LibraryU at Providence Public Library

Three years of project funding from the National Leadership Grant Program, Institute for Museum and Library Services, will enable Providence Public Library (PPL) and its local and national partners to **develop, deliver, and disseminate a high-impact teen workforce development collective impact program model: LibraryU**. Through LibraryU, PPL will provide free, accessible, high-quality competency-based learning opportunities to empower diverse, underserved teens with skills, academic credit, badges/credentials, and work exposure in high-demand and high-interest disciplines. LibraryU addresses IMLS' priority to promote and facilitate active, participatory learning in libraries.

The LibraryU Project Model is centered upon student interest and the development of 21st Century Skills through interactive and engaging library programs. In this model, PPL serves as facilitator, resource provider, assessor, curriculum developer and backbone organization. PPL will facilitate the recruitment of multi-sector partners to mentor teens and provide industry knowledge to help inform the program curriculum design. PPL and its community partners will develop assessments to provide students with academic credit, digital credentials and/or service learning opportunities. Teens will be empowered with the necessary skills to enter the workforce and forge a career pathway.

PPL's key partners in this effort include the Academy for Career Exploration, a public charter high school in Providence that offers an academically rigorous program with a focus on career exploration in Technology; AS220, an innovator in the development of free arts education programming for youth; AskRI.org, a free online reference and resource portal available online to all RI residents; and IntraCity Geeks, a company that seeks to help students and adults in urban areas become successful through developing coding and entrepreneurship skills.

Key allies and advisors include the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services, Rhode Island Department of Education, the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), and Roger Williams University. Rigorous outcomes-based and developmental evaluation will be conducted by an experienced, independent evaluator. The program will participate fully in the ongoing national dialogue around transforming libraries, learning labs, maker spaces, connected learning, and youth development.

Nationwide, teen employment has plummeted, and studies show a sharp decline in school engagement as students reach the high school level. This demonstration project will establish the important leadership role public libraries can play in the community to provide teen workforce education and increase employment.

IMLS funding for this project will support program delivery to more than 600 teens at PPL. These teens will receive digital credentials, academic credit, exposure to the world of work, and entry into education and career pathways. Teens will have increased community and civic engagement, improved attitudes, and more ambitious college and career aspirations. The program will share this new model for teen development nationwide, including program tools, curricula, and guidance needed to replicate the program. Finally, this connected learning in the libraries model will be extensible to other populations or content areas.

Organizational Profile

Providence Public Library (PPL) is a 140-year-old nonprofit corporation providing free public library services through print, recorded and digital collections, information resources, programs of interest and relevance, and expert staff. PPL's mission is to inspire lifelong education among all Rhode Islanders, fostering personal fulfillment and enhanced quality of life for an informed, enlightened, and engaged citizenry. PPL focuses on building and strengthening this core mission and services for all Rhode Islanders—expanding its reach and fostering critical connections with individuals and groups statewide—to nurture and enhance the educational, historical and cultural fabric of Rhode Island.

PPL was founded as a private library through the determined efforts of citizens in the early 1870's. As a private not-for-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors and chartered to serve as the free public library for Rhode Island, PPL has the flexibility to respond to community needs rapidly and effectively. Since 1989, PPL has served as the Statewide Reference Resource Center, making it unique as the country's only independently governed public library that directly serves an entire state. PPL was the founder, primary provider and technical operator of Ocean State Libraries (formerly Cooperating Libraries Automated Network, CLAN) which gives patrons throughout the state easy access to the resources of a major urban library. PPL is a major lender of materials to other libraries statewide.

PPL created the PPL Foundation in 2005 to provide clarity between public and private funding streams. The Foundation is a tax exempt public charity, and all Foundation activities are donated solely for the benefit and support of the Providence Public Library. With the fiscal separation of the city's branch services from the Providence Public Library in July 2009, PPL receives no city funding for the library services it provides to Providence residents.

PPL is both a physical and virtual presence and is the premiere free, personal learning institution in Rhode Island. All ages and backgrounds engage in robust and vigorous lifelong learning, which occurs in ways from delightfully serendipitous to intensely purposeful. PPL is a committed partner with each individual in meeting their intellectual and cultural goals and with the broader community of readers and learners. PPL's successful partnerships with agencies as diverse as the R.I. Department of Education, R.I. Department of Labor, Greater Providence YMCA, the Rhode Island Film Festival, Meeting St. School, Brown University, Ready To Learn Providence/AmeriCorps, and area daycare centers have led to enhanced and innovative programming.

In FY14, the library launched its new Strategic Plan: Think Again, same mission-- different world. With seven key strategies in mind, it launched an ambitious three year implementation plan that focuses the library on high impact, measurable learning programs, as well as building collaborative partnerships to accomplish those programs. Think Again seeks to stay true to PPL's mission as a premiere free, personal learning place for all Rhode Islanders, while also growing and transforming the library's offerings to embody those of a true 21st century community learning hub. The Strategic Plan information can be viewed on the library's webpage www.provlib.org.

Three years of project funding from the National Leadership Grant Program, Institute for Museum and Library Services, will enable Providence Public Library (PPL) and its local and national partners to **develop, deliver, and disseminate a high-impact teen workforce development collective impact program model: LibraryU**. This demonstration project will establish the important leadership role public libraries can play to provide teen workforce education and increase employment. Through LibraryU, PPL will provide free, accessible, high-quality competency-based learning opportunities to empower diverse, underserved teens with skills, academic credit, badges/credentials, and work exposure in high-demand and high-interest disciplines. LibraryU addresses two of the key findings from the IMLS Convening on Learning in Libraries held on May 14, 2015 which are to: "design participatory learning programs that demonstrate innovation and scalability' and "develop cross-disciplinary collaborations that advance library services nationwide."

1. Statement of Need:
Rhode Island ranked 31st in the nation and last in New England for child well-being in 2014. More than one in every five children in Rhode Island were living in poverty in 2013, with the state's urban communities having the highest poverty rates for children under 18 (RI Kids Count, 2015). Rhode Island has one of the nation's largest gaps in absenteeism rates between low-income and higher-income students and between Hispanic and white children, according to a national study called Attendance Works. A recent Gallup poll of public school students found that student engagement tends to plummet

> "If we were doing right by our students and our future, these numbers would be the absolute opposite. For each year a student progresses in school, they should be more engaged, not less. The drop in student engagement for each year students are in school is our monumental, collective national failure. There are several things that might help to explain why this is happening --ranging from our overzealous focus on standardized testing and curricula to our lack of experiential and project-based learning pathways for students-- not to mention the lack of pathways for students who will not and do not want to go on to college"
>
> – Brandon Busteed, Executive Director of Gallup Education
> (Gallup, 2013)

at the high school level; roughly 75% of elementary school students are actively involved and invested in school, compared with only 44% of high school students (Gallup, 2013). In Providence, the city's four-year graduation rate for the class of 2014 was 71% (RIDE, 2014). Nationwide, teen employment has plummeted, particularly among teens of color and teens living in poverty.

Rhode Island's governor has recognized the crisis of education and employment for teens and reconvened a long dormant state Children's Cabinet comprising state agencies serving children and have adopted a "new five-year, data-driven plan that seeks to strengthen state services for Rhode Island children." The plan "focuses on five key areas to of improvement by 2020: physical health and safety; behavior and emotional security; academic empowerment and career readiness; social, cultural, and civic engagement; and family and community stability."(Providence Journal, 2015)
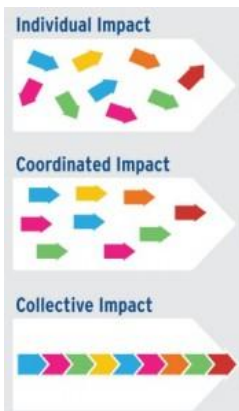
However, no single organization or agency can positively impact the education and employment of teens. Traditionally, libraries have worked with partners to coordinate services hopeful of impacting education and employment. However, a Collective Impact model can achieve significant and lasting social change. **LibraryU positions PPL to serve as a 'backbone organization' to convene partners in support of a**

'common agenda, shared measurement and alignment of effort' and to create a replicable collective impact model where libraries play a central role. PPL will join with government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organizations and residents to act together to increase teen employment and career readiness.

LibraryU builds on PPL's highly successful IMLS-funded ALL Access model (www.allaccessri.org) that works to leverage libraries and partners to collectively impact workforce development and education for adults. ALL Access up-to-data is available in a data dashboard on the project's website. LibraryU will integrate ALL Access' best practices. LibraryU represents a next iteration of ALL Access, explicitly moving PPL to the role of backbone organization and addressing the workforce needs of teens.

This project will be specifically targeted to high-school-aged teens and includes key success factors for teen programming: flexible subject matter, interest-driven, project-based, collaboration with community mentors and engagement with schools. LibraryU offers a variety of learning options for teens to better serve their diverse interests and learning styles. Successful programs for older teens are different than programs targeting middle school students: "High school programs focus their programming more on providing formal and informal opportunities to explore and prepare for college and other post-graduation programming, apprenticeships, and mentoring; and offering the content and the particular skills older teens want to learn." (Harvard Family Research Project, 2010)

2. Impact

Six Core Functions for the Backbone Organization

- Guide Vision and Strategy
- Support Aligned Activities
- Establish Shared Measurement Practices
- Build Public Will
- Advance Policy
- Mobilize Funding

Backbones must balance the tension between coordinating and maintaining accountability, while staying behind the scenes to establish collective ownership

LibraryU will establish a blueprint for libraries to play a central role in collective impact that is well suited to the strengths and mission of libraries - the role of 'backbone' organization. Traditionally, libraries have taken a less central, albeit important role, as a partner. Libraries already do some of the core functions of a backbone organization, and this project will explore the challenges and opportunities in successfully fulfilling all six functions (graphic on left from FSG and Eastside Pathways, 2013). By serving as the backbone for LibraryU, PPL will have the opportunity to amplify current innovative teen workforce practices that are taking place across the country such as the LRNG initiative (www.lrng.org/) which is working with a variety of partners to redesign "learning for the connected age" for youth.

In Rhode Island, the time is right to bring together a statewide partnership to address these challenging issues. Key partners will be drawn from multiple sectors including employers, state workforce development agencies, K-12 schools, higher education, technology start-ups, training and community organizations. With 40% of US employers reporting they have jobs they cannot fill because applicants lack the required skills (ManpowerGroup, 2014), LibraryU is employer-driven and focused on high-demand skills and work experiences.

The Teen Squad (TS), piloted in 2014 and now entering its fourth cycle, serves as the nascent model for LibraryU. TS engages diverse partners such as the Rhode Island Historical Society, Brown University

Center for Public Humanities, Providence Performing Arts Center, and Trinity Repertory Company to help teens build technology, media production, and research skills. TS is built on student-interest and the use of PPL's collections. Teens created websites and videos about local neighborhoods, theaters and downtown performance spaces that have become part of PPL's digital collection. http://hub.provlib.org/teensquadhome.html) TS helped participants to increase their level of comfort with technology by using a variety of platforms and devices. The teens borrowed devices from PPL so that they could share their experiences with friends and family. They also learned to conduct documentary field research while serving as the Directors, Producers, Talent, and Editors of their own historical narrative videos. Teens were exposed to a variety of career possibilities ranging from Operations Manager of a theater to Tour Guide of a historical location. LibraryU will harness and build upon the youth-centered and diverse partnership aspects of TS. Informal and formal tools will be used to regularly solicit input and feedback from teens and partners. Through an iterative process, this input and data will inform the project and future LibraryU cycles.

LibraryU			
Learning Outcomes	**Performance Indicators**	**Project Targets**	**Tangible Products**
Teens have the education and skills to be competitive in the workforce.	Teens demonstrate proficiency in each of the following 21st century skill categories: Learning and Innovation; Information, Media and Technology and Life and Career.	- A minimum of 600 teens participate in LibraryU over the course of three-years - A minimum of 80% of teens earn Northstar Digital Literacy certificates/digital badges -A minimum of 30% of teens create videos that demonstrate specific 21st century skills -80% of teens complete self-assessments that demonstrate competency in 21st century skills -A minimum of 50% of teens create web portfolios that can be used for college or work applications -A minimum of 15% of teens earn academic credit -A minimum of 25% of teens participate in service learning - A minimum of 25% of teens gain work exposure	-Teen instructional videos that will be added to the library collection -Library U digital badges -Assessments of 21st century skills -Teen career pathway awareness and exploration tools -Teen created web portfolios -Teen created instructional tools to support service learning assignments
PPL creates a collective impact model-LibraryU-	-A cross disciplinary team of community	-LibraryU PPL team, Core Team and Advisory Council are formed -Participation and feedback from	-LibraryU mission and vision statements -LibraryU model

to provide teen education and increase employment.	partners create a shared vision, agenda and measures. -Innovative, competency based programming is developed.	partners and Advisory Council demonstrates commitment to LibraryU -Partners share expertise and resources to support LibraryU -Programming and project models are developed	design -LibraryU Guiding Principles -Partner and backbone formative assessments -Online toolkit for creating LibraryU -Teen interest survey -Mentor matching tool
A model for the role public libraries can play as backbone organization in collective impact is established.	-PPL serves as the backbone organization for a multi-disciplinary team of partners. -A data system to measure effectiveness is created and used.	-PPL and partners regularly discuss challenges and opportunities of working together -PPL and partner staff demonstrate comfort and confidence in sharing information and resources -PPL staff receive training (as needed) on implementing a collective impact model -Library services and resources that support serving as a backbone organization are assessed -PPL staff discuss internal policies of transitioning to a backbone organization	-Program design tools -Evaluation tools -PPL policies that support collective impact -Partner selection rubric -Playbook that other libraries can use when developing collective impact projects with their communities.

A dedicated Evaluator, Linda Braun, will assist PPL in assessing the quality and effectiveness of the program to support ongoing refinement and improvement. The Evaluator will engage in mixed-method evaluation using a variety of tools--site observation, training with PPL staff and community partners, video and in-person interviews, activities, prompts, etc.--to strengthen and assess program effectiveness in regard to teen, partnership, and staff outcomes. The Evaluator will conduct extensive site visits two or three times per year and complete a final report at the end of each year with findings and suggestions. Linda has more than two decades of experience working with educational institutions on managing and evaluating projects of this type. An Evaluation Plan is attached.

LibraryU Project Model
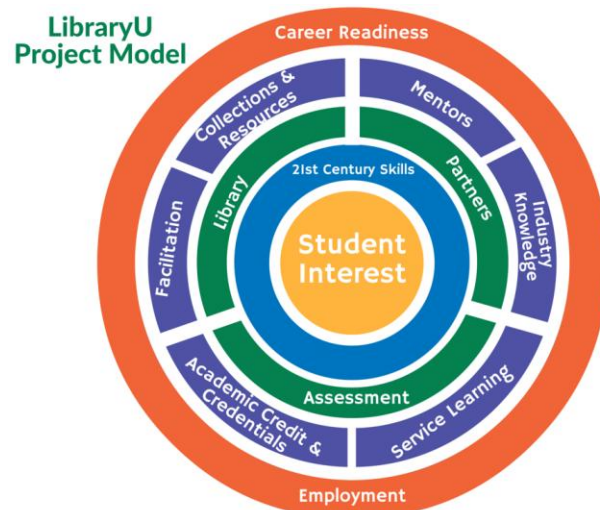
3. Project Design

The LibraryU Project Model centers on student interest and the development of 21st Century Skills through interactive and engaging programs. It matches student interest to resources within PPL's collections, and facilitates deeper exploration of the student's topic of interest through hands-on interaction and manipulation of collection items. Technology is integrated throughout the Model to both learn and practice new technology skills and to enhance learning. In this model, PPL serves as facilitator, resource provider, assessor, curriculum developer and backbone organization. PPL will facilitate the recruitment of multi-sector partners to mentor teens and to provide knowledge that will inform the design of LibraryU. Additionally, PPL and partners will develop assessments to provide students with academic credit, digital credentials and/or service learning opportunities. The result of this collaboration is a well prepared group of teens with skills to enter the workforce.

LibraryU has four key objectives:
- Establish the library as the backbone organization in the collective impact for education and workforce development for teens in Rhode Island;
- Develop youth-driven and-centered competency-based programming responsive to the school and community context that will create, expand and connect teens to workforce development opportunities;
- Create a shared, scalable and replicable framework that harnesses library collections and resources, community partners, and mentoring that is driven by student interest and aligned to education and workforce development standards with measurable outcomes; and
- Build a data-driven case of the library's critical role in education and workforce development for teens.

LibraryU will use evidence-based best practices in education and workforce development including use of IMLS' '21st Century Skills' framework, connected learning principles such as peer- and mentor-support and project based learning. A variety of learning formats that match student-interest and competencies will be utilized from informal and self-exploration options to more formal courses and workshops. Academic partners will advise on the requirements for the creation of learning options to qualify for academic credit. In addition, activities will be planned of varying intensity and times to

make the learning accessible to a wide range of teens. Programs with longer time commitments will include stipends for students. Skills, partners and assessments will be selected based on the interests identified by teens. Project cycles on particular themes/interests such as IT will vary in length and can be overlapping.
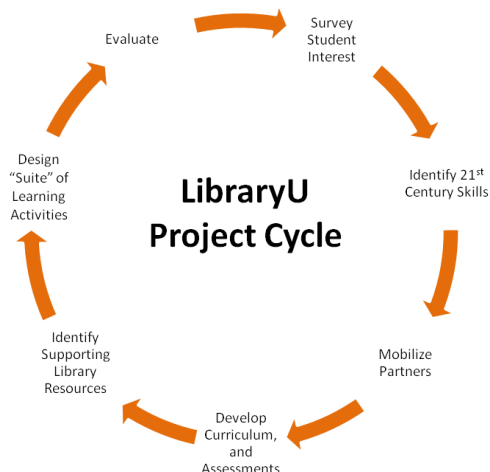
The LibraryU model will replicate PPL's current and established practice of lending materials--including wifi hotspots and technology devices--to students enrolled in LibraryU. Teens will be able to check out a variety of technology tools to extend their learning and ability to practice their skills

during their tenure with LibraryU. Libraries have the unique internal system capacity to lend a variety of materials.

As LibraryU matures, teens will be engaged in service learning opportunities where they can apply their skills to serve the community. Teens will "take their show on the road" and go to retirement centers, adult literacy organizations, public housing and other locations to share their expertise, gain real-world experience, practice leadership and team building skills and teach underserved populations. These "Pop-Up LibraryU's" will be equipped with technology including internet access to help community members gain education and workforce skills. Service learning often requires tremendous coordination. In this model, partners will only be required to provide the space and recruitment of participants and LibraryU teens will teach and share their knowledge.

Digital credentials and badging is a critical aspect of LibraryU. Building on the work of LRNG, PPL will create or identify digital credentials that are aligned to defined skills, competencies, and assessment rubrics to provide clarity, motivation, and portfolio building artifacts for teens. For employers, credentials and badges help communicate teens' capabilities. These credentials also enable clearer measurement of outcomes than have typically been tracked by library programs. The Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment (www.digitalliteracyassessment.com) and Credly.com, a free online service that allows nonprofits to create digital badges for learners, will allow teens to earn credentials for demonstrated competence. Northstar consists of the following modules: Basic Computer Use, Internet, Windows Operating System, Mac OS, Email, Microsoft Word, Social Media, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and Information Literacy. Northstar is offered in 27 states and territories with 225 sponsor sites across the nation. Locally, the Office of Multiple Pathways at the Rhode Island Department of Education, uses Northstar as a tool for improving digital literacy skills. The Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services, supports Northstar and has made it available to libraries across the state. A digital badge or certificate can be earned by 85% successful completion of each Northstar module (Northstar, 2014). PPL will leverage and utilize readily available digital badges and micro-credentials that align to the IMLS 21st Century Skills. PPL will also create digital badges using Credly to demonstrate achievements that are unique to LibraryU - both badges that signify skill knowledge as well as behavioral successes.

PPL has a vast network of local, state and national partners upon which to leverage for LibraryU. Partners will be utilized as members of a LibraryU Project Team and Advisory Council. Additional public and charter K-12 schools and other partners will join the effort over time based on teen interest and the theme identified. The state's extensive youth center system will be utilized. The project's objectives, activities and roles of partners is detailed below:

Establish the library as the backbone organization in the collective impact for education and workforce development for teens in Rhode Island	
Activities	Roles of Partners
-Inform PPL team of expectations for serving as a backbone organization -Recruit and convene multi-sector partners -Convene partners regularly and establish shared vision and measurements	-Inform about gaps in existing workforce and education systems for teen workforce development and how LibraryU can have maximum impact -Share information about resources and services -Commit to shared vision and mission for LibraryU

-Establish a project Advisory Council with local and national representation -Plan and coordinate LibraryU	
Develop youth-driven and-centered competency-based programming responsive to the school and community context that creates, expands and connects teens to workforce development opportunities	
Activities	Roles of Partners
-Assess interests and needs of teens for education and workforce development services -Develop detailed but flexible project-based curricula that encompasses connected learning -Incorporate library resources -Deliver learning experiences and workforce exposure -Pair teens with mentors -Align some LibraryU activities to qualify for academic credit -Coordinate service learning opportunities in community -Identify credential opportunities and award digital credentials/badges	-Recruit and select teen participants -Provide instruction based on their area of expertise (such as soft skills, career-readiness, arts, technology, etc) -Identify and offer incentives such as food, gift cards, and special events -Setup internships, mock interview, mentors and job shadow opportunities -Align with school curriculum and service learning requirements -Define skills and competencies that align to school curriculum and eligibility for credit -Inform LibraryU of industry knowledge for employment
Create a shared, scalable and replicable framework that harnesses library collections and resources, community partners, and mentoring that is driven by student interest and aligned to education and workforce development skills with measurable outcomes	
Activities	Roles of Partners
-Conduct outcomes-based evaluation -Disseminate scalable program framework via communication partners -Utilize traditional and social media channels to communicate LibraryU progress	-Provide participant "success" stories -Contribute to the design and ongoing assessment of LibraryU
Build a data- driven case of the library's critical role in education and workforce development for teens.	
Activities	Roles of Partners
-Capture education and workforce outcomes for participants -Identify shared measures for LibraryU -Analyze data from partners -Conduct ongoing outreach and communication to project partners, collaborators, and key constituents.	-Submit data for project's data dashboard -Discuss and analyze data to inform project -Advocate for policies that support LibraryU -Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support LibraryU

4. Diversity Plan

PPL will reach out and engage teens from low-income and diverse communities by partnering with schools such as ACE who primarily serve teens from low-income, diverse families and backgrounds.

Providence is home to five institutions of higher learning, numerous private and charter K-12 schools, and 47 public schools serving more than 30,000 students. As RI's largest public library, PPL provides services and resources statewide with patrons coming from Providence and the surrounding metro area.

One of PPL's guiding goals for LibraryU is to create an education program that is as accessible to the public as possible. By its design, LibraryU will cater to the needs of low-income and underserved groups and help address their achievement gaps through providing education opportunities that are free, centrally located at PPL's urban downtown location, easily accessible by public transportation, flexible and provide access to technologies, resources, and tools that may otherwise not be readily available to these students. Partners representing diverse constituencies will not only identify teens to participate in LibraryU but also connect to diverse employers, teachers, mentors, and other professionals that can serve as role models.

5. Project Resources: Personnel, Time, Budget

The project will be organized to address PPL serving as the backbone organization for a diverse set of partners. There will be a ongoing PPL Project Team and Advisory Council. Core Team members are selected based on the areas of teen interest and resources related to the career sector identified and may change for each cycle of Library U. PPL staff will lead in the six functions of a backbone organization.

LibraryU PPL Project Team	LibraryU Proposed Core Team	LibraryU Proposed Advisory Council
- PPL Director: Jack Martin - Interim Director of Education: Karisa Tashjian - Teen Librarian: Shannon Lake - Partnerships and Engagement Coordinator: TBD - Technology Trainers/Support (3): Don Gregory, Remmy Villacis and TBD - Director of IT and AskRI: Beatrice Pulliam - Head Curator of Collections: Jordan Goffin - Project Evaluator: Linda Braun *Confirmed supporter of LibraryU	- Selected members of the LibraryU PPL Project Team - ACE* - AS220* - Corporate partners - IntraCity Geeks* - Roger Williams University* - School One* - University of Rhode Island* - State youth center(s)	- Citizens Bank* - City of Providence (ex-officio)* - Digital Media & Learning Research Hub (ex-officio) - Mobile Beacon - Providence Community Libraries: Cheryl Space, Youth Services Coordinator - Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Multiple Pathways* - Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services: Karen Mellor, Chief* - Rhode Island Society of Technology Educators: John Bilotta, Director* - Roger Williams University: Jamie Scurry, Dean, School of Continuing Education* - Teen representatives (2) - United Way - Workforce Solutions of

		Providence/Cranston*

A newly formed Partnerships and Engagement Coordinator will be key in establishing sustainable long term partnerships with collective impact partners which will include public libraries, schools, higher education institutions, employers, state agencies, philanthropic and community organizations and others. The Coordinator will actively recruit partners to join the LibraryU effort, help manage the project and document LibraryU best practices for dissemination. The Coordinator position is a long-term position and will be key in acting as PPL's liaison between the library's programs and impactful lasting community relationships.

The Project Team will be supported by additional PPL staff including the Associate Director, Aaron Peterman; the Director of Finance, Carinda Palumbo; and the Director of Marketing, Tonia Mason. The Core Team will meet at least biweekly via conference call, webinar, or meeting. During project startup and the evaluation phase, the Core Team will meet more frequently. The Advisory Council will convene monthly to review progress, provide recommendations and make connections for the project. Resumes are attached for all named personnel.

PPL proposes a three years of funding with a May 2016 start date in order to synchronize with school schedules. This will allow 4 months startup time to design and implement teen input and partnership development; establish direct service and support roles, resources and protocols; and organize the Project Team and Advisory Council. With the support of the Advisory Council, the Core Project Team will continually assess and improve their service delivery models throughout the project with the goal of maximizing outcomes for teens. Analysis and evaluation will take place throughout the effort, as will communications and dissemination activities. Learnings from the project will be collected and documented throughout the grant period.

PPL is requesting grant funding of $559,098 for LibraryU with a cost share of $1,431,076 from PPL and partners' budgets. The cost share does not reflect LibraryU's leverage of other youth workforce development initiatives such as the state's Youth Centers, the state's Children's Cabinet and the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Action --all of which will benefit this effort. The majority of the program budget will be expended to design, develop, and disseminate a nationally replicable program.

6. Communications Plan
LibraryU's communication plan has four objectives: (i) to recruit and allow teen participants to communicate and share their experiences with each other and the community; (ii) to facilitate partner and project information sharing; (iii) to highlight LibraryU's activities for advocacy and dissemination and (iv) to ensure a strong feedback loop from stakeholders. LibraryU will use existing PPL web platform and channels for information dissemination and project presence. A more robust, web platform will be developed and dedicated for LibraryU students to share their feedback and experiences. A free online project management tool will be chosen in conjunction with partners to coordinate project documents and schedules. Extensive consideration will be on sharing best practices and information about LibraryU with a wide and diverse audience. PPL will utilize its robust website and social media presence. Students' digital creations will provide content for publicizing and sharing about LibraryU.

Partners will leverage their networks for disseminating and giving updates about LibraryU. Print based materials will also be utilized. A logo and overall styling guide will be developed for the project to ensure a recognized "brand." Importantly, all partners will highlight these logos on their own websites and materials. Staff will also collect and highlight stories with photos/video about specific students, activities and partners.

Underlying all project communications will be a strong emphasis on transparency. A live-data project dashboard will be shared among partners' websites and on PPL's. In PPL's role as a backbone organization is the function to affect policy and build good will. Strategies related to fulfilling these functions will be developed with partners. Two of PPL's key allies in communication will be the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a national association of librarians, library workers and advocates whose mission is to expand and strengthen library services for teens and the Digital Media & Learning Hub at the University of California, Irvine. PPL will participate in ongoing dialogue with both YALSA and Digital Media & Learning Hub at the University of California Irvine as well as other partners.
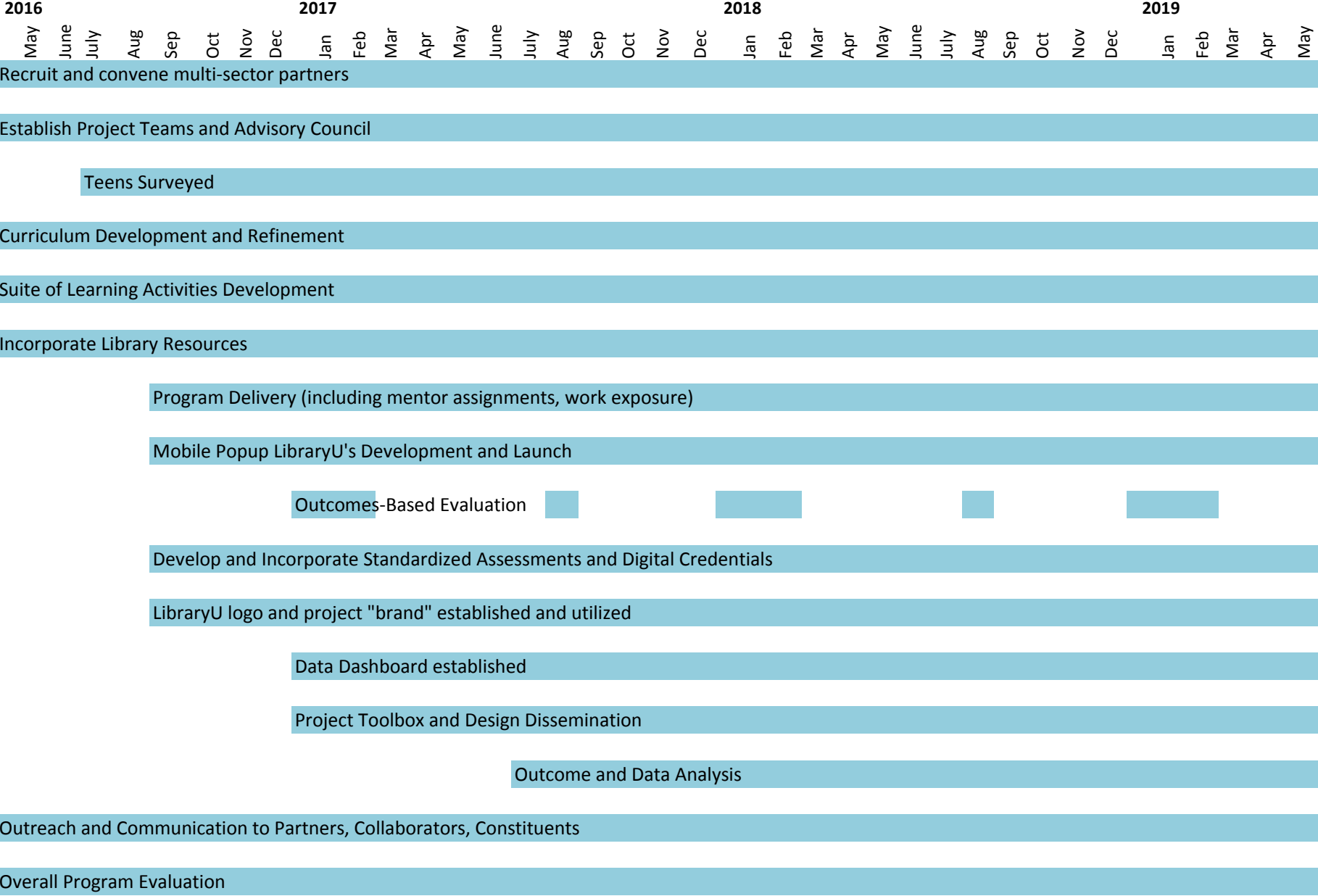
LibraryU leaders will attend, and, when possible, present at library conferences such as ALA and the YALSA Symposium, as well as non-library-specific gatherings such as the Digital Media & Learning conference, MozFest, Museums on the Web and various workforce development events. PPL will work with education innovators such as Connected Learning TV to share findings and create webinars and conference programs/panels for the national and international community.

7. Sustainability

Developing and implementing a program model such as LibraryU is a key priority in PPL's 2014 Strategic Plan, *Think Again,* and the cornerstone of PPL's efforts to grow and adapt to the community's evolving needs and its role as a library of the 21st century. LibraryU is a powerful model that aligns to PPL's goals of: (i) developing learning initiatives for maximum user value and impact; (ii) growing PPL as a network; (iii) increasing library use and engagement through outreach and relationship building; (iv) becoming a place that represents transformation and innovation; and (v) enhancing the digital library as adjunct to program activities. Over the past two years, PPL has begun the process of hiring and appointing new staff to support these expansions--including a Director of Technology, Director of Education, and Development team--and is committed to sustaining this important initiative beyond the scope of the grant period through a combination of PPL operational funds, individual donor support, public, private, and corporate grants and partner contributions.

The program will yield a model for ongoing programs at PPL, as well as a national model for teen workforce development programming and collective impact. Libraries in Rhode Island and nationwide will have the program tools and guidance needed to replicate the program. Following on the interest and success of ALL Access for buy-in and interest from the library field, LibraryU meets a need in the field for a practical, effective model for collective impact combined with teen programming. This project also gives attention of how to grow and sustain partnerships across varied institutions. The purpose of a collective impact model is to enact systemic change and this project shows libraries how to be central to that change. **LibraryU, while focused on teens, will serve as a prototype for future programs for other audiences and in other content areas. T**he ultimate vision is to make the library a key partner on the collective impact for positive education and workforce outcomes.**

Providence Public Library
LibraryU - Schedule of Completion

2016　　　　　　　　**2017**　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**2018**　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**2019**

May June July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May June July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May June July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May

Recruit and convene multi-sector partners

Establish Project Teams and Advisory Council

Teens Surveyed

Curriculum Development and Refinement

Suite of Learning Activities Development

Incorporate Library Resources

Program Delivery (including mentor assignments, work exposure)

Mobile Popup LibraryU's Development and Launch

Outcomes-Based Evaluation

Develop and Incorporate Standardized Assessments and Digital Credentials

LibraryU logo and project "brand" established and utilized

Data Dashboard established

Project Toolbox and Design Dissemination

Outcome and Data Analysis

Outreach and Communication to Partners, Collaborators, Constituents

Overall Program Evaluation

With the support of an IMLS National Leadership Project Grant, the Providence Public Library (PPL) will establish LibraryU, a premier, high-impact, open source education initiative for the Rhode Island youth community and beyond, serving as a nationally replicable, scalable model to promote and facilitate Learning in Libraries. LibraryU will provide teens and young adults with measurable, marketable skills in a variety of STEAM disciplines, giving them a competitive advantage as they prepare to enter higher education and the workforce. PPL will create engaging, interest-based education programs where 21st century learning experiences take place through the confluence of technology, personal interests, academia, expert educators, mentors, and unique library collections. Community partnerships will help connect the students with mentors, job and internship opportunities, academic credit, and more. Programming will ultimately be expanded to serve younger children, adults, and seniors, providing accessible opportunities for creative exploration, skill building, artistic growth, and professional and personal development across a broad age spectrum. LibraryU builds on the success of IMLS's Learning Labs grant program, as well as PPL's successful IMLS-funded Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL) Access program (www.allaccessri.org) and Teen Tech Squad, seed funded through IMLS by a Library Services and Technology Act/Library of Rhode Island grant and now entering its third cycle at PPL.

Providence is home to five institutions of higher learning, numerous private and charter K-12 schools, and 47 public schools serving more than 30,000 students. While it is also home to many afterschool programs for elementary- and middle-school youth, fewer afterschool learning experiences for high school students exist. With over 112,000 square feet of space in the heart of downtown Providence with nearby access to arts, educational, and cultural partners, PPL is poised to become the afterschool learning hub for the thousands of students in its near vicinity, as well as the rest of Providence and Rhode Island.

LibraryU is an expansion of our successful collaborative program model for Providence teens, Teen Tech Squad, piloted at PPL in 2014. The Teen Tech Squad focused on cultivating teen interest in the history of their community by teaching research, curatorial and coding skills. Participants were instructed by community partners; The Rhode Island Historical Society (RIHS), Providence Preservation Society, and Brown University's Public Humanities Department. Collaborators provided content expertise and shared information with teens about what researchers in the future will be looking for and how to document that today. Teens conducted local history research using the library's Rhode Island Collection. Equipped with IPads, teens explored PPL's collections, built exhibition websites (http://tech.pplspc.org/), took walking tours and honed their presentation skills at an RIHS gallery night by presenting their work to the public. The success of the first Teen Tech Squad cycle precipitated additional iterations offered in summer 2015 and fall 2015 and more to come.

With a reputation as a statewide leader, diverse partnerships, and an expansive and easily accessible downtown location, PPL has the ideal conditions for this project's success. Our Board has committed to establishing LibraryU as a model of engaging, hands-on programming, collaboration, and communities of practice that embodies all the qualities of a vibrant library of the future. Technology offerings will be strategic and informed by curricula design. As our pilot efforts and vision for the fully scaled program evolve, we are putting increased focus on building statewide partnerships with education providers, nonprofits, employers, and other key groups, which will have manifold benefits. It will enable us to strengthen and broaden our recruitment process, engage low-income and at-risk youth and provide access to technology and education resources they may not otherwise have, facilitate the offering of diverse learning experiences in a way that is cost effective and leverages existing resources among collaborators, connect curricula and skill development with the needs of local employers and create structured internship and job placement pathways, increase persistence among teens, and better incentivize and celebrate their accomplishments (i.e. linking school credit or volunteer hours with program completion). We will recruit mentors by drawing on community assets who are invested in and enthusiastic about the work we do--college students, artists, nonprofit leaders--in order to provide sustainable ongoing support and guidance for the teens, while also developing pathways for program graduates to return as mentors. We will also foster national partnerships with libraries to disseminate our

curricula and best practices and to aid in establishing similar accessible public education initiatives throughout the country.

Establishing innovative education programs, technology labs, and makerspaces at PPL while developing strategic city- and statewide partnerships will transform PPL into an integral community resource where organizations can collaborate, host their programs and classes, expand their own curriculum offerings, and increase familiarity and comfort with PPL among their constituents, thus exposing formerly disengaged audiences to all that libraries have to offer. Our vision for LibraryU in Year 3 and beyond is to build a rich continuum of programming for all ages and skill levels at varying degrees of commitment and intensity—from informal, autonomous exploration in our labs, to day-long technology skill workshops, to full university-style courses, which can then be combined to create specializations that are perfectly tailored to each patron's goals, interests, and needs--and to do so through an accessible, sustainable program model that is replicable and realistic for other libraries to implement nationwide.

Proposed project activities include: (i) building and leveraging partnerships with K-12 and higher educational institutions and agencies, businesses, nonprofits, government leaders, and the community to mobilize learning resources. This includes leveraging existing curricula and certifications to realize cost efficiencies and wider recognition of learning; (ii) developing a dedicated Advisory Board with members representing a variety of organizations and businesses in order to inform curriculum, foster networking and mentoring opportunities, and provide ongoing program support and insight; (iii) creating robust metrics to measure the impact of programming, including developing informal and formal skill assessments so that programs are designed around patron needs and learning is measured; (iv) providing training for library staff into new connected learning models; (v) developing an online platform for tracking individual achievement which could include digital badging; (vi) explicitly creating "learning pathways" that link youth to learning opportunities both inside and outside the library so they continue on a path of lifelong learning; (vii) tying learning experiences to PPL collections wherever possible; and (viii) leveraging technology as a learning tool.

The overall goals of this transformation of PPL's programming and space are: (i) to create premier, free learning opportunities that result in long lasting and positive changes for individuals; (ii) to mobilize partners to leverage resources and knowledge that will impact lifelong learning; (iii) to implement tools such as digital badges that track and measure short and long term impact; (iv) to develop natural pathways for libraries to become active partners in the state and country's workforce and educational landscape, especially (but not solely) as it pertains to youth; and (v) to create a model for Learning in Libraries that can be easily scaled up and replicated among libraries nationally.

This IMLS grant will spearhead the evolution of the new PPL. PPL's Board and Foundation Board of Trustees have fully committed to the library's new direction of high impact programming as evidenced in the acceptance of PPL's Strategic Plan. PPL's Director, Jack Martin, brings with him a wealth of experience and relationships related to this project, and our Teen Educator, Shannon Lake, has been working since early 2015 to expand the Teen Tech Squad program and develop partnerships in support of this work. The estimated budget requested from IMLS over three years is $500,000. Funds will provide support for the staffing of a new education design and implementation team and our existing Teen Educator, as well as staff certification, training, and marketing. It will also support our collaboration with an evaluator who, using a developmental approach, will facilitate real-time feedback to program staff and help develop metrics and assessment strategies for measuring the impact of our programs. Additionally, this budget will support the purchase of critical program supplies and equipment/technology to outfit our lab with the tools necessary to provide hands-on educational experiences, and stipends/honoraria for workshop consultants, mentors, and trainers providing instruction and curriculum advisement as necessary.