

**Abstract**

As lead applicant, OCLC proposes to work in partnership with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) to deliver *Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*, a two-year project (July 2016 – June 2018) that will guide and support 15 small and rural public libraries to work with their communities to reimagine and reconfigure library space to support socially engaging and active learning programming that addresses a defined community need or interest.

According to the recently published *2014 Digital Inclusion Survey: Survey Findings and Results*, only 14.8 percent of rural libraries have undergone renovations or space enhancements of any kind within the last five years; and rural libraries offer fewer social learning and community engagement programs than their city counterparts. OCLC and ARSL believe that with well-structured guidance, curated resources, starter materials and the support of an expertly facilitated peer community of practice, more libraries in smaller communities can be encouraged to transform their spaces into social centers of active learning. The resources and case studies that will result from this project will also provide information and inspiration to other small libraries.

**Phase one** of the project will recruit and select 15 libraries that serve populations of less than 25,000 to participate, and will adapt content for the project's online orientation and community of practice. This content will build upon resources developed from a WebJunction pilot project, *Transforming Library Spaces*; other references will include the *IDEO Design Toolkit for Libraries*, guidance from the Project for Public Spaces, and materials and cumulative expertise developed from OCLC's *Geek the Library* and *Outside the Box* programs.

**Phase two** will introduce and orient participants to essential concepts, methods and tools for reconfiguring their spaces, including placemaking, innovative library spaces; outreach and community engagement; programming for active learning; human-centered design; and community partnership building. WebJunction will facilitate and support peer learning and sharing within the online community of practice as participants apply the process and concepts to engage their community to reimagine and create models for design solutions, and create an action plan and budget.

During **phase three**, participants will put their plan into action, reconfigure their spaces and offer active learning programs. Participants will also collect data about use of the space.

In **phase four**, case studies, documentation and an evaluation report will be produced and disseminated widely through ARSL, WebJunction and other OCLC media channels. Recordings and other project resources will be published on WebJunction.org, where they will be freely available to all for self-directed discovery beyond the end of the project.

*The goals of the project are to* (1) foster social connection among people to form strong communities; (2) create library spaces that provide active learning that encourages exploration and play; (3) better prepare small libraries to quickly adapt the use of their physical space in response to evolving community needs and interests; (4) magnify libraries' key role in providing learning outside of the formal classroom, for all ages. In addition to these outcomes, the knowledge, resources and experiences from this project will broadly benefit other small and rural libraries all over the United States.

**Organizational Profile**

Founded in 1967, OCLC is a global nonprofit library cooperative that provides shared technology services, original research and community programs for its membership and the library community at large. We are librarians, technologists, researchers, pioneers, leaders and learners. With 16,000+ library members in more than 100 countries, we come together as OCLC to make information more accessible and more useful.

Whether we're supporting advancements on the leading edge of science or helping children build a strong learning foundation, shared knowledge is the common thread. People can find the answers they need to solve important problems in their lives, in their communities and in the world. Together we make breakthroughs possible.

**We advance understanding and drive innovation.** We conduct research that helps institutions stay ahead of their most pressing challenges. We ensure that the promise of new technologies makes a difference in the lives of librarians, researchers and learners. We provide shared services that help libraries operate more efficiently, enabling them to focus more time and resources on their goals. And we deliver tools and data that member libraries need to fulfill their commitments to the communities and campuses they serve.

**We connect people to the information they need.** OCLC libraries collectively steward a vast quantity of knowledge. Working together, we make this information more visible and accessible to end users through shared WorldCat data, syndication programs and partnerships. This sharing of ideas creates connections both inside and outside the library community. It unites thinkers and doers around common purposes. And it helps researchers and learners achieve their goals by putting the world's knowledge in reach.

**We move forward with purpose.** When we come together as a network, we can address shared challenges at scale. And we can better understand the needs of all researchers, students and innovators. Learning from each other, leaning on each other, we chart a clearer course across the ever-changing information landscape.

We have greater impact when we work together to champion libraries and increase their visibility. OCLC has a long history of creating, testing and scaling programs that promote libraries and librarianship. [WebJunction](#), the flagship public library program managed by OCLC Research, provides online resources, programming and learning opportunities that build the knowledge, skills and confidence library staff need to power relevant, vibrant libraries. WebJunction resources are openly available to all professional, paraprofessional and volunteer library staff with access to the Internet. WebJunction designs and delivers transformational programs for public libraries that address community needs such as lifelong learning, health and wellness, and economic success. More than 70% of all U.S. public libraries across all 50 states have participated in WebJunction programs and learning since 2003.

OCLC's mission and public purpose statements are authorized by OCLC's executive management team, Global Council and Board of Trustees. The source of this information is OCLC's website at <http://www.oclc.org>; this information was last accessed on January 4, 2016.

## Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces

### Statement of Need

#### *A Space to Learn Together*

At the IMLS Focus Forum on Learning held in May 2015, Joan Lippincott succinctly described what researchers are saying about learning: (1) learning that involves *doing* leads to deeper learning, and (2) learning is a *social process*. The strong interest in this active approach to learning has challenged both formal and informal educators to reconfigure gathering space and programs to encourage socially engaging, hands-on learning. Recognizing their role as supporters of lifelong learning for all ages, a vanguard of public libraries has reimagined the use of library space and offers nontraditional materials and activities in those spaces.

Some of these innovative libraries are located in our nation's smallest and remotest communities. For example, Everson Branch Library (WA, service pop. 3,000) reclaimed an area in the center of a room that housed a largely unused reference collection, VHS cassettes and books on tape to create the Nooksack Valley Heritage Center. The result is a flexible, homey space that supports community members' research, digitization and recording of local history and heritage. The Naturita Community Library (CO, service pop. 2,100) planted vegetable beds that children tend while learning about gardening and use to make food baskets for patrons. In partnership with the school district and Iowa Public Television, Eldon Public Library (IA, service pop. 1,900) installed an interactive, multimedia Library Corner to engage families in activities that develop early literacy and math skills. And Middletown Free Library (PA, service pop. 16,000) designed its CreateSpace, which offers digital media equipment, 3-D printers, craft cutters and even sewing machines. These successful projects all share a few common elements:

- *Strong community engagement:* The libraries deliberately reached out to community members to understand their needs and interests, and continued to engage the community throughout the process through structured and unstructured activities.
- *Positive partnerships:* An otherwise modest budget was stretched through partnerships, donations and volunteers that brought in additional expertise, services, equipment and labor.
- *Evolved use of space:* Library staff looked at existing physical space with fresh eyes and imagination, recognized the effect of the information landscape's shift from print to online, and let go of furnishings and materials that were an impediment to the transformation.
- *Flexible:* The resulting spaces are modular and adaptable, making it easier for the library and the community to continually evolve the space to meet changing needs.

#### *Small, Rural Libraries Lag Behind*

Despite these inspiring examples, however, small and rural libraries are much more likely to be lagging behind. According to the recently published *2014 Digital Inclusion Survey: Survey Findings and Results*, only 14.8 percent of rural libraries have undergone renovations or space enhancements of any kind within the last five years, compared to 33 percent of city libraries. The report noted that libraries with older physical facilities were less likely to offer programs related to physical space, and showed that rural libraries offer fewer social learning and community engagement programs than their city counterparts:

Type of program	Rural locales	City locales
Afterschool programs	26.5%	51.4%
STEAM events	19.7%	48.9%
Community engagement events	30.2%	49.1%
Social connection events for young adults	42.6%	78.9%
Social connection events for adults	49.8%	69.7%

While the examples above demonstrate that even the smallest and most remote libraries can transform space for impressive results, it is likely that many small libraries are not aware of these success stories or the available resources to guide them. And, combined with an assumption that “learning spaces” and “community engagement” means a lot of time, equipment and staff—as well as the real constraints of lean budgets and limited capacity—it is understandable that many libraries remain locked in status quo. This situation exacerbates the lag in progress that many rural communities are experiencing: with the steady migration to and development of urban areas, the 80 million people residing in small-town and rural America are more likely to be overlooked by progress without specific, direct engagement and collaborative intervention. OCLC and the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) believe that with well-structured guidance, curated resources and the support of an expertly facilitated community of practice, more libraries in smaller communities can be encouraged to transform spaces into social centers of active learning.

### *Building on Past Projects*

OCLC and its WebJunction team have managed multiple projects that forge mutually supportive connections between small libraries and local residents that strengthen the library as a vital hub for individual and community development. The Everson Branch Library project described above was part of [\*Transforming Library Spaces\*](#), a pilot project in Washington State in which OCLC guided two libraries through community engagement and space transformation activities with funding from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation. The publication *Transforming Library Spaces for Community Engagement*<sup>1</sup> was produced by the WebJunction project team as a result. At the 2014 ARSL Conference, WebJunction staff presented the extremely well-received preconference event, “Rooms That Rock: Practical Tips for Library Space Planning,” which shared the results and resources from the pilot project. OCLC has also conducted two other recent projects that have served libraries in small communities all over the United States:

- ***Geek the Library*** (funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) that stewarded more than 1,500 libraries, 65% of which serve populations less than 25,000, through the planning and execution of local awareness campaigns that engage residents with the library around their individual passions and lifelong desire to learn. Participating library staff reported increased skills and confidence with community outreach and engagement, and increased connections to the community. (Read more about the project, impact and results in the evaluation materials included as *Supportingdoc3.pdf*, *Supportingdoc4.pdf*.)
- ***Outside the Box*** (funded by Outerwall, Inc., and in partnership with the Project for Public Spaces) provided placemaking consultation, equipment and furnishings to create community-based outdoor events, fostering civic pride and new local partnerships; 58 events were produced in 40 places, 17 of which are small towns. Participating libraries increased their placemaking skills and forged more connections with community members and local organizations. (*Supportingdoc5.pdf* and *Supportingdoc6.pdf* provide a summary and a case study that highlight the results from this project.)

In partnership with ARSL, OCLC proposes to use the primary approach of the *Transforming Library Spaces* pilot to guide 15 public libraries serving populations less than 25,000 through the planning and implementation of an engaging space that addresses a learning need, with emphasis on community input and interaction. While serving as test cases for the guided process, these 15 libraries will produce examples of “smart” spaces that are activated to support hands-on learning and strengthen community. Furthermore, the shared collection of experiences, examples and case studies that will result from this project will provide pragmatic guidance and inspiration to hundreds of other small libraries.

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<sup>1</sup> *Transforming Library Spaces for Community Engagement* is included as *Supportingdoc1.pdf*. See also *Supportingdoc2.pdf* for the final evaluative report on this pilot project.

## Impact

***Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*** proposes to support and guide small public libraries as they reach out and engage their communities in order to transform their library spaces into environments for active learning. This project aims to benefit three target audiences: (1) *participating libraries and their staff*, (2) *participating communities* and (3) *other small and rural libraries*. To this end, OCLC and ARSL seek an IMLS investment of \$249,710 toward achieving the following project goals:

<b>Project goals</b>	<b>Measurable outcomes</b>
Libraries will foster social connection among people to form strong communities.	<p>Participating libraries will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engage their local community in visioning and planning for library space</li> <li>• develop and maintain community partnerships</li> <li>• increase understanding of and apply the concepts of community outreach, particularly to underserved populations</li> <li>• increase understanding of and apply the concepts of human-centered design</li> <li>• implement a newly designed space that supports social connection</li> <li>• identify populations they wish to reach and outcome measures of success for that outreach and engagement.</li> </ul> <p>Community members will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make use of and attend activities in the library space (number of users).</li> </ul>
Libraries will create a space to provide active learning that encourages exploration and play.	<p>Participating library staff will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and apply the concepts of active learning</li> <li>• implement a space that supports active learning</li> <li>• provide active learning programming in the library (measured by number of programs).</li> </ul> <p>Community members will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate in active learning in the library (number of participants).</li> </ul>
Libraries will be better prepared to quickly adapt the use of their physical space in response to evolving community needs and interests.	<p>Participating libraries will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand what guidance and resources are effective toward adapting their spaces to meet community needs</li> <li>• transform library space</li> <li>• engage the local community in visioning and planning for library space</li> <li>• understand how to evaluate space usage to improve or further evolve their space</li> <li>• benefit from peer support via the project's community of practice.</li> </ul>
Libraries will magnify their key role in providing learning outside of the formal classroom, for all ages.	<p>Participating libraries will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand their role as an essential partner that addresses the lifelong learning needs of the community.</li> </ul> <p>Community members will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see the library as an essential partner that addresses the lifelong learning needs of the community.</li> </ul>

Knowledge, resources and experiences from the project will broadly benefit other small and rural libraries.	<p>Participating library staff will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contribute to case studies and evaluation activities, including observation and measurement of space use and program attendance.</li> </ul> <p>Other small and rural libraries will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gain relevant information, tested resources and case studies to increase awareness and understand how their physical space can evolve to meet community needs.</li> </ul>
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### Project Design

***Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*** will guide and support participating libraries through a four-phased approach to create an engaging space that addresses a learning need or interest in their community. Participants will gather community input, develop a design solution, draft an action plan, implement their newly designed “smart” space, host active learning programs, and then observe and measure how their community uses the reconfigured space. The project will be delivered through the WebJunction program of OCLC. As an all-volunteer organization with limited capacity, ARSL is generously donating 52 hours as a consultative partner to the project through a current board member who is also a full-time director of a small public library.

### **Phase 1: Selection Process and Content Development, July–December 2016**

This two-year project will start with an application process open to all U.S. public libraries in small communities in rural or town locales with populations less than 25,000.<sup>2</sup> Participating libraries should meet a minimum capacity baseline (i.e., having at least 1 FTE). Ideal participants include public library directors or public library staff responsible for space planning who are motivated to transform their space. A cohort of 15 libraries will be selected. Definitive selection criteria will be determined by OCLC, ARSL and the project evaluator; the selection process will ask applicants to consider their community demographics in order to ensure that the resulting spaces apply to a wide and varied set of people and places, including traditionally underserved populations.<sup>3</sup>

WebJunction and ARSL will announce and promote the project to potential participants through their communication channels; COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) will also broadcast the application opportunity to its network of state library agencies. During this phase, the project team will develop, adapt and refine project content; schedule subject matter experts for presentations; and configure space on the WebJunction platform to host the project’s online activities. For a preliminary overview of project content and activities, see the “Draft Orientation Content Overview” (*Supportingdoc8.pdf*). The evaluation plan will also be further refined at this phase, with the assistance of an independent evaluation consultant.

<b>Phase 1: Selection Process and Content Development</b>	
<b>Key activities</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
WebJunction and ARSL define participant readiness criteria to aid selection; finalize application design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application for potential participants</li> </ul>
Announce and promote project to generate participant interest and applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published articles and social media</li> </ul>
Adapt, develop and refine project content including webinars and participant materials; schedule subject matter experts and other guest speakers, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project content outline and schedule</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Participation in this project is unrestricted and open to all qualifying libraries, regardless of their status as current ARSL members, OCLC member institutions or WebJunction users.

<sup>3</sup> See Supportingdoc7.pdf for a draft of the participant application.

Select evaluation consultant through open request for proposals process; refine evaluation plan with evaluation consultant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third-party evaluation consultant is contracted</li> <li>• Refined evaluation plan</li> </ul>
Configure space on the WebJunction platform to host the project's online activities for orientation and community of practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online learning environment customized to project</li> </ul>
WebJunction coordinates application process and, with ARSL, identifies 15 libraries to participate. <b><i>Final applications due October 31, 2016.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 libraries selected that meet the readiness criteria to participate</li> <li>• Letters sent to selected libraries inviting them to start project in <b><i>January 2017</i></b></li> <li>• Press release announcing participants broadcast by December 1, 2016</li> </ul>

## Phase 2: Orientation and Design, January–July 2017

Through live facilitated sessions hosted on WebJunction's learning platform, participants from the 15 libraries will be oriented to concepts of placemaking, human-centered design, community engagement methods and innovative library spaces. The project orientation will also include information that can help small and rural libraries find and cultivate supportive partnerships, as well as identify potential funding to sustain their spaces. The material for this orientation will draw upon the [IDEO Design Toolkit for Libraries](#), the work of the Project for Public Spaces and their "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" interventions, and the materials and cumulative expertise developed through past OCLC and WebJunction programs, including the guide *Transforming Library Spaces for Community Engagement* (see *Supportingdoc1.pdf*).

After this orientation, the project will prepare participants for, and support them through, the process of collecting input through outreach and community engagement (e.g., brainstorming, posterboards, surveys), defining and/or clarifying their target audiences and choosing the challenge they want their new space to address. Participants will also use the community input they gather to develop solution ideas to address their chosen challenge.

Following this, participants will make simple small-scale models, sketches or mocked-up spaces to illustrate their solution ideas, using an iterative process to gather community feedback on their proposed ideas. The project will offer access to a technology consultant (regarding, for example, audio-visual equipment, makerspace materials or software) for libraries with technology-related considerations for their space. Other topics covered in this phase will include facilitating active learning and programming in their reconfigured spaces and information on ways small and rural libraries can cultivate supportive partnerships and identify potential funding opportunities for further developing their spaces beyond the project timeline.<sup>4</sup>

Next, participants will draft an action plan and budget in which they document (1) a vision for the space that identifies the people for whom they're designing (e.g., seniors, new residents, job seekers, at-risk youth); (2) community outcomes (e.g., increasing job skills, contributing to physical health), and (3) a plan for sustaining, managing and facilitating the use of the space (e.g., through community partnerships for programming, in-kind donations, other support).

Participants will apply the processes and concepts they've learned and share their experiences and progress with each other via the community of practice hosted on WebJunction's learning platform. WebJunction has been at the forefront of delivering highly engaging, effective online peer learning and training programs since 2003.

<sup>4</sup>For example, the USDA has expressed interest in assisting project participants through the application process for their Community Facilities grant program. For more information on this, please see the letter of interest from the USDA included as *Supportingdoc9.pdf*.



Our live online programs are considered top of class for the library field, in terms of quality of content, presentation and interactivity. As part of another grant-funded project, WebJunction has just completed facilitating an online community of 436 library practitioners across five states. Participation rates in each live session of the 5-week guided orientation ranged from 95 percent to 73 percent; and 67 percent of participants were awarded certificates of completion of the full set of activities over the two-month program. This track record gives us full confidence that participants in this project will benefit from the online community that will be stewarded by the experienced project team.

Phase 2: Orientation and Design	
Key activities	Deliverables
Introduction and orientation to key concepts, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placemaking and innovative library spaces</li> <li>• Outreach and community engagement</li> <li>• Active learning</li> <li>• Design thinking, human-centered design</li> <li>• Partnering with community members, businesses and organizations for programming and other support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-4 webinars</li> <li>• Participant materials (templates, guides, worksheets, etc.)</li> <li>• Online community of practice to collect and organize resources and foster peer discussion and sharing</li> </ul>
Facilitation and support of peer learning and sharing within community of practice, using IDEO's <i>Design Thinking for Libraries Toolkit</i> , among other tools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants apply design thinking process and related concepts to reimagine their space and create models for design solutions to gather community input.</li> <li>• Based on input, participants make an action plan and budget for designing their new space.</li> <li>• Participants find local partners and volunteers to augment support of the plan.</li> <li>• Participants request from WebJunction the materials needed (up to \$5,000).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-4 webinars</li> <li>• Structured learning environment to guide participants through design process</li> <li>• Community of practice discussion forums for peer sharing of experiences, challenges and questions</li> <li>• Community input documentation</li> <li>• Models/sketches/mock-ups</li> <li>• Action plans</li> <li>• Budgets</li> <li>• Community partnerships</li> </ul>

### Phase 3: Implementation and Data Gathering, July–December 2017

Starter materials (i.e., equipment, furnishings, supplies of up to \$5,000) will be provided to each library that has created an action plan and budget. Libraries will be encouraged to use resources from local partners to supplement these resources, and volunteers to support and lead programming. During implementation, the cohort of participants will continue to have access to guidance, and will share ideas and experiences with each other via the interactive, facilitated community of practice. Libraries have through December to design and transform their spaces. Once implemented, libraries will use some simple measures to evaluate the use of their space.

Phase 3: Implementation and Data Gathering	
Key activities	Deliverables
Purchase and deliver starter materials for libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter materials</li> </ul>
Libraries implement their plan and create space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly designed spaces</li> </ul>
Post-implementation, participating libraries observe and measure community use of new space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community usage data (evaluation/survey responses/other feedback)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of lessons learned, impact on library (e.g., the actual space, how activities/services are sustained with partnerships/volunteers)</li> </ul>
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#### **Phase 4: Evaluation, Documentation and Dissemination, October 2017–June 2018**

Case studies will be developed for each participating library; and project staff will visit up to eight sites in order to document the spaces, their usage, and the experiences of library staff and community members (e.g., through interviews or focus groups, videos and photographs). The case studies and other outputs (such as articles, webinars, social media posts, virtual tours, reports and conference presentations) will be disseminated widely via ARSL, WebJunction and other OCLC channels. The evaluation consultant will collect project evaluation data and prepare a final report in consultation with project staff.

<b>Phase 4: Evaluation, Documentation and Dissemination</b>	
<b>Key activities</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
WebJunction project staff visit selected participating sites to capture images/video and input from staff and patrons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual and written documentation of library spaces</li> </ul>
WebJunction writes and publishes case studies to summarize experience of libraries, communities and local impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published case studies</li> <li>• Presentation of final reports</li> <li>• Webinar describing experiences from 2-4 of the participating libraries</li> </ul>
Final evaluation and summative report by evaluator in consultation with project staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation data</li> <li>• Final evaluation report</li> </ul>

#### Diversity Plan

This project focuses on public library staff in small and rural communities. Based on 2013 IMLS Public Library Survey data, there are currently 4,077 library systems that would be eligible to apply to participate in this program (IMLS survey locale is coded as rural/fringe, rural/distant, rural/remote or town/fringe, town/distant, town/remote; minimum 1 FTE; and a service area population of less than 25,000). This project will accept applications from all eligible public libraries (regardless of the library's status as a supporter or member of WebJunction, OCLC or ARSL). During the selection process, attention will be paid to creating geographic diversity in the project. The benefit of this diversity will be to support broader awareness of the project throughout the country. It is also anticipated that libraries selected to participate can ultimately serve as local champions for future and similar activities in their states and regions.

In addition to geographic diversity, the project will also seek diversity in the types of populations that will be reached through the newly reconfigured library spaces by asking applicants to consider their community demographics with the aim of ensuring that the resulting spaces apply to a wide and varied set of people and places, including traditionally underserved populations. Applicants will be asked to describe how their newly designed space can benefit their community as a whole. Application reviewers will factor diversity in during selection, and applicants will be made aware of the importance of diversity in the final selection. This will result in a robust set of case studies and experiences that can be shared with the public library community. This process recognizes that not all libraries face the same challenges, and the project will be strengthened by libraries sharing their challenges and experiences.

#### Project Resources: Personnel, Time, Budget

OCLC will serve as the lead applicant, project manager and grant administrator responsible for the successful completion of the program. OCLC has managed a number of implementation, evaluation and planning projects at the national scale and in partnership with state libraries, primarily through its WebJunction program. WebJunction is known for its successful projects that feature dynamic learning environments and communities

of practice for effective peer exchange and support. It will draw on its existing staff and the resources created and expertise gained during the *Transforming Library Spaces* project and other projects mentioned earlier in this narrative. Toward the successful completion of these deliverables, OCLC will

- serve as grant and project manager, compile and publish research findings, contract with and manage consultants, develop final report and manage communications with IMLS
- ensure effective coordination among project staff, partners, consultants and participating libraries
- host the community of practice and related content that is used in this project
- share broadly with the library field through WebJunction, other OCLC channels, and with COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) to broadcast through its network of state library agencies.

As a partner to *Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*, ARSL will

- provide consultation to the project, focused on the application process to engage and select the participating libraries; and to provide additional perspective on rural and small library capacity and mindset. Due to the limited capacity of ARSL, which has no paid staff, this consultation will be provided by volunteer board member Jennifer Pearson, who is also the full-time director of Marshall County Memorial Library (TN)
- use its communication channels and connections to small and rural libraries to raise awareness of the opportunity for libraries to apply to participate
- use its communication channels to disseminate information produced by the project
- promote each phase of the project at the ARSL annual conferences during project duration. As appropriate, conference time can be given to a program/programs about the project.

OCLC and ARSL will collaboratively determine the selection plan criteria, coordinate the application process, announce and promote project and its results, and select participants. The project will also draw upon the expertise of the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) for webinar content and consultation on the orientation content.

Letters of commitment are provided from Jet Kofoot, President of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries; Elena Madison, Vice President of Project for Public Spaces, Inc.; and a letter of interest from Chris Beck, Senior Projects Advisor, Office of the Undersecretary, Rural Opportunity Investment Initiative, USDA.

#### *Personnel*

WebJunction Director Sharon Streams will serve as the project director and oversee the successful completion of this project. Key personnel are

- Betha Gutsche, Program Manager, who will manage the project toward the completion of all deliverables (.25 FTE)
- Liz Morris, Project Coordinator, who will coordinate the project schedule, team and logistics (.70 FTE)
- Kathleen Gesinger, Learning Community Manager, who will oversee the community of practice activities (.30 FTE)
- Jennifer Pearson, Board Member of ARSL, who will serve as the project representative for ARSL (ca. 52 hours)
- Elena Madison, Vice President of PPS, who will provide subject matter expertise and consultation to the project in the area of placemaking, especially toward the orientation content (20 hours)
- An evaluation consultant (TBD), who will provide a framework, plan and report to assess the project's outcomes. The evaluator will be an active collaborator with the team and will be identified through an RFP process intended to select a candidate who meets cost and quality requirements (20 days).

### *Time*

OCLC and its partners propose to deliver this project between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2018. The **Schedule of Completion** provides a snapshot of these activities on the proposed timeline. OCLC staff time represents approximately 4,300 hours over 24 months, and partially allocated staff have the capacity and expertise to take on the defined activities in the proposed timeframe. Approximately 20 hours of the budgeted time for ARSL will be applied during the first 6 months of the project; the rest will be deployed throughout the project, especially toward communication and dissemination as project results are made available.

### *Budget*

The amount of \$249,710 requested in the budget for the project is primarily allocated to staff hours for personnel contracted by OCLC and an OCLC project coordinator. Additional line items cover evaluation, costs to support project participants in the WebJunction platform, costs for materials to be used by participants to create their designed spaces, travel expenses for site visits and in-kind contributions. OCLC is committed to the completion of these deliverables and believes that the budget is both necessary and sufficient to complete the planning tasks as described.

### Communications Plan

WebJunction and ARSL see broad sharing and collaboration across the library field as key, and together they reach thousands of library staff through multiple communications platforms – all of which are *free and openly accessible to everyone*. By working together, WebJunction and ARSL will be able to share project results and resources widely, making this even more impactful to the library field.

The content used by libraries participating in *Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*, as well as the case studies that result, will be made widely available via these multiple platforms. With current support from 23 state library agencies and other strong relationships in the library field, WebJunction is known for providing free, quality materials, and will use its resources to reach many more libraries beyond the core program participants.

WebJunction and ARSL will amplify the reach and impact of the project in the following ways:

- Free, publicly available WebJunction webinar(s) promoting project outcomes and resources.
- Publication of all project content and case studies on OCLC channels and the WebJunction website, which has more than 300,000 unique individuals visiting the site each year; more than half of WebJunction's user base are library staff of small libraries. This publication extends the life of the program beyond both the cohort of participants and the length of the original project.
- The webinars delivered to project participants will be posted on WebJunction for all to access freely.
- Promotion of all content, case studies and webinars in WebJunction's twice-monthly e-newsletter that reaches 24,000 subscribers.
- Publication of all project content and case studies on the ARSL member-only listserv as well as the ARSL public website. The listserv reaches all 800+ ARSL members; the ARSL website reaches thousands of librarians and library supporters.
- Further ongoing promotion on WebJunction's and ARSL's main social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn).
- Promotion of each phase of the project at the ARSL annual conferences during project duration. As appropriate, conference time can be given to a program/programs about the project.
- Proposals to disseminate project findings at other national professional conferences (e.g., ALA annual and midwinter conferences; PLA annual conference).

### Sustainability

At the completion of the project, the participants' community of practice will end. However, project resources, case studies, the evaluation report and recordings of orientation sessions will be published on WebJunction.org, where they will continue to be available to all for free through self-directed discovery. Participating library staff, as well as non-participating staff in all states, especially in small and rural locales, and any other stakeholders who may be interested, will benefit from continued access to these resources, ensuring that the project will serve the greater library community beyond its formal end date. Articles and news content created by WebJunction will be under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 license, which allows for sharing and distribution with attribution.

Additionally, the reimagined spaces created during the project, the active learning programming being offered in the new spaces, and the knowledge and skills acquired in the process of using human-centered design to reconfigure and implement those spaces, can continue to benefit participating public library staff and their communities. The competencies involved around outreach, community engagement, placemaking, design thinking, active learning and partnership building, once acquired, can also be used over and over again, extending not only individual staff capacity, but organizational capacity as well, for planning and programming active, community-driven learning. The emphasis placed on peer collaboration during the project promotes community building within the field, encouraging sustainability as participating library staff support and openly share their experiences with one another.

This project will also prepare participants to sustain their newly created spaces by developing partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits and government agencies that can contribute to supporting both their newly designed spaces and the active learning programming that will take place in those spaces.

OCLC and ARSL have enthusiastically joined together on this proposal to support libraries as they transform their library spaces to encourage active learning in their community. We are grateful for the opportunity to propose this project, and look forward to your review.

## Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces

### Year 1: July 2016 - June 2017

Phase	Key activities	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
<b>Phase 1: Selection process and content development</b>	WebJunction and ARSL define participant readiness criteria to aid selection; finalize application design.												
	Announce and promote project to generate participant interest and applications.												
	Adapt, develop and refine project content including webinars and participant materials; schedule subject matter experts and other guest speakers, etc.												
	Select evaluation consultant through open request for proposals process; refine evaluation plan with evaluation consultant.												
	Configure space on the WebJunction platform to host the project's online activities for orientation and community of practice.												
	WebJunction coordinates application process and, with ARSL, identifies 15 libraries to participate.												
	Announce participating libraries by Dec. 1, 2016.												
<b>Phase 2: Orientation and design</b>	Introduction and orientation to key concepts, including: Placemaking and innovative library service Outreach and community engagement Active learning Design thinking, human-centered design Partnering with community members, businesses and organizations for programming and other support												
	Facilitation and support of peer learning and sharing within community of practice. Participants apply design thinking process and related conceptsto reimagine their space and create models for design solutions to gather community input. Based on input, participants make an action plan and budget for designing their new space.												

## Year 2: July 2017 - June 2018

Phase	Key activities	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
<b>Phase 2: Orientation and design</b>	Complete Phase 2 activities.												
<b>Phase 3: Implementation and data gathering</b>	Libraries implement their plan and create space.												
	Post-implementation, participating libraries observe and measure community use of new space.												
<b>Phase 4: Evaluation, documentation and dissemination</b>	WebJunction project staff visit selected participating sites to capture images/video and input from staff and patrons.												
	WebJunction writes and publishes case studies to summarize experience of libraries, communities and local impact.												
	Final evaluation and summative report by evaluator in consultation with project staff.												

## DIGITAL STEWARDSHIP SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

### Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded research, data, software, and other digital products. The assets 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. However, applying these principles to the development and management of digital products is not always straightforward. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and best practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer a series of questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital assets. 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

If you propose to create any type of digital product as part of your project, complete this form. We define digital products very broadly. If you are developing anything through the use of information technology (e.g., digital collections, web resources, metadata, software, or data), you should complete this form.

**Please indicate which of the following digital products you will create or collect during your project**  
(Check all that apply):

	<b>Every proposal creating a digital product should complete ...</b>	Part I
	<b>If your project will create or collect ...</b>	<b>Then you should complete ...</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Digital content	Part II
<input type="checkbox"/>	Software (systems, tools, apps, etc.)	Part III
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dataset	Part IV

## PART I.

### A. Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

We expect applicants to make federally funded work products widely available and usable through strategies such as publishing in open-access journals, depositing works in institutional or discipline-based repositories, and using non-restrictive licenses such as a Creative Commons license.

**A.1** What will be the intellectual property status of the content, software, or datasets you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright? Will you assign a Creative Commons license (<http://us.creativecommons.org>) to the content? If so, which license will it be? If it is software, what open source license will you use (e.g., BSD, GNU, MIT)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.



**A.2** What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital content, software, or datasets and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain any terms of access and conditions of use, why they are justifiable, and how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

**A.3** Will you create any content or products which may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities? If so, please describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

## **Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content**

### **A. Creating New Digital Content**

**A.1** Describe the digital content you will create and/or collect, the quantities of each type, and format you will use.

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

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

## **B. Digital Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation**

**B.1** Describe your quality control plan (i.e., how you will 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 (e.g., storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, 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 CFR 200.461).

## **C. Metadata**

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

**C.2** Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created and/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 digital content created during your project (e.g., an API (Application Programming Interface), contributions to the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) or other digital platform, or other support to allow batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

#### **D. Access and Use**

**D.1** Describe how you will make the digital content 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 and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital collections or content your organization has created.

### **Part III. Projects Creating Software (systems, tools, apps, etc.)**

#### **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) this software will serve.

**A.2** List other existing software that wholly or partially perform the same functions, and explain how the tool or system you will create is different.

**B. Technical Information**

**B.1** List the programming languages, platforms, software, or other applications you will use to create your software (systems, tools, apps, etc.) and explain why you chose them.

**B.2** Describe how the intended software will extend or interoperate with other existing software.

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

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

**B.5** Provide the name and URL(s) for examples of any previous software tools or systems 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 an open-source license to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software created, and what conditions will you impose on the access and use of this product? 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 any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, explain why these terms or conditions are justifiable, and explain how you will notify potential users of the software or system.

**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 be publicly depositing source code for the software developed:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:  
URL:

### **Part IV. Projects Creating a Dataset**

1. Summarize the intended purpose of this data, the type of data to be collected or generated, the method for collection or generation, the approximate dates or frequency when the data will be generated or collected, and the intended use of the data collected.
  
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?

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).
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.
5. What 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).
6. What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks, etc.) 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?
7. What is the plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?
8. Identify where you will be publicly depositing dataset(s):  
  
Name of repository:  
URL:
9. When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?

## Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces

There is growing awareness and effort among public libraries to (1) foster social connection among people to form strong communities; (2) support active, hands-on learning that encourages exploration and play; (3) demonstrate their role as educators that provide learning outside of the formal classroom for all ages; (4) evolve how physical library space is used as the information landscape shifts from print-based to online. A vanguard of libraries is leading the way in addressing these interrelated dynamics, including those from our nation's smallest communities. Naturita Community Library (service pop. 2,100) planted vegetable beds that children tend while learning about gardening, producing food baskets for patrons. Eldon Public Library (service pop. 1,900) installed an interactive, multimedia Library Corner for families in partnership with the school district and Iowa Public Television. Everson Public Library (service pop. 3,000) transformed space to engage residents in local history and heritage. Small libraries and their staff often have strong and deep ties to their community and high visibility as anchor institutions, but may be less prepared to respond to these trends that are reshaping what is "community" and the attendant role of the library. With the steady migration to and development of urban areas, the 80 million people residing in small town and rural America are more likely to be overlooked by progress without specific, direct engagement and collaborative intervention. The [2013 Digital Inclusion Survey](#) results show that rural and small communities lag significantly behind larger towns and cities in offering social or community-engaging events and programs; public libraries are well positioned to help close the gap.

OCLC has managed projects that forge mutually supportive connections between libraries and local residents that strengthen the library as a vital hub for individual and community development, including:

- Geek the Library (funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) has stewarded more than 1,500 libraries, 65% of which serve populations less than 25,000, through the planning and execution of local campaigns that engage residents with the library around their passions and lifelong desire to learn.
- Outside the Box (funded by Outerwall, Inc., and in partnership with Project for Public Spaces) provided placemaking consultation, equipment and furnishings to create community-based outdoor events, fostering civic pride and new local partnerships; 58 events were produced in 40 places, 17 of which are small towns.
- A Paul G. Allen Family Foundation-funded project supported two libraries (one serving 3,000 residents) that transformed space within the library; conceived from direct community input, the spaces support social and interactive learning in the library. The publication [\*Transforming Library Spaces for Community Engagement\*](#) was produced by the project team as a result.

OCLC, in partnership with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL), proposes to blend approaches, activities, and resources from these three programs into a project that guides a cohort of 15 public libraries serving populations less than 25,000 through the planning and implementation of an engaging space that addresses a learning need, with emphasis on community input and interaction. While serving as test cases for the guided process, the libraries will produce examples of "smart" spaces that support hands-on learning and strengthen community.





This two-year project will include an **application process** to select libraries that convey intrinsic motivation to innovate their space, and meet a minimum capacity baseline (e.g., having at least 1 FTE); it will also take into account demographics, so that the resulting spaces impact a diverse set of people and places, including traditionally underserved populations.

The resulting cohort will be **introduced to principles** of placemaking, human-centered design, community engagement methods, and innovative library spaces, drawing upon the combined expertise developed through the above-referenced programs as well as other key resources, including the [\*IDEO Design Toolkit for Libraries\*](#). The content and webinars will be hosted as a **community of practice** on WebJunction.org, the open online community for library staff that has reached at least 63% of all small and rural public libraries with its content and programs. This overview will provide the context for the approach, followed by practical guidance that has been accumulated through the above-referenced programs and augmented by consultation from small library practitioners and support organizations.

With this orientation, libraries will conduct **community input activities** to foster lively dialogue between residents and library staff (e.g., brainstorming, posterboards, surveys). This will be followed by an **action planning** process where participants document a vision for the space, and identify target users (e.g., seniors, new residents, unemployed) and learning outcomes (e.g., physical health, job skills). Participants will share their progress with the cohort.

As described in the *IDEO Design Toolkit*, participants will **develop a prototype** with a simple mock-up space and request patron feedback. **Starter materials** (equipment, furnishings, supplies of up to \$5,000) will be provided to each library with a pilot plan and budget; libraries will be encouraged to seek local partners, donors, and volunteers to supplement these resources. During implementation, participants will continue to access guidance, and share ideas and experiences with each other via the interactive, facilitated community of practice.

**Case studies** developed from the communities will be shared broadly, along with the resources used to guide the participants, via WebJunction, using OCLC and partner channels to build awareness. An **independent evaluation** will assess the effectiveness of the resources and guided process toward creating library spaces, and the experiences of the cohort as a peer support network; this will inform any adjustments and considerations for larger-scale or iterative implementation of this approach.

This project will be managed by OCLC, under the oversight of WebJunction Director Sharon Streams. The ARSL board of directors has expressed enthusiastic support for this proposal and have agreed to serve as a project partner. Project for Public Spaces has agreed to serve as a consultant to the project.

OCLC requests support in the amount of \$249,000, to fund a project coordinator, consultation from subject matter experts, foundational materials for library spaces, independent evaluation, and site visits, over the period of July 2016 to June 2018. OCLC will contribute an additional \$157,000 in cost share to supply the rest of the WebJunction project team and the online community of practice.