

Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences

Abstract

The American Library Association (ALA) Public Programs Office (PPO) requests a \$249,378 National Leadership Grant to support libraries responding to the need for adult media literacy training in their communities. In 2016, a Pew Center Research report showed that “about two-in-three U.S. adults (64%) say fabricated news stories cause a great deal of confusion about the basic facts of current issues and events” (Barthel, pg. 1). As trusted institutions that are open to all, libraries are eager to respond to their adult patrons’ need for media literacy services. This 16-month project will convene cross-sector advisors to address the challenges and opportunities of providing adult media literacy programming and services, and to develop and distribute resources for local level use.

In November 2019, ALA will bring together 30 advisors for a two-day convening to explore existing media literacy programming and services for adults; gaps in current services and trainings for adult patrons; collaborations to benefit underserved populations and rural/small communities; and partnership opportunities between educators, researchers and libraries. The convening will be facilitated by New Knowledge Organization (NKO), an independent social science research firm.

Following the convening, ALA will work with NKO to synthesize the notes to create a landscape report for the field that documents information that surfaced during the two days. Utilizing the landscape report and continued input from the advisory group, ALA will work with NKO to create a practitioners’ guide that documents resources, best practices, competencies, tools, and recommendations for near-term, mid-term, and long-term steps libraries can take. The guide will be published in July 2020. To inform the findings and support adoption of the practitioners’ guide and landscape report, ALA will host a series of six live webinars throughout the project — one following the landscape report in March 2020 and the rest following the publication of the practitioners’ guide. From July to November 2020, ALA PPO will collect additional resources shared by webinar participants and advisors for publication on ALA’s Programming Librarian website.

The goals of this project are to:

- Expand the capacity of libraries to support community needs
- Create needed professional development, instructional and partnership resources that libraries can use to foster collaborations and implement services to respond to the critical need for adult media literacy
- Provide library staff with access to a free, open repository of well-curated and centralized resources on ProgrammingLibrarian.org
- Apprise libraries and partner organizations on methods and tools that can inform strategy, programming and services toward adult media literacy education
- Inform library leaders about a range of community-based responses to adult media literacy education, including how libraries are addressing emerging learning, challenges, gaps, partnerships, opportunities and evolving community needs, and how they are measuring results

The key outcome of this project will be recommendations and program models, specifically focused on adult learners, that will assist libraries, researchers and organizations focused to make better-informed decisions on programs, services and resource offerings related to media literacy. This project will lay the groundwork for richer, deeper and more relevant media literacy programming and services for adults in libraries and cross-sector organizations.

The American Library Association (ALA) Public Programs Office (PPO) requests a \$249,378 National Leadership Grant for *Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences*. This 16-month project will help libraries respond to the need for adult media literacy training in their communities through the creation and distribution of a suite of free resources designed for use by libraries and partner organizations. The impetus for these resources will be a convening of thought leaders from libraries and related sectors (e.g. education, journalism) who will serve as advisors to the project.

In their convening, the 30 advisors will consider the scope of current media literacy efforts and research; identify areas for collaboration between librarians, journalists, researchers and adult educators; and develop strategies to address gaps in current adult services and staff training in libraries. Two primary outputs will result: 1) a landscape report, to be shared with the library field and allied sectors, and 2) a practitioners' guide containing best practices, resources and program models for libraries. To bolster the relevance of the landscape report and practitioners' guide, ALA will collaborate with project advisors to develop cross-sector resource web pages and a series of webinars for the field. *Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences* aligns with the 2018-2022 IMLS Strategic Plan Goal of promoting lifelong learning by aiming to help libraries address a critical learning need for their out-of-school adult patrons.

STATEMENT OF NEED

Media literacy builds upon the foundations of traditional literacy by empowering people to be critical thinkers, effective communicators and active citizens within the complex, ever-changing digital environment. There is currently a critical need in communities across the U.S. for media literacy education for adults, especially materials that teach adults to evaluate the validity of online news and research. For the first time since the Pew Research Center began monitoring how adults get their news, social media has outpaced newspapers as the primary source, with 43% of adults now getting their information from either news websites or social media.¹ This is especially concerning in light of a 2016 Pew study, which found that only one in six adults (17%) is confident in their online skills and ability to find online information they trust.² With the proliferation of mis/disinformation in our technology-saturated environment, the inability of many adults to evaluate news sources is an urgent issue, especially when "two in three U.S. adults (64%) say fabricated news stories cause a great deal of confusion about the basic facts of current issues and events."³

As trusted institutions that are open to all, libraries are eager to respond to their adult patrons' need for media literacy services. A 2019 report by the Knight Commission on Trust, Media and Democracy calls for the development of "new opportunities and increase[d] awareness of current opportunities for adult education in libraries."⁴ Library demand was demonstrated through the overwhelming response to "Post-Truth: Fake News and a New Era of Information Literacy," an ALA webinar presented in February 2017 by Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, associate professor at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. Less than three hours after the webinar registration opened, the live session was full at 250. Since then, the archived recording has been viewed more than 10,000 times on several viewing channels.

¹ Pew Research Center, "[Social media outpaces print newspapers in the U.S. as a news source](#)" (December 10, 2018)

² Pew Research Center, "[Digital Readiness Gap](#)" (September 20, 2016)

³ Pew Research Center, "[Many Americans Believe Fake News is Sowing Confusion](#)" (December 15, 2016)

⁴ The Knight Commission on Trust, Media and Democracy "[Crisis in Democracy: Renewing Trust in America](#)" (February 2019)

ALA began to respond to this need by prototyping *Media Literacy at Your Library*⁵, a pilot project in collaboration with the Center for News Literacy (CNL) at Stony Brook University to teach public library workers how to better equip their adult patrons to be discerning news consumers. Supported by a grant from the Knight Foundation, Democracy Fund and Rita Allen Foundation, five public libraries were selected to participate in training, conduct related public programs and serve as advisors in testing the effectiveness of CNL's media literacy curriculum on a virtual learning platform. Through the work of these libraries, three practitioner challenges were identified:

1. Library workers may not have the expertise to identify resources effective for reaching adults;
2. Library workers are confused as to which existing media literacy resources are best for patrons; and
3. There is a lack of best practices for teaching media literacy to adults.

Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences responds to these challenges by convening a national forum to produce a landscape report, practitioners' guide and related webinars. This project will also advance discourse in the field about media literacy beyond current crisis-orientated stop-gaps toward integration with existing information literacy services. Additionally, the project will raise awareness in other sectors that libraries, in their role as trusted community institutions and places of lifelong learning, make powerful partners. Finally, this project aims to shift traditional systems of practice that result in siloed efforts and limited impact and activate community collaborations that will equip libraries to deal with future challenges as the media landscape evolves.

Related Projects

In the last three years, media literacy has jumped to the forefront of public consciousness. With the increased sense of urgency around the issue, many institutions, researchers and practitioners have started programs seeking to address the problem. Building off a 2016 Stanford History Education Group study that found 80% of students have trouble identifying credible news online⁶, many of these projects have focused primarily on providing educational resources and opportunities for children and young adults in libraries. This proposed project will fill the gap in media literacy for adults by bringing diverse advisors together and building upon the foundation of existing projects and research that has largely been focused on students. These projects include, but are not limited to: *Storytellers without Borders*, an initiative of the Dallas Public Library; *Teach Media Literacy* by Belinha S. De Abreu, Ph.D.; and the Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) white paper *Media Mentorship in Libraries Serving Youth*.

ALA's project plan and timeline complements and builds upon the findings of *Media Literacy at Your Library* and the IMLS-funded *Know News: Understanding and Engaging with Mis- and Disinformation* forum, led by Simmons College. Both efforts were completed in spring 2018, positioning this project to utilize findings of the two initiatives to respond to the field's need for community-ready media literacy resources for adults. This project will also utilize the experiences and piloted programming from *Media Literacy at Your Library* to build program models suitable for national distribution and adaptation by libraries of all types. These resources will be developed and promoted during a critical period as ALA estimates that demand for media literacy best practices and program models will reach an even higher pitch leading up to the 2020 election.

⁵ American Library Association "[Media Literacy at Your Library: Learning and Prototyping Report](#)" (December 2018)

⁶ Stanford History Education Group, "[Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning](#)" (November 22, 2016)

Maturity Model Alignment

As this project seeks to identify the most promising approaches to pursue for adult media literacy education in libraries, it fits within the exploratory phase of the IMLS maturity model⁷. *Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences* seeks to pull together cross-sector thought leaders and experts to collect various methods of media literacy and think creatively about adapting them to best suit the needs of adult learners regardless of background, age or circumstances. The project will also work to identify existing media literacy program models and resources that will work for libraries of all types that serve adult learners.

Alignment with National Leadership Grants for Libraries: Lifelong Learning Category

Aligning with the IMLS National Leadership Grants for Libraries lifelong learning category, our findings will:

1. Develop, implement and evaluate library media literacy programs and resources, resulting in opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning for adult patrons;
2. Foster collaborations between libraries and formal/informal learning organizations to address the shared concern of media literacy for adults, reinforcing libraries' role as essential community hubs for lifelong learning; and
3. Investigate questions related to how library services, resources and programs on media literacy impact adult patron learning.

PROJECT DESIGN

Project goals and outcomes

This project's goals are to:

1. Expand the capacity of libraries to support communities' needs
2. Create professional development, instructional and partnership resources that libraries can use to foster collaborations and implement services to respond to the need for adult media literacy education
3. Provide library staff with access to a free and open repository of well-curated and centralized resources on ProgrammingLibrarian.org, a website of ALA PPO
4. Apprise libraries and partner organizations on methods and tools that can inform strategy, programming and services toward adult media literacy education
5. Inform library leaders about a range of community-based responses to adult media literacy education, including how libraries are addressing emerging learning, challenges, gaps, partnerships, opportunities and evolving community needs; and how they are measuring results

Audience and beneficiaries

Library workers serving adults are the primary audience for this project. Beneficiaries will include out-of-school adult patrons; national, state, county and local organizations that support media literacy education; national library support organizations, state libraries, and state and regional library associations; and grantmakers that are committed to supporting lifelong learning and media literacy.

⁷ Institute of Museum and Library Services "[Biscuits vs. Granola: Innovative Ways for Libraries, Archives, and Museums to Scale Up](#)" (June 8, 2018)

Advisors

To inform the project’s research and outputs, and to foster collaboration and network-building between libraries and a broad coalition of potential partners, the project team will gather perspectives, knowledge and resources through a two-day convening of advisors who are leaders in this field. The advisors will:

- Participate in a cross-sector convening session to bring their expertise, insights, approaches and suggestions for the landscape review and practitioners’ guide
- Serve as thought leaders for the project and its outputs
- Act as subject matter experts who suggest additional resources and/or serve as webinar presenters

The project will engage 30 advisors, comprising representatives of four public libraries serving large, urban communities; three public libraries serving small, rural communities; one public library serving a suburb; three academic libraries; two school libraries; one state library; one presidential library; one museum; four media literacy educators; three journalists; three media literacy researchers; one civic engagement-focused organization; one organization focused on services to older adults; and two foundations working in media literacy education. (See Supportingdoc1.pdf for a list of identified advisors and their bios.)

Many of these individuals have already expressed interest in this project, and letters of commitment have been received from the following (See Supportingdoc2.pdf):

Jimmeka Anderson, Outreach Coordinator, Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library, NC	Amber Conger, Director, Kershaw County Public Library, SC
Nicole Cooke, Associate Professor and LIS Program Director, University of Illinois, IL	Diana Laughlin, Program Services Supervisor, Estes Valley Public Library, CO
Laura Saunders, Associate Professor of the School of Library and Information Science, Simmons University, MA	Michael Spikes, News Media Literacy Education Consultant, MAS Media Consulting, LLC, IL

Additional people who will be invited include:

Joel Breakstone, Director, Stanford History Education Group, CA	Len Bryan, District Digital Media Specialist, Hillsboro School District, OR
Jake Cornelius, Information & Business Center Manager, Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, AL	Belinha S. De Abreau, Vice President, National Telemedia Council, DC
Leanne Ellis, School Library Coordinator, New York City Department of Education, NY	Terri Garner, Executive Director, William J. Clinton Presidential Library, AR
Mary Jo Giudice, Deputy Director, Dallas Public Library, TX	Allison Head, Executive Director, Project Information Literacy, WA
Kieran Hixon, Technology and Digital Initiatives Consultant, Colorado State Library, CO	Darryl Holliday, Co-Founder and News Lab Director, City Bureau, IL
Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, Director, CIRCLE, MA	Anna Kassinger, Director of Curriculum, Newseum, DC
Amita Kaur Lionel, Assistant Library Director, Tacoma Public Library, WA	Jenny Marder, Science Writer, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, MD

Pattie Mayfield, Director, Bertha Voyer Memorial Library, TX	Lynnanne Pearson, Adult Services Manager, Skokie Public Library, IL
Fatima Perkins, Director of Community Outreach and Advocacy, Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, OH	Jennifer Preston, VIP of Journalism, Knight Foundation, FL
Srividya Ramasubramanian, Professor of Communication, Texas A & M University, TX	Ronny Rojas, Data Editor, Univision News, FL
Josh Sterns, Public Square Program Director, Democracy Fund, DC	Tailia Stroud, Director of the Center for Media Engagement, University of Texas, TX
Tara Susman-Pena, Senior Technical Advisor, IREX, DC	Dawn Emsellem Wichowski, Library Director, Salve Regina University, RI

Key activities and schedule

The project will take place from Aug. 1, 2019, to Nov. 30, 2020. It will be managed and carried out by ALA PPO. As the largest national membership organization in the field, ALA is uniquely positioned to lead a project on media literacy education in libraries for adult audiences. Since 1992, ALA PPO has worked to support libraries as places of cultural and civic engagement where people of all backgrounds gather for reflection, discovery, participation and growth. Through programming resources, model programs, grant opportunities and professional development activities, PPO supports libraries of all types as they fill their roles as community cultural centers and places of civic engagement and lifelong learning. PPO employs a staff of nine and is advised by ALA’s Public and Cultural Programs Advisory Committee (PCPAC).

Key PPO staff include Mary Davis Fournier (deputy director), Samantha Oakley (program officer), Colleen Barbus (program coordinator) and Sarah Ostman (communications manager). Fournier will supervise ALA project work, and coordinate project goals with other ALA-wide efforts; Oakley will lead collaboration with advisors and partners and conduct project planning; Barbus will conduct task work, oversee tech support for webinars and provide general project support; and Ostman will implement the communications strategy and editorial, production and design support. All project staff will contribute editorial, research and synthesis to this content-heavy, fast tracked project. Oakley, Barbus and Ostman are grant-funded employees. Their allotted time will be spent on this grant, with no conflict with ongoing duties. Resumes for key project staff and consultants are attached (see attachments, Resumes.pdf), and the budget includes a breakdown of staff time devoted to the project.

An important partner will be New Knowledge Organization (NKO), an independent social science research firm. NKO focuses on studying paths to individual and community wellness, how to support a healthy biosphere and how media and cultural organizations contribute to a just society. Consistent with the principles of a strong democracy, they promote public dialogue and action through collaboration, transparency in their process and open access to the results of their work. Key staffers will be Rebecca Norlander, a researcher with expertise in digital communication tools, and Jena Barchas-Lichtenstein, a researcher with expertise in media circulation. NKO will work with ALA to co-develop a plan for the two-day convening; facilitate the convening; create project evaluation tools; and assist in the creation of the landscape report and practitioners’ guide.

The 16-month budget of \$280,140 covers: \$87,391 in salaries/benefits for ALA’s team; \$45,856 in travel for convening participants; \$19,364 in meeting expenses, \$11,500 in communications/dissemination; and \$40,000

in consultants (NKO, graphic recorder, advisor participant and webinar presenter stipends); indirect costs of \$45,267. Total grant funded costs are \$249,378; ALA will provide \$30,762 in-kind.

Advisor Convening (November 2019)

This two-day convening will bring together 30 cross-sector advisors (media, museum, researchers, adult education, libraries) to explore existing media literacy programming and services for adults; gaps in current services and trainings for adult patrons; collaborations to benefit underserved populations and rural/small communities; and partnership opportunities between educators, researchers and libraries. The agenda and topics for the convening will be informed by an October 2019 virtual meeting with the advisors and by findings from ALA's *Media Literacy at Your Library* prototype. The convening will be facilitated by NKO.

Prior to the convening, ALA will provide the advisors with Simmons College's *Know News* white paper, the *Media Literacy at Your Library* prototype report and any additional briefing materials identified in the preliminary landscaping. The first day of the convening will consist of small-group discussions related to existing media literacy programming and services for adults; identifying gaps in current services and trainings; collaborations to benefit underserved populations and rural/small communities; and partnership opportunities between media literacy educators, researchers and libraries. The second day will consist of a workshop, bringing together the findings from the first day's discussions to begin creating the content for the landscape report and outline of the practitioners' guide. Advisors will also work together to craft a theory of change for the project. A graphic recorder will visually document the discussion and findings, creating multiple graphic representations to be used in dissemination and reporting to the field.

ALA is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion or other group identity. Therefore, participants will be informed of and agree to observe ALA's statement of appropriate conduct⁸ during the convening.

Landscape Report (March 2020)

Following the convening, ALA will work with NKO to synthesize the resulting notes to create a landscape report for the field that documents information that surfaced during the two days. This document will be made available as an accessible PDF report via ALA's ProgrammingLibrarian.org⁹. The landscape report will also act as a building document for the content of the practitioners' guide and webinars.

Webinars (March 2020, July – November 2020)

To both inform the findings and support adoption of the practitioners' guide and landscape report, ALA will host a series of six live webinars. These sessions will be presented for free via ProgrammingLibrarian.org by participating advisors. These interactive sessions will present the content from the landscape report and practitioners' guide to foster wider discourse of media literacy practices in the field. They will provide the field with the opportunity to comment on project deliverables, share additional resources and brainstorm with their peers on ways to further support the media literacy needs of their communities. Webinar content will be influenced by the outputs of the advisor convening, landscape report and practitioners' guide, while remaining flexible enough to accommodate the quickly evolving media literacy landscape.

⁸ American Library Association "[Statement of Appropriate Conduct](#)"

⁹ Programming Librarian reaches approx. 20,000 unique visitors/month

The first webinar, hosted in March 2020, will share the results of the convening and subsequent landscape report and solicit feedback from the field to further inform the creation of the practitioners' guide. Starting in July 2020, ALA will host five monthly webinars on the topics covered in the practitioners' guide. Facilitated by participating advisors, these sessions will provide space for attendees to discuss practical application tips, share program ideas and solicit advice for implementing the guide in their communities.

These sessions will be hosted on the webinar platform Zoom. Each webinar will be free, and attendees will receive a copy of the slides. Additional resources shared during these sessions by participants will be compiled and made available as a free download. The recordings and webinar materials will be archived and made freely accessible for anyone to view through ProgrammingLibrarian.org.

Practitioners' Guide (July 2020)

Utilizing the landscape report and continued input from the advisors, ALA will work with NKO to create a guide that documents resources, best practices, competencies and tools, as well as recommendations for near-term, mid-term and long-term steps libraries can take. The guide will include reference to existing frameworks, trainings, program models, tools and research. Content will be informed by themes surfaced in the convening and resulting landscape report, which may include topics such as:

- Staff and patron media literacy training
- Building and marketing adult media literacy services for hard-to-reach audiences
- How to incorporate media literacy into existing library programs and services
- Incorporating media literacy into civic engagement and community discussion programs
- Community-driven approaches to media literacy programming centered on hyperlocal current events

Project advisors will be invited to comment on a draft guide prior to its publication. The guide will be available as a free digital download on ProgrammingLibrarian.org, and copies will be printed for targeted distribution. This guide will be widely promoted through advisor and ALA communication channels.

Curated Resources (July – November 2020)

Following publication of the practitioners' guide, additional resources shared by webinar participants and advisors will be collected by ALA PPO and collated in a central location on ProgrammingLibrarian.org. ALA anticipates that these additional curated resources may include program models, worksheets, webinars, blogs, articles, lib guides and examples of successful library-led media literacy initiatives. ALA PPO will also solicit program models and blog posts focused on adult media literacy from library workers throughout the project for publication on ProgrammingLibrarian.org. Additionally, the project team will pursue presentation opportunities at national library events (e.g., Association for Rural and Small Libraries, ALA conferences).

Assumptions

An assumption of this project is that the gap in media literacy skills increases for out-of-school adults as technology continues to advance. The changing media and information landscape, combined with low media literacy among adults, contributes to the proliferation of mis/disinformation. This reality negatively affects the ability of many adults to be well-informed citizens. As trusted institutions, libraries are essential spaces for cross-sector collaboration with local media and are well positioned to increase adult patrons' skills and help rebuild trust in media outlets/institutions within the community.

Potential Risks

The primary risk to the project is the relevancy and duplication around addressing media literacy in communities across the country. Many projects and institutions are seeking to address the need for media literacy skills; rebuilding of trust in democratic institutions; and bridging the divides in communities. Due to the critical nature of the subject, much pressure is placed on institutions to figure out the best way to address the issue. In this urgency for an immediate answer, we run the risk of landing on stop-gap solutions. An example of this is the creation of technology that identifies mis/disinformation based on algorithms. Seen as more logical and less prone to bias than people, algorithms are often seen as a quick solution to stopping the spread of mis/disinformation by preventing users from even seeing it. However, algorithms are not entirely foolproof or free of bias. As a 2018 report by Data & Society states, “many algorithmic systems either codify existing sources of bias or introduce new ones.”¹⁰ Thus, it is important to teach users to critically and accurately evaluate information they find online rather than simply relying on technology as a gatekeeper.

The same issue around demand for a solution has caused duplication of efforts by limiting the time for communication and partnership formation between allied professionals, creating works silos. This can be seen in the plethora of ongoing projects from organizations in the library, journalism, museum, technology and adult education fields, where each are working toward a solution but rarely collaborating.

To mitigate this risk, ALA will:

- Utilize the landscape report and part of the advisor convening to identify existing projects, services and partnerships to identify gaps, opportunities and duplication of current initiatives across the nation. ALA PPO is aware of several current efforts, which will be factored into the environmental scan, including Simmons University’s *Know News* forum; Project Information Literacy’s national study on young adult’s news consumption; and the IMLS funded *Building an Alliance for Media Literacy in Early Childhood Informal Learning: A National Forum* led by the Erikson Institute TEC Center.
- Ensure that project communications are timely and transparent to guarantee that current findings are available to inform the ongoing efforts of libraries to address the need for media literacy in communities. Our communications plan maps out a phased release of the landscape report, practitioners’ guide and webinars, leveraging a variety of media to elicit engagement from the field.

Communications Plan

Starting in August 2019, ALA will implement a comprehensive marketing plan — drawing upon ALA member databases, social media, electronic mailing lists, e-newsletters and distribution to state and regional library associations — to communicate the project to the field. Resources will be promoted to both ALA members and nonmembers. The recordings of the free webinar series and curated resources will be archived and made openly available via ProgrammingLibrarian.org for anyone to view, regardless of ALA membership status; the landscape report and practitioners’ guide also will be freely and openly accessible via ProgrammingLibrarian.org. ALA will further engage the library field around the project deliverables through a presentation to the Public and Cultural Programs Advisory Committee (PCPAC), circulation to other ALA bodies, a News You Can Use presentation at the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, and at a booth at the 2020 PLA Conference in Nashville. The advisor group will be asked to promote and share the content widely, as is appropriate for their constituents. ALA will also engage both the library and national media in the project through strategically timed press releases, including an initial project announcement and upon publication of the deliverables.

¹⁰ Data & Society, “[Algorithmic Accountability: A Primer](#)” (April 18, 2018)

All downloadable materials generated as part of the project will be under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 license, which allows for sharing and distribution with attribution. Project deliverables will be posted publicly on ProgrammingLibrarian.org, without being obstructed by a paywall or authentication requirements. ProgrammingLibrarian.org will continue to publicly host the resulting project materials and webinar recordings for a minimum period of two years after the project ends so that as library staff find capacity and the need to address issues connected to adult media literacy, these grant-funded resources will continue to be available.

Evaluation and Performance Measurement

In collaboration with NKO, ALA will develop an evaluation instrument to measure the effectiveness of the practitioners' guide. NKO has done extensive research on the topic of media literacy. Their prior work, including acting as an evaluation consultant for ALA's *Media Literacy at Your Library* prototype, makes them valuable as both a thought partner and evaluation consultant for this initiative. To support this evaluation, NKO will develop a retrospective survey to measure the effectiveness of the practitioners' guide. The survey instrument will be distributed to webinar participants and made available as a link in the practitioners' guide. Participants of the webinars and those who download the practitioner's guide will be encouraged to complete the short survey. Data collected will be used to measure the comprehension and adaptability of the guide. NKO will review the data collected and provide a top-level report of findings.

The project will be guided by the 2018 – 2022 IMLS Strategic Plan Goal #1: Promote Lifelong Learning¹¹. The design, implementation and dissemination of resources will intentionally measure how the project:

- Enhanced library resources that foster media literacy for adults.
- Supported cross-disciplinary methods of adult learning within libraries.
- Invested in library programming that focused on continuous learning for adults of diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and needs.
- Leveraged the distinct role libraries play as trusted sources of information.

DIVERSITY PLAN

Libraries play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full participation in a democratic society. Equity, diversity and inclusion is one of ALA's strategic directions, in which the Association commits to "addressing, dismantling, and transforming policies structures and bias throughout the organization and the field of librarianship."¹² Within ALA and in the services and operations of libraries, efforts to include diversity in programs, activities, services, professional literature, products and continuing education are ongoing and encouraged. In the context of this project, equity, diversity and inclusion means addressing dimensions of geographic isolation and distribution, demographics of communities served, type of library, MLIS and non-MLIS library workers, and numerous other considerations. ALA is committed to ensuring that the spectrum of the library field serving small and rural communities is heard throughout this project.

The activities funded by this project will equip libraries to better support their communities. ALA is committed to seeking representation from library practitioners and experts in allied fields serving ethnically and economically diverse communities – those who can speak on behalf of economically underserved communities, remote and rural communities, ethnically diverse communities and divided communities. ALA

¹¹ IMLS "[Transforming Communities Institute of Museum and Library Services Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022](#)" (2018)

¹² American Library Association, "[Strategic Directions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)" (2017)

has already begun this work by extending invitations to the convening to experts serving diverse populations in the library field. To see a full list of the advisors who will be invited see Supportingdoc1.pdf.

NATIONAL IMPACT

When ALA issued a request for proposals for its *Media Literacy at Your Library* prototype, more than 30 public libraries applied for the five available slots in the three-week application period. Interest in the project remained high throughout the one-year pilot, with multiple libraries, educational institutions, museums, researchers and media outlets reaching out to ALA, inquiring about the project or seeking to be involved in it.

Based on this experience, ALA is confident that library professionals crave readily available, adaptable media literacy resources. Additionally, as this project is the only known initiative in the library field to specifically examine the media literacy needs of adults, this project fills a critical gap in the national discussion. Indeed, a 2016 Pew study found that “by an 81% to 52% margin, personal [adult] learners are more likely to cite a locale such as a high school, place of worship or library as the site at which personal learning takes place.”¹³ The link between communities’ trust in libraries, their place as hubs of continuing education, and their role in media literacy education for adults is further confirmed by the recent Knight Commission on Trust, Media and Democracy’s report. In the report’s recommendations libraries are called out as obvious spaces not only for the development of media literacy educational opportunities but also as potential providers of civic engagement programming that incorporates media literacy skills to address local issues.¹⁴ As such, this project will work to ensure that libraries are better equipped to meet their communities’ media literacy needs.

The *Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences* will provide leadership within the field and at a national level, allowing for the development of resources and best practices. The resulting project deliverables have the potential to clarify current practices around media literacy education in the field by providing recommendations for libraries to implement in their communities. ALA will ensure the project products are relevant to a wide variety of communities by guaranteeing representation in the advisory group from experts with experience serving diverse communities and consistently soliciting feedback from them.

ALA expects that this project will lead to enhanced conversations, research, trainings and collaborations between thought leaders and organizations active in the media literacy realm. As the largest national library membership organization, ALA is uniquely positioned to foster learning and sharing of best practices to the field. ALA will work with partners from allied fields (e.g. Newseum, Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University) to highlight the library-field relevance of the current resources these organizations are producing and to communicate adaptable program models, best practices and resources.

This project and resulting deliverables will contribute to the national impact of libraries by narrowing the digital divide for adults by providing a set of resources and best practices for media literacy services to the field. The key outcome of this project will be recommendations and program models, specifically focused on adult learners, that will help libraries, researchers and organizations to make better-informed decisions on programs, services and resource offerings related to media literacy. This project will lay the groundwork for richer, deeper and more relevant media literacy programming and services for adults in libraries and cross-sector organizations.

¹³ Pew Research Center. “[Lifelong Learning and Technology](#)” (March 22, 2016)

¹⁴ The Knight Commission on Trust, Media and Democracy. “[Crisis in Democracy: Renewing Trust in America](#)” (February 2019)



DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded digital products (e.g., digital content, resources, assets, software, and datasets). The products you create with IMLS funding require careful stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and re-use by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

Instructions

All applications must include a Digital Product Form.

- Please check here if you have reviewed Parts I, II, III, and IV below and you have determined that your proposal does NOT involve the creation of digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, assets, software, or datasets). You must still submit this Digital Product Form with your proposal even if you check this box, because this Digital Product Form is a Required Document.

If you ARE creating digital products, you must provide answers to the questions in Part I. In addition, you must also complete at least one of the subsequent sections. If you intend to create or collect digital content, resources, or assets, complete Part II. If you intend to develop software, complete Part III. If you intend to create a dataset, complete Part IV.

Part I: Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

A.1 What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (content, resources, assets, software, or datasets) you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright(s)? How will you explain property rights and permissions to potential users (for example, by assigning a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, or Creative Commons to the product)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

A. 3 If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A. Creating or Collecting New Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A.1 Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.

A.2 List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

A.3 List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG) you plan to use, along with the relevant information about the appropriate quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, or pixel dimensions).

B. Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period of performance. Your plan may address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

C. Metadata

C.1 Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata. Specify which standards you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., MARC, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

D. Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content).

D.2 Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

Part III. Projects Developing Software

A. General Information

A.1 Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

B. Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

B.3 Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

B.4 Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

B.5 Provide the name(s) and URL(s) for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

C. Access and Use

C.1 We expect applicants seeking federal funds for software to develop and release these products under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on its access and use? Identify and explain the license under which you will release source code for the software you develop (e.g., BSD, GNU, or MIT software licenses). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

C.2 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

C.3 Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

Part IV: Projects Creating Datasets

A.1 Identify the type of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use to which you expect it to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate it.

A.2 Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

A.3 Will you collect any personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information? If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect such information while you prepare the data files for public release (e.g., data anonymization, data suppression PII, or synthetic data).

A.4 If you will collect additional documentation, such as consent agreements, along with the data, describe plans for preserving the documentation and ensuring that its relationship to the collected data is maintained.

A.5 What methods will you use to collect or generate the data? Provide details about any technical requirements or dependencies that would be necessary for understanding, retrieving, displaying, or processing the dataset(s).

A.6 What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks) will you capture or create along with the dataset(s)? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the dataset(s) it describes?

A.7 What is your plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?

A.8 Identify where you will deposit the dataset(s):

Name of repository:

URL:

A.9 When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?