

PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET - PAGE ONE

1. Applicant Information

a. Legal Name (5a from Face Sheet): University of South Carolina Research Foundation

b. Organizational Unit (if different from Legal Name): School of Library and Information Science

c. Organizational Unit Address

Street1: 1501 Greene St. Street2: _____

City: Columbia County: Richland

State: South Carolina Zip+4/Postal Code: 29208

d. Web Address: http://libsci.sc.edu

e. Type of Institution (check one):

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Association | <input type="checkbox"/> School Library, or School District applying on behalf of a School Library or Libraries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquarium | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Consortium | <input type="checkbox"/> Science/Technology Museum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arboretum/Botanical garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum Services Organization/ Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized Museum** |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's/Youth Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribe/Native Hawaiian Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community College | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural History /Anthropology Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> State Museum Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Four-year College | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Center | <input type="checkbox"/> State Museum Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Museum* | <input type="checkbox"/> Planetarium | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoo |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate School of Library and Information Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Institution of higher education other than listed above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic House/Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Research Library/Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historically Black College or University | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History Museum | | |

*A museum with collections representing two or more disciplines equally (e.g., art and history)

**A museum with collections limited to one narrowly defined discipline (e.g., textiles, stamps, maritime, ethnic group)

2. Grant Program or Grant Program Category

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. 21st Century Museum Professionals | <input type="checkbox"/> d. Museum Grants for African American History and Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Native American Library Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Conservation Project Support | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Museums for America | <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Grant only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Conservation Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging Communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Grant with Education/ Assessment Option |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed Conservation Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Institutional Capacity | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancement Grant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Collections Stewardship | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian Library Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Improvements | | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> f. National Leadership Grants | <input type="checkbox"/> Programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training | Select Museum or Library: | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> with Education Component | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancement of Museum Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Connecting to Collections: Statewide Planning Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master's-level Programs | Select Grant Category: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral-level Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Digital Resources | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-professional Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Library and Museum Community Collaboration Grant | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research (early career development) | Research and Demonstration: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research (other than early career development) | <input type="checkbox"/> Research | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs to Build Institutional Capacity | <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Planning Grant | |

PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET - PAGE TWO

3. Request Information

a. IMLS funds requested: 169,592.64 b. Cost share amount: 47,211.04 31,153.28

4. Museum Profile (Museum Applicants only)

a. Is the institution either a unit of state or local government or a private not-for-profit organization that has tax-exempt status under the internal Revenue Code and that is organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes? Yes No

b. Does the institution own or use tangible objects, whether animate or inanimate? Yes No

c. Does the institution care for tangible objects, whether animate or inanimate? Yes No

d. Are these objects exhibited by the institution to the general public on a regular basis through facilities the institution owns or operates? Yes No

e. Is the institution open and exhibiting tangible objects to the general public at least 120 days a year through facilities the institution owns or operates? Yes No

Institution's attendance for the 12-month period prior to the application: Onsite: _____ Offsite: _____

Year the institution was first open and exhibiting to the public: _____

Total number of days the institution was open to the public for the 12-month period prior to application: _____

f. Does the institution employ at least one professional staff member, or the full-time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, who is primarily engaged in the acquisition, care, or exhibition to the public of tangible objects owned or used by the institution? Yes No

Number of full-time paid institution staff: _____ Number of full-time unpaid institution staff: _____

Number of part-time paid institution staff: _____ Number of part-time unpaid institution staff: _____

g.

Fiscal year	Revenue/ Support income	Expenses/ Outlays	Budget deficit (if applicable)*	Budget surplus (if applicable)*
Most recently completed FY _____				
Second most recently completed FY _____				

*If Institution has a budget deficit or surplus for either of the two most recently completed fiscal years, please explain the circumstances of this deficit or surplus in the Text Responses section of the application.

5. Public Broadcasting Licensee Information (Partnership for a Nation of Learners Grants only)

a. Nonfederal financial support (NFFS) for the most recently completed fiscal year: \$ _____ .00

b. CPB CSG ID# _____

6. Native Hawaiian Organization Eligibility (Native American/Native Hawaiian Programs only)

Is the institution an eligible not-for-profit organization that primarily serves and represents Native Hawaiians (as defined in Title 20 U.S.C. Section 7517; if yes, see Proof of Eligibility requirements)? Yes No

Abstract

Assessing the Economic Value of Public Library Services: A Review of the Literature and Meta-Analysis (META) is a two year University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science project designed to summarize and integrate recent assessments of the economic value of public library services. While interest in this topic continues to rise, the value of the growing number of state and system based studies is limited by the absence of the resources required to aggregate and integrate their findings. As a result, little is known concerning the consistency of these estimates, their predictable magnitude, or the contextual factors that figure in their variation. The impact of the individual studies is also lessened, and it is unclear whether current research is making substantial progress toward the understandings required to further national and local advocacy efforts. META is a three-phase study designed to address this problem. Phase 1 will result in preliminary specification and annotated bibliographic description of the literature that assesses public library value from an economic perspective. During Phase 2, benefit measures will be extracted from these studies, and data that meet selection criteria will be organized, coded, and subjected to meta-analysis. During Phase 3, a comprehensive literature review will be completed, and this review and the results of the meta-analysis will be shared with the research community through presentations and publications. The results will also be integrated into a set of educational modules that will be made publicly available to practitioners and others to support and extend current public library advocacy efforts.

The specific goals of the project are:

Critically appraise the economic benefit assessments reported in recent public library studies. During Phase 1, the research team will use multiple sources to identify and retrieve studies that report assessments of the economic effectiveness of public library services. These sources will include bibliographic databases such as LISA and Eric, experienced investigators, and organizations with an interest in valuation studies. During Phase 2, the research team will review these studies for provenance and contextual factors and parse their measurements into groups corresponding to four assessment strategies: contingent valuation, cost-benefit analysis, regional impact analysis, and externality estimates. This step is needed for creation of the literature review and subsequent analysis, but it will also facilitate the identification of anomalies, relationships, gaps, and contradictions that merit future analysis.

Contribute to a more comprehensive and integrated understanding of the economic benefits associated with public library services. During Phase 2, the research team will also design and employ a meta-analysis model that explores 1) the provenance and contextual factors that lead to variations in the benefit effects developed using each assessment strategy, 2) the consistency in the benefit effects within each of these groups, 3) statistical correlations among these groups, and 4) the relative stability of values reported using each assessment strategy.

Further a more effective and cumulative research agenda and contribute to more persuasive public library advocacy platforms. The literature review and the results of the meta-analysis will be presented in research and practice oriented publications, workshops, and presentations at professional meetings. Models for integrating their results into advocacy presentations will be developed and incorporated into publicly available educational materials.

Assessing the Economic Value of Public Library Services: A Review of the Literature and Meta-Analysis

Assessment of Need

As Robert T. Behn (2003) indicates, there are many reasons to measure organizational performance¹. They typically begin with the basic question, "Is my organization doing what it is intended to do?" Beyond this point they can be used to guide the allocation of funds, motivate and direct employees, identify needs for improvement, and foster organizational culture. In the public sphere, perhaps even more importantly, performance measures are also a powerful tool for communicating programmatic value and accomplishments to both stakeholders and constituents

Over the past several years, the value of this type of dialog and the measurements needed to sustain it have been recurring themes in public library discussions (Durrance and Fisher, 2005; McCook, 2000, 2004; Usherwood, 1999), including those that center on making the case for the public library in economic terms (Holt, 1998; Morris, Sumsion, and Hawkins, 2002; Elliott, 2005; Imholz and Arns, 2007). Arguments made by Glen Holt and Donald Elliott have figured prominently in these discussions. Forums hosted by The Americans for Libraries Council have also pointed to the importance of this dialog, as have The Urban Libraries Council, OCLC, State Librarians, and many practitioners. In response, there are now multiple examples of studies that have used a variety of methodologies to create a picture of the contributions that public libraries make in American communities.

Much less progress has been made in systematically analyzing and consolidating the results of these efforts (Imholz and Arns, 2007), and as a consequence, there is much to be learned concerning the 1) consistency of the benefit estimates, 2) their predictable magnitude, and 3) the contextual factors that figure in their variation. It is also, if not a waste of scholarly resources, almost impossible to build a cumulative research agenda or make significant strides toward more comprehensive assessments without this type of information (Wolf, 1986).

Impact

Assessing the Economic Value of Public Library Collections and Services: A Review of the Literature and Meta-Analysis (META) is a two year research project designed to provide insight into these questions and a more robust model of the economic value of public libraries. The results should be useful on many levels.

- Building national research capacity: The results of the project will help clarify a number of issues for researchers, including the effectiveness of different means of assessing the economic performance of public libraries, measurements that can withstand analysis and testing for homogeneity, and profitable directions for new empirical studies that build cumulative knowledge.
- Facilitating community engagement: The transferable value estimates and communication models produced by the project will allow practitioners to provide

new and relatively reliable information concerning the likely impact of library services and library volunteer efforts in their communities. As well as providing a new sense of value, this type of information makes a clear argument for both institutional ownership and citizen engagement.

- Strengthening local advocacy capacity: The project's findings will strengthen library advocates' ability to present a multi faceted argument for the value of public libraries. While economic analysis rarely stands on its own as a convincing agent, its absence is noted when it is unspoken or unavailable to those who must assess competing departmental and funding priorities.

Diversity

This project will be of particular value to small public libraries with operating budgets and service priorities that are likely to preclude local economic assessment and modeling. In the many cases where these libraries are centered in remote, rural, and diverse communities, the librarians and community members will have a stronger argument for becoming involved in public libraries and improving library services without incurring time and fiscal expenses that might typically exceed their grasp.

Project Design and Evaluation

Theoretical Perspective

Assessments of the economic value of public library collections and services are complicated by their hybrid nature. Although they are not in themselves public goods, the information they provide generally approaches this definition. In most cases, this commodity, like the light that flows from a fireworks display, is not depleted as it is consumed. Nor does its use by one person preclude its use by another, and for these reasons public libraries seem to fit within the classification of goods that should be provided by the public sector because there is no profitable private market for them. There is also an historical explanation for this location – that public libraries, like public schools, are of sufficient cultural importance to be guarded from the whims of political influence and the dangers associated with market fluctuations (Joeckel, 1935; Garceau, 1949; Foster, 1997). Over time, the advantages of this position have been sufficient to maintain this situation, but they also deprive public libraries of the advantages gained through a marketplace that can reach equilibrium and demonstrate market value.

Within this theoretical framework, four types of measurements suggest themselves for theoretically supported evaluation and meta-analyses (Chen & Rossi, 1992). The first, contingent valuation, is widely used to value non-market goods within both the public and private sectors. These analyses provide an estimate of the demand for public goods and services, and they serve as a useful tool for aggregating perceptions concerning the benefits derived from these products and endeavors. Examples of studies using contingent valuation measurements are readily available in the fields of public health, environmental protection, national security, and public works (Champ, 2003).

The second type of measurement, cost benefit analysis, provides a well-recognized organizational framework for estimating the value of public services and the rate of return that accrues from public investments. Like contingent valuation estimates, cost

benefit measurements have been used for several decades to assign economic value to the results of efforts ranging from medical procedures to natural habitat protection (Fuguitt & Wilcox, 1999).

The third type of measurement is obtained by using economic models that generate assessments of the regional impact of policy initiatives. The benefits captured in these assessments typically include income streams such as those created through public service employment and public expenditures that flow through local economies. This type of assessment has been used to characterize economic benefits for several decades, and examples of its use can be found in assessments of the economic impacts of activities in the environmental, cultural, medical, and transportation industries (Anas, 2001).

The last and most difficult measurement available to assess the value of non-market goods focuses on community-wide economic externalities (Cornes & Sandler 1996). These types of benefits are often associated with health care interventions, such as inoculations and tuberculosis treatment, which contribute to the well-being and health of those who do not actually receive these services. In some cases the monetization of these benefits is straightforward, but in other cases the major challenge lies in linking these important value measurements to appropriate constructs (Usherwood, 1999). In the case of public libraries, the community capital and sustainability models currently being developed to capture the returns on community-wide investments appear to be particularly promising (Morrissey, Mc Ginn, & McDonnell 2003).

Research Questions

Over the past years, many studies of the economic impact of public libraries have been performed both here and abroad. Almost all of these studies concentrated on two basic questions: 1) whether there is evidence that public libraries contribute to the economic prosperity of the communities they serve, and 2) how these benefits might be reliably characterized. These studies show considerable diversity in the populations studied, which range from national (The British Library, 2003; Aabo, 2005; Fitch & Warner, 1999) to major metropolitan library systems (Berk & Associates, 2005), to small urban areas (Kamer, 2005) and state-wide studies (Griffiths et. al., 2004; Potomac Inc. 2003; Barron et. al, 2005). The methodologies are equally varied. The St. Louis, Florida, and Norwegian studies make extensive use of contingent valuation techniques and indirect economic impact measures. The South Carolina and Long Island studies use attributed valuation of service measures and indirect economic impact measures. Some of the studies rely extensively on interviews and focus groups while others use locally or nationally collected statistical data.

This project differs significantly from these efforts while making extensive use of their findings. Its wide scope will not be population or locality specific and, rather than collecting new data, it will use meta-analysis techniques to draw conclusions developed by integrating the results of these and other studies and probing them for patterns that will:

1. Improve our understanding of the economic effects of public library services
2. Point out weaknesses and strengths of the methodologies used in earlier studies
3. Contribute to theory development about the economic benefits of public libraries

Data Collection and Organization

The Meta-analysis proposed for this project may be characterized as a methodological approach that allows a researcher to "integrate results from existing studies to reveal patterns of relatively invariant underlying relationships and causalities, the establishment of which will constitute general principles and cumulative knowledge" (Hunter, Schmidt, and Jackson, 1982, p.26).

- Work Plan Phase 1:

The first step in this process will be the identification and assembly of a comprehensive international collection of empirical studies that report economic benefit measures developed using the four approaches previously indicated: contingent valuation, cost-benefit analysis, economic modeling techniques, and externality assessments. As these are assembled, the research team will create bibliographic records for each study as well as meta-data that indicate the elements used to create these measurements, the type of benefit reported, the size of the benefit effect, and additional contextual variables that are likely to influence the size of the benefit effects reported. These descriptive and contextual elements will be drawn primarily from the meta-analysis eligibility criteria developed by Lipsey and Wilson (2001), but exemplary meta-analysis research studies conducted in the medical, environmental, and public policy domains will also be reviewed in order to develop a wide and theoretically supported coding scheme. The MLS student specified in the grant will take the lead with the PI in identifying eligible studies and obtaining copies for review.

These data will be entered into a master database of studies and their content will be later used to create an annotated literature review that clarifies and summarizes the contributions that these studies have made, as well as their progress toward a comprehensive research agenda. Both of these products, the database and the literature review, are intended to create a firm foundation for the META project, but when they are made available, they will also minimize the scholarly resources required for a wide range of subsequent economic assessment studies. Dr. Robert Williams, the lead author on the South Carolina economic impact study will advise and work with the PI and the MLS student specified in this grant on this phase of the project.

Once the research team has created the master database, the doctoral student will take the lead with the PI in parsing the benefit estimates into four additional data files, each of which will contain benefit effect findings produced using the four previously described assessment strategies. In contrast to the master database, these data files will have one record for each benefit effect reported and each benefit effect will be coded using the same metric. In cases where a study has used more than one assessment strategy, the study and its descriptive elements will appear in more than one data file. The coding and data entry will be performed by the doctoral student under the supervision of the PI.

Data Analysis

- Work Plan Phase 2

Phase 2 efforts will focus on the development of a rigorous meta-analysis model that explores the size and underlying relationships that characterize the selected economic value assessments. The calculations will treat the measurements in each file separately since the effect measures in the files are methodologically distinct (Lipsey and Wilson, 2001). Although the model calculations cannot be developed without reference to the data, it is expected that it will treat the benefit estimates in each file as “single variable relationships” similar to measurements that record test scores and other observations with values that are represented with a single variable (Lipsey and Wilson, 2001, p. 38).

Once the model is developed, it will be used to systematically explore the consistency of the economic value estimates, their predictable magnitude, and the contextual factors that figure in their variation. The results of these analyses will provide a clearer picture of value estimates that might be used to characterize the economic value of public libraries at a national level, identify some of the relative merits of typically used assessment strategies, and expose some of the factors that might be manipulated in order to increase the return on public library investments.

One of the statistical consultants attached to the team, Dr. Roumen Vesselinov, will take the lead with the PI on model development. Dr. Vesselinov has specific expertise in both meta-analysis and econometric modeling. He is currently based in the University of South Carolina’s Department of Statistics. A second consultant, Dr. Catherine Zimmerman, will provide additional assistance. Dr. Zimmer is currently a Senior Research/Statistical Consultant with the University of North Carolina Odum Institute for Research in Social Science. Dr. Zimmerman will provide assistance with data management and statistical analysis that falls outside the area of meta-analysis.

Although meta-analysis has not been used frequently in LIS research, it has been used for some time in other disciplines, including education (Allen et. al, 2004; Shelley & Schuh, 2001), medicine (Bourdes, Boffetta, and Paisani, 2000; Schell & Rathe, 1992), environmental science (Root et al, 2005), technology management (Chan & Lim, 1998; Tornatzky & Klein, 1982), public policy (Puerto, 2007; Noonan, 2003; Ware & Dupagne, 1994), and commerce. It has also been singled out as a promising approach for LIS research (Trahan, 1993; Ankem, K., 2005; Saxton, 2006), and several studies demonstrate its potential in this area (Smith, & Stullenbarger, 1994; Smith, 1996; Saxton, 1997; Ankem, 2005 & 2006; Chen & Yu, 2000; Holzemer, et. al., 2004; Griffiths; 2004; Hwang, Saeed, & Yi, 2003; Straub & Zheng, 2005; Koufogiannakis & Wiebe, 2006).

Results and Dissemination

- Work Plan Phase 3

Phase 3 efforts will focus on two related objectives. Once completed, the proposed analyses will provide new insight concerning public libraries’ contributions to the economic prosperity of the communities they serve and the levels of economic benefit that are likely to accrue from public library services. Ongoing dissemination of these results within the academic and research communities can be expected to produce a sharper focus on these issues while encouraging cooperative dialog and peer assessments. In order to accomplish these objectives, progress reports will be made

while the project is ongoing, and the results of the study will be presented in research and practice oriented publications, workshops, and presentations at professional meetings.

The second Part 3 objective focuses on the development of continuing education, workshop, and curricular resources that provide models for the integration of results of the literature review and meta-analysis into effective advocacy presentations. The need for these materials was recently raised in at an October 2007 Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) workshop, and development of these web-based materials falls within the ongoing relationship between the University South Carolina Center for Teaching Excellence and University South Carolina School of Library and Information Science (SLIS). SLIS has long been a leader in developing distance education products, and these teaching modules will be made nationally available on the SLIS website. Diantha Schull, President of the Americans for Libraries Council, will bring over a decade of advocacy experience and workshop development to this part of the META project.

Bibliography

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