The REALIA Project
The REALIA Project is a searchable digitized media database that provides instructors of modern languages with teaching resources via the Web. REALIA publishes royalty-free, faculty-reviewed media for scholars and students, and is open to all disciplines that wish to contribute or use cultural materials appropriate for instruction at the college and secondary level. Its primary focus is presenting the important realia of everyday life that weave the unique patterns of culture.

Origins
Collaborative efforts of three consortia:

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<th>Associated Colleges of the Midwest</th>
<th>Associated Colleges of the South</th>
<th>Great Lakes Colleges Association, Inc.</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.acm.edu">www.acm.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.colleges.org">www.colleges.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.glca.org">www.glca.org</a></td>
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The Global Partners Project
www.global-partners.org
A Set of Initiatives to Strengthen International Study for Liberal Arts Colleges
Best Practices in International Education
Regional Centers and Regional Alliances
Language and Technology
Strategic Briefings

Language and Technology Task Force
The Global Partners Language and Technology Task Force consists of members from all three Global Partners consortia (ACM, ACS and GLCA). This group initially met at the Center for Educational Technology (CET) at Middlebury College in June of 2000. During this meeting the task force discussed various possibilities regarding the use of technology in language instruction and how such instruction might better serve students planning a study abroad experience, as well as those remaining on campus. Particular consideration was given to this effort in regard to the Global Partners overseas centers in Kenya, Central Europe (Czech Republic and Russia), and Turkey. During this meeting the task force developed a survey for distribution to language faculty on all Global Partners campuses. The survey gathered information on current technological resources available for language teaching and asked what resources faculty would like to have. Results of this survey indicated that faculty were keenly interested in increased availability of electronic images. Similar interests and overlapping goals led to partnership and joint planning with ALIANCO for the REALIA Project.

ALIANCO
Around the same time period, ACS had formed ALIANCO (Allied Languages in a Networked Collaboration Online), a modern languages collaboration. This group of faculty met at the University of Richmond in April of 2001 and generated the idea for a web-based media archive devoted to language teaching. The group met again in August at the ACS Technology Center, where they developed a model for an archive. Subsequent presentations of other media projects by participants from GLCA (Great Lakes Colleges Association), ACM (Associated Colleges of the Midwest) and CET (Center for Educational Technology at Middlebury College) led to discussion of how a central archive might be beneficial for the institutions of the tri-consortium (ACS, GLCA, and ACM) and other potential collaborators. After developing a mission statement, the joint group (ALIANCO and the Global Partners Language and Technology Task Force) sought designers for the prototype and members for a preliminary editorial and managing board.
Evolution
The three consortia involved in The REALIA Project formed a managing board in the fall of 2001 comprising language faculty, IT specialists, and librarians. The board planned deliverables for a prototype phase, as well as a long-term vision for the project. Numerous products and goals have now been attained:

- A series of surveys to discern uses of media by teachers of modern languages, as well as their interest in participating in projects such as REALIA. More than 100 participated in the initial survey, which showed a strong interest in using media for teaching.
- Technical specifications for images for use on the Web.
- Guidelines for media gathering by faculty and students gathering.
- For the prototype, identification of contributors—modern language faculty members in Russian, and Spanish. The two languages - one using the Roman alphabet, the other employing a non-Roman alphabet - were chosen to provide the REALIA team with a representative set of cataloging and other challenges that might be encountered when working with a large number of diverse languages.
- Cataloging standards for the images. These were developed cooperatively by librarians and faculty members, and are designed to capture thorough and consistent information that will ensure their usefulness for teaching. The information includes title, geographic location, description, pedagogical uses and information in the target language and is designed to ensure compatibility with other high-quality databases that use standards such as the Dublin Core and Library of Congress subject headings.
- Legal documents addressing privacy, copyright and other issues.

Future Directions
Future directions and ideas anticipated for the project, include:

- Images associated with additional languages.
- Additional media, including sound, video, and immersive media such as Quicktime VR.
- Search technologies such as Latent Semantic Indexing (LSI), which provides "intelligent" searches of natural language entries.
- Conferences, workshops, and other opportunities for faculty to produce media and discuss pedagogical uses.
- Models that showcase exemplary use of media in teaching modern languages and cultures.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships with groups and organizations that share some of REALIA's goals.

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3. Centre College
4. Davidson College
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6. Hendrix College
7. Millsaps College
8. Morehouse College
9. Rhodes College
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14. University of Richmond
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3. Coe College
4. College of the University of Chicago
5. Colorado College
6. Cornell College
7. Grinnell College
8. Knox College
9. Lake Forest College
10. Lawrence University
11. Macalester College
12. Monmouth College
13. Ripon College
14. St. Olaf College

**Great Lakes Colleges Association**
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2. Antioch College
3. Denison University
4. DePauw University
5. Earlham College
6. Hope College
7. Kalamazoo College
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