

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) seeks funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to fund a national diversity recruitment and development program, the ARL Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence. The goal of the project is to provide practical field experience in libraries and archives to undergraduate or graduate students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups with training and expertise in disciplines outside of master of library and information science. ARL will serve as the lead applicant for this project. Project institutional partners—drawn largely from ARL member organizations from throughout the United States—will be recruited for this project based on the geographic locations (place of residence) of the participants (fellows). The ARL fellows will be selected by a competitive application process. The project will provide numerous continuing education opportunities for the fellows to explore possible career options in the library and information science field, as well as training in diversity, inclusion, and social justice topics.

For more than a decade, the LIS literature has been signaling a change in hiring trends in public and academic libraries. In 2006, Neal noted an increase in hiring in academic libraries of professionals with credentials other than the MLIS and predicted that the trend would continue as libraries evolve to meet information needs in the digital environment.¹ The year prior to this, controversy erupted when the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) established its post-doctoral fellowships in academic libraries.² In 2015, a five-year study of position descriptions posted to the ARL Jobs and Residencies website confirmed that there had been a steady rise in positions that did not require the MLIS or that required no formal LIS education.³ Alongside this trend is the persistent low representation of people from racial and ethnic minorities in the LIS profession. Although the American Library Association (ALA) reports static percentages of historically underrepresented groups in the last two decades, data from ARL provide evidence of slow, but steady improvement in the sample of research libraries and archives it represents.⁴

It's at the nexus of these emerging trends that ARL proposes the establishment of the ARL Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence. Although the project intersects across several agency goals, it aligns with IMLS' project category three: Curating Collections. It does so in its projected performance goals of "increasing capacity to create, preserve, manage, and provide access to digital library collections across the country." Moreover, program participants will have opportunities to be trained in the areas of "preservation, conservation, access, and stewardship of digital collections [including data] and, as appropriate, the synergy with physical collections."⁵ The program also supports agency goals in recruiting and developing a diverse library and archives workforce.

The ARL Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence will replicate the design of other successful ARL diversity recruitment and development programs with notable enhancements. The program components will include:

- A one-year, paid internship position in research libraries and archives.
 - Placements will focus on emerging roles in research libraries and archives in a digital environment, including (but not limited to): digital asset management, digital archives, user experience and assessment of digital resources, data information literacy, digital humanities

¹ James G. Neal, "Raised by Wolves: Integrating the New Generation of Feral Professionals into the Academic Library," *Library*

² For more information, see: <https://www.clir.org/fellowships/postdoc>.

³ Mark A. Puente, "Job Trends 2010–2015," Presented at the Columbia University Libraries Colloquium, March 20, 2015.

⁴ American Library Association, "Diversity Counts 2009–2010 Update," <http://www.ala.org/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/2009-2010Update>, (Accessed on August 30, 2016); Association of Research Libraries, *Annual Salary Survey, 2013–2014*, <http://publications.arl.org/ARL-Annual-Salary-Survey-2013-2014/>, (Accessed on August 30, 2016).

⁵ Institute of Museum and Library Services, Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program – FY17 Notice of Funding Opportunity.

and scholarship, data curation and visualization, and other areas. Rotations may be developed to expose the fellows to multiple functional areas of the library or archives.

- Leadership and career development and other continuing education opportunities provided by attendance at the annual ARL Leadership Symposium (held during the ALA Midwinter meeting) as well as a series of synchronous, online meetings throughout the fellowship year. A portion of the training will include topics such as diversity in LIS, critical race theory, managing micro-aggressions in the workplace, and related topics.
- A mentorship program that pairs student interns (fellows) with peer groups, library and information science professionals from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups, and professionals with similar areas of subject and domain expertise. The program will pilot a non-dyad mentorship model and will be supported by a Visiting Program Officer at ARL.
- A capstone institute where the cohort is brought together for additional professional development, community building, and to report out on internship outputs.

This project will introduce diverse undergraduate and graduate students from outside of the LIS discipline to work and culture of the contemporary research library and archive. The project will expose participants to emerging professional roles and services offered by these types of organizations and will provide a platform to explore possible points of entry into the profession. Recruitment of fellows will focus on students with subject, domain, or functional expertise that is needed in the digital information environment. The ARL Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence will recruit, support, and develop a total of 30 students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups—10 per year for the three years of the grant. The project will serve as a model and a possible stepping-stone for possible integration into ARL’s comprehensive diversity and inclusion portfolio. ARL’s director of diversity and leadership programs, Mark A. Puente, will manage the project, assisted by the ARL administrative team. Puente has managed several successful IMLS funded diversity recruitment programs including collaborations with the Music Library Association and the Society of American Archivists. An advisory group will be established to guide the project. This group will be commissioned by the ARL Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (DAIC) and populated by library and archives professionals from throughout the country. Members of the DAIC or their designates will serve as the selection committee.

The total cost of the project in the proposed budget is \$797,757: \$519,103 requested from IMLS, with \$278,654 in cost share contributed by ARL and by the partner institutions (internship hosts). In the personnel category, \$38,882 of IMLS funds will be drawn down to cover dedicated portions of salaries of full-time, permanent staff, including the project director (14.2% of the director’s time or five hours per week) and the administrative team, (ten hours per week or the equivalent of 28.5% of one FTE with duties distributed across four permanent staff). Fringe benefits are calculated at the rate 29% of salaries at \$63,141 for the three-year grant. \$10,100 is allocated toward supplies and materials, with ARL and partners absorbing \$4,750 of those expenses. Student support is, by far, the largest cost category with \$416,400 of IMLS funds largely dedicated to internship stipends as well as travel support for the Leadership Symposium and for the capstone Institute. Students will also receive support to join national LIS professional organizations that align with their interests (\$1000 a year for three years). The budget includes \$800 per year for workshop materials for the ARL Leadership Symposium as well as the final capstone Institute. Indirect costs for the program are 10% of all budget categories minus student support: \$9,337 requested from IMLS, \$25,332 in cost share, for a total of \$34,669.

The objective of the ARL Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence is to expose students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups to the LIS profession and the opportunity to explore employment opportunities in the field. The project will extend and the national and international impact that ARL’s diversity recruitment efforts have had on the LIS profession.