

Digital Stewardship Training Courses for TALMs and Small Public Libraries

In partnership with Washington State University (WSU), OCLC respectfully requests \$249,168 toward an 18-month Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian project grant to create a set of self-paced courses and accompanying facilitation guides from the Tribal Digital Stewardship Training program and related open educational resources developed by WSU's Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation. The resulting 13 hours of continuing education courses will be freely and broadly accessible to tribal archive, library, and museum (TALM) staff and small public library staff, through WebJunction and the Sustainable Heritage Network (SHN).

Statement of Need

Over the past six years and with funding from IMLS, WSU's Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation (CDSC) has led 4 cohorts totaling 46 staff from 24 TALM institutions through its yearlong Tribal Digital Stewardship Cohort Training (TDSCT) program.¹ In addition, the CDSC's Sustainable Heritage Network (SHN) has collected an abundance of self-directed resources—curriculum, short tutorials, guides, and templates—for use by TALMs. This successful continuing education initiative is in its scaling phase of maturity, seeking sustainable methods for extending the training to more TALM learners and reach a new audience of public library staff. By adapting the existing training resources into an openly accessible set of self-paced courses, the project meets the need for TALM institutions to train their staff on digital stewardship, connect to much-needed professional development, and grow TALM professionals as peer mentors. By extending the courses to public libraries, the project addresses an important training need documented in the IMLS-funded 2017 OCLC Research Report, *Advancing the National Digital Platform: The State of Digitization in US Public and State Libraries*, which states that 61.4% of public libraries identified insufficient staff training/expertise as a major barrier to their digitization efforts.²

Project Goals

This project will advance the goals of the National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives category of the LB21 program by (1) increasing public library and TALM staff knowledge and skills around the life cycle of digital stewardship and each stage of collaborative curation, ethical stewardship of culturally sensitive collections, and how to work with cultural heritage professionals and tribal communities; (2) expanding access to digital stewardship continuing education to more TALM and small, rural public library staff; and (3) supporting peer mentoring and collaborative learning among TALM and public library staff.

Project Design

This project is a strategic collaboration between OCLC's WebJunction and WSU's CDSC that aligns WebJunction's demonstrated expertise with designing and delivering online learning at scale for under-resourced small, rural public library staff, with CDSC's demonstrated expertise with digital stewardship, collaborative curation, and training for underserved TALM staff. WebJunction Senior Program Manager Dale Musselman will lead the project and work closely with the WSU team led by CDSC Director Dr. Kim Christen.

Deliverable 1: Set of self-paced courses (September 2020–October 2021)

Drawing from the CDSC's Tribal Digital Stewardship training and related open education resources, the project team will produce 13 hours of self-paced online courses that cover the digital stewardship life cycle, with learning paths covering both TALM and non-tribal library cultural needs and values; plus an overview module. The courses will be divided into modules that will allow learners to choose their point of entry depending on their learning needs, goals, and existing skills and experience. Learning assessments will be built for each course. The courses will be hosted in the [WebJunction](#) Course Catalog and the SHN portal; both are free for

¹ For more information on WSU's Tribal Digital Stewardship Cohort Training program, which supports the educational and curatorial needs of tribal archives, libraries, and museums see: <https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded/re-85-17-0115-17>.

² Morgan, Kendra, and Merrilee Proffitt. 2017. *Advancing the National Digital Platform: The State of Digitization in US Public and State Libraries*. Dublin, Ohio: OCLC Research. <https://doi.org/10.25333/C3WK8F>.

learners at any library to use, at any time. The courses will be promoted to public libraries across the U.S. through WebJunction and OCLC communication channels, and to TALM institutions through SHN and WSU channels. WebJunction will host an introductory webinar for public libraries and will attend the 2021 Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) Conference to raise awareness of the topic and the availability of the courses.

Deliverable 2: Facilitation Guides (September 2021–December 2021)

Two facilitation guides, one for public library and one TALM staff, will be designed to support staff who want to guide groups of their peers who take the self-paced courses together. The completed guides will be published as downloadable files to the WebJunction and SHN websites. WebJunction will host a free webinar to introduce the facilitation guide for public libraries; the webinar recording will be accessible on WebJunction for future viewing. WSU's SHN will host two free webinars that will provide a step-by-step overview of the topic, training courses, and the facilitation guide for TALM staff; the recording will be posted to SHN's portal.

Deliverable 3: Evaluation (January 2021–February 2022)

With consultation from a third-party consultant, the project team will develop an evaluation plan to measure indicators of success for each of the project goals described above. The project will create learner assessments for the self-paced courses; collect and analyze self-paced course enrollment and usage data through the end of the project; gather feedback from facilitators about their readiness to lead peer learning cohorts; and produce a final formative and summative evaluation report.

Broad impact

The near-term outcome for the TALM and public library staff who complete the courses will be their **strengthened capacity** to manage and conduct digital stewardship, and participate in or lead collaborative curation of cultural collections. Those staff who participate in or lead peer learning circles with the course will have peer mentors to draw upon as they initiate digital stewardship projects. The longer-term impact of applying this increased capacity toward digital stewardship activities will be **increased public access** to diverse collections and cultural heritage materials.

Diversity Plan

This project will continue WSU's aim to serve the needs of TALM staff marginalized by large-scale national projects and professional organizations that do not recognize their sovereign status, unique historical role and collections, limited resources and infrastructure, and training needs. The courses will center tribal protocols, goals, and values, as the starting place for building policies, workflows, and curation. The project will seek ways to represent and amplify the practitioner voices from past TDSCT cohorts into the courses. As with previous TDSCT work, this project will coordinate with key professional organizations, including ATALM, the Society of American Archivists' Native American Roundtable, the American Indian Library Association, and the Tribal College Libraries Institute, to reach a wide TALM audience. Several organizations have already provided positive response to this proposal; we will request letters of support if invited to submit a full proposal. WebJunction will draw on its expertise with and reach to small and rural libraries to ensure that the courses are relevant to their practice and sensitive to their needs and capacity; and will represent the project at the 2021 ARSL Conference to raise awareness of key issues and concepts in digital stewardship and collaborative curation, and to promote the courses as a professional development opportunity to that audience.

Budget

The requested \$249,168 in funds will be used toward project team salaries and fringe (\$235,598) for the 18-month period; honoraria for subject matter experts (\$2,500); evaluation consultant (\$5,000); ARSL conference travel (\$1,800); Moodle hosting (\$2,500), course authoring software (\$1,500), and closed captioning for WebJunction webinars (\$270). The partners will contribute an additional \$125,847 in cost share.

OCLC and WSU are grateful for the opportunity to propose this project, and we look forward to your review.