Tempe, Arizona
November 28, 2022

The non-profit Offline Internet Consortium (OLI) is delighted to receive a $300,000 grant from UK-based Arcadia - a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin. When half the world's population has little or no broadband access, the OLI exists to connect researchers and practitioners seeking to provide access to high quality networked information with technologies that can work where broadband is unavailable. The groups now active in this field serve people in developing countries, in remote locations, in politically constrained settings, in post-disaster and post-conflict environments, and wherever the need is great. The OLI brings together librarians and technologists with government and NGO players to deploy cheap, ingenious technology to bridge the gap.

The grant will be used to launch and advance the OLI's global efforts by leveraging the efforts of its initial members. Where now this work is done by small groups unconnected with each other or with the big technology players, the consortium's work focuses on coordination of that work, raising public awareness, and doing outreach to other groups active in the field, to agencies working in relevant human development space, and to potential funding partners. The Arcadia grant will support that consortial work, including internal competitive re-grants to encourage startups and disadvantaged players to take necessary steps to join the consortium and prepare to benefit from the international cooperation that the funds can facilitate.

The OLI office will be housed at the Arizona State University Library, site of two international summits that envisioned and developed the OLI concept. University Librarian James O'Donnell said, "We know we cannot wait for universal broadband if we are serious about supporting the needs of people in information deserts. At ASU, we believe in planning for the long term but acting now when needs are great."

The OLI has partners around the world. Muy-Cheng Peich of Paris-based Bibliothèques sans Frontières (BSF: "Libraries without Borders") said, "Our technology is in the field in African villages, Bronx laundromats, and near the frontlines of the Ukrainian resistance to aggression. Finding more partners to provide technology and information and more people we can support is our highest priority." "We are delighted that the OLI enterprise is consistent with Arcadia's vision for affordable, global access to information, to the many parts of the world that are now under-served by broadband," added Ann Okerson, who will serve as Coordinator for this grant period

The fundamental principles of the OLI were outlined in the "Tempe Declaration" at the group's first summit. For further information, contact Ann Okerson at internet.unplugged@gmail.com.

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The *Offline Internet Consortium (OLI),* founded in 2018, is an international group of approximately 35 member groups working on different aspects of delivering Internet-quality information to populations that have no direct Internet access.

Arcadia (www.arcadiafund.org.uk) is a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin. It supports charities and scholarly institutions that preserve cultural heritage and the environment. Arcadia also supports projects that promote open access and all of its awards are granted on the condition that any materials produced are made available for free online. Since 2002, Arcadia has awarded more than $1 billion to projects around the world.