucci that are not examined in detail in any of the existing critical editions: Petrucci's *frottola* books 2, 3, 4, and 5, the second edition of Bossinensis' first book of intabulations of *frottole*, and his second volume of intabulations. I have already curated Petrucci's first book of *frottole* and Bossinensis' first volume of intabulations as my initial dataset, and created the database design, data attributes, template configurations, and visualizations. I have developed and continue to develop methods for understanding the little-known musicians, poets, and printers who created *frottole* through their work products and work processes. In addition to providing network visualizations that identify the variant witnesses and readings of each song, my initial data-mining trials uncover the choices each individual composer tended to make when he or she sat down to write a piece of music. I have been able to identify each composer's favorite genre, poetic form, key, time signature, mode, and even favorite poet. Expanding the data mining out to a larger set of the repertory, I have been able to determine which musical features are most often associated with specific genres and forms of poetry. I have created visualizations to assist musicians in selecting repertory for performance, as well as galleries that allow users to visually analyze print design, distinctive features of the original music notation, and the narrative arcs of printed books. The linchpin of my edition, though, is the audio widget, which synchronizes sound recordings with poetic transcripts, poetic analyses, translations, music analyses, and commentary.
My work process includes the following steps for each song: analysis of poetic form; analysis of musical form and repetitive structures; communication of analyses to musicians and discussion of

performance practices for creation of audio files; data compilation (clefs, key signatures, time signatures, voice ranges, placement of the song within its book – layout, forme, gathering, foliation, etc.); creation of formatted, time-stamped transcripts; creation of image data (complete *frottole* in their original notation, plus cropped decorated initials and distinctive music notation); uploading of .jpg, .mp3, and .txt files to the WordPress Media Library; data entry and proof-reading of data; creation of record page to highlight distinctive features of the song and relevant context (can include additional recorded performances, prose writing, video, screen capture, and/or audio analyses). My rate of speed is about ten songs per week for data analysis, file creation, and data entry, which works out to about six weeks per volume. Working with musicians and creating record pages adds to that time in unpredictable increments. Necessary permissions are secured in writing for all audio files.

Competencies, skills, and access
I teach both music history and comparative literatures at UNC-Chapel Hill, specializing in Renaissance Italy, and so I am uniquely qualified to conduct the research in the music and poetry required for this project. My training in digital humanities began with a year-long faculty fellowship in the Digital Innovation Lab at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2014, and I am a close collaborator with Michael Newton, the Lab's Technology Lead and developer of the programming used in this project. Since spring 2014, I have partnered with musicians Marco Beasley and Franco Pavan to create recordings of *frottole* (both are featured in my film Ad tempo taci: Songs for Isabella d'Este, together with art historian Dr. Molly Bourne and former Director of the State Archives in Mantua, Italy, Daniela Ferrari). Musicians Jeff Noonan and Catalina Vicens have recently become participants in this project. I am working also with graduate student researchers and musicians in the Historical Performance Institute at Indiana University, Bloomington and at UNC-Chapel Hill. My Co-PIs are a former teacher of adult computer literacy at the Durham Literacy Center and a former graduate advisee. I have already received both authorization for use and free digitizations of nine books of Petrucci's *frottole* from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, and I am in process of securing authorizations for use and digitizations from other libraries: specifically, the Öesterreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (Petrucci II, 2nd ed; Petrucci III, 2nd ed; Petrucci IV, 2nd ed); the Biblioteca Braidense in Milan (Bossinensis II) and the Newberry Library in Chicago (Bossinensis I, 2nd ed). If required, I am prepared to pay for digitizations out of pocket or via small grant opportunities at my university.

Final product and dissemination
The technology for this edition – a visualization toolkit for WordPress called Prospect – was created by the Digital Innovation Lab at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and is freely available as a WordPress plugin. My edition's site resides on the WordPress server at UNC-Chapel Hill (https://ideamusic.web.unc.edu), although the site is locked while in development. The site is backed up every two hours, and all configurations of attributes, templates, and exhibits are stored as .json files (records are stored as .csv files) on an independent hard drive. All files are periodically deposited in the Carolina Digital Repository, where they are stored in perpetuity and freely available. Database design and configurations are easily adaptable for other projects and other music repertories. It is a fundamental precept of this project that all work, performances, images, sources, texts, etc., are cited in full at their location on the site, and that all programming, database design, and research be open access.