Regents of the University of California / California Digital Library

Library Carpentry

1   Statement of National Need

The California Digital Library (CDL) seeks $249,554 in Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Project Grant funding in the Curating Collections category to support an 18-month effort to promote and coordinate Library Carpentry (LC) activities for Continuing Education of US librarians. LC is an international effort to provide software and data management training customized for the needs of librarians, modeled after the successful Data Carpentry (DC) and Software Carpentry (SWC) initiatives, which target faculty and student researchers.[1]

In today's highly interconnected, online, and data-driven world, all librarians, including research, Baccalaureate, and community college librarians, play a key role in supporting the diverse information needs of the scholarly enterprise. However, librarians cannot be effective in connecting scholars with information and tools without themselves understanding the nature of that information and those tools. While information needs have increasingly come to depend upon sophisticated usage of data and software, professional development for the skills needed by librarians has not kept pace. In response, the nascent LC movement began in the UK by emulating well-established, self-sustaining DC and SWC "train-the-trainer" programs.[2] Our project complements international efforts and provides focused training for US-based librarians, equipping them with the critical data and software literacy skills necessary to function and thrive in the computationally-rich environment of 21st-century information stewardship.

LC training is organized into thematic modules, with topics such as scripting, data quality assurance, statistical analysis, etc., and takes place in face-to-face workshops hosted by local libraries. Modules are made available online under a CC-BY license for self-directed study. There have been few LC opportunities so far in the US, in part due to the lack of effective coordination and outreach. Our project will produce a cohort of LC trainers; develop modules on significant topics in data and software literacy for librarians; and coordinate national outreach and planning for training opportunities. We will also provide much needed technical and organizational resources to act as a catalyst for ensuring that the US LC movement is maintained and prospers.

2   Project Design

Projects activities are organized into three focus areas:
1. Project Coordination (30%): Advocacy and outreach to the US library communities; engagement with DC, SWC, and international LC initiatives; and

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[1] https://librarycarpentry.github.io/; http://www.datacarpentry.org/; https://software-carpentry.org/

[2] J. Baker et al. (2016), "Library carpentry: Software skills training for library professionals," *LIBER Quarterly* 26(3):141–162, http://doi.org/10.18352/lq.10176.

planning instructor and practitioner training opportunities for research, Baccalaureate, and community college librarians.

2. Curriculum development (50%): Creation of an catalog of training modules; an open platform for nominating and prioritizing new module topics; and module development by individuals and through collaborative, in-person "write-a-thons."

3. Instructor Training (20%): Two training events to certify librarians as LC/DC/SWC instructors. While certification is not a requirement to train fellow practitioners in new skills, it is important at this early stage that the LC movement maintains a high level of quality in its instructor pool. A prerequisite for instructor training is a firm commitment to respond to future practitioner training requests

We will recruit an experienced project coordinator with broad expertise in library curriculum development and professional development training. CDL has already played a formative role in introducing LC to a US audience by sponsoring instructor training during the upcoming 2017 csv conference.[3] Further efforts to solidify and sustain the US LC movement require funding for dedicated coordination and outreach.

3   Diversity Plan

We will enlist the ACRL Community and Junior College Libraries Section (CJCS) and Diversity Alliance to work together to ensure participation in LC training opportunities by librarians from all sectors, particularly underserved and underrepresented institutions. While we will rely on expertise at research institutions, we will hold training events across multiple geographic regions and ensure that LC remains responsive to the needs of underserved libraries.

4   National Impact

Widespread US adoption of Library Carpentry training will provide information practitioners with the skills needed to facilitate and enhance exemplary national stewardship of library collections, as well as ensuring the continuing relevance of libraries as strong anchors for supporting research and scholarship. Our efforts will support the IMLS Learning goal through curriculum development, inclusive training opportunities, and support for communities of data and software literacy practice.

5   Budget

The total project budget is $278,267 ($249,554 IMLS funding and $28,713 CDL cost-share for the 5% FTE PI). The bulk of the funds supports a 100% FTE project coordinator ($184,345 in salary and 35.2% benefits). The remainder is for travel ($7,500), instructor training course hosting ($20,000), and Indirect costs are requested at our Federally negotiated rate 17.8% of MTDC ($37,708).

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[3] https://datapub.cdlib.org/2016/12/08/announcing-instructor-training-for-librarians/