New York University/Library Freedom Project: Privacy in Libraries

Privacy in Libraries: Partnership between New York University and Library Freedom Project
New York University (NYU), in partnership with the Library Freedom Project (LFP), seeks a two-year Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian project grant to advance the use of practical privacy tools in libraries and their communities through the development of a privacy-focused train-the-trainer program for librarians that we will call the Library Freedom Institute.

1. Statement of Need
With almost weekly revelations of massive privacy attacks (on email providers, health care companies, governmental agencies, universities, political campaigns, and other targets, including libraries), the public has developed a heightened awareness of the vulnerability of their private information. Public libraries see the need to respond to these concerns both by assuring patrons that the library is protecting their privacy, and by educating their communities about how an even wider number of privacy threats jeopardize the public. The dismal state of privacy should be of particular concern to libraries; privacy has been one of ALA's core values since 1939 and is part of the Library User's Bill of Rights. Librarians have fought vociferously against privacy violations at least since the McCarthy Era, and ALA continues to make privacy a priority through initiatives like "Choose Privacy Week". In addition, a survey in the May/June 2016 edition of *Library Technology Reports* found that only about 15% of academic and large public libraries had implemented even the very basic privacy protections for web queries (https). And UNESCO has cited the privacy provisions of Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as part of their "Promoting Freedom of Expression and Privacy on the Internet".

This project will build upon the professional values set forth by ALA, going further to give librarians the practical, 21st century skills they need to safeguard patron privacy in the digital era. LFP's highly successful privacy workshop program has trained an average of 1,500 librarians per year since 2013. We will build on that work to create an intensive program that will train librarians to take leadership roles throughout the country, giving them skills to conduct their own privacy workshops aimed both at developing more privacy-centric library practices, and at educating communities about privacy threats and steps to mitigate them.

There is a significant library and public audience wanting this type of education. The Sept 2015 Pew Report "Libraries at the Crossroads" showed that the public wants libraries to provide digital education, and named privacy/security courses in particular. After praising our draft proposal, rural Public Library Director (and *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker) Justin Hoenke writes "I would gladly encourage one of my staff to commit a small portion of their time to this opportunity." Jamie LaRue, Director of ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom, called our proposed Library Freedom Institute "complementary" to OIF's efforts.

2. Project Design
To meet the increased demand for privacy training in public libraries, we will augment the LFP's highly successful in-person workshops with NYU's experience in curriculum development and delivery. The resulting Library Freedom Institute would offer librarians the extensive training needed to serve as privacy workshop leaders in their own right. We will focus on training future trainers to create an impact-multiplier effect, working across regions, with statewide and metropolitan library organizations, and with LFP's own collaborative partners. By combining the educational experience and reputation of NYU with the subject-matter expertise and workshop experience of LFP, we will create a high-profile and effective new resource for librarians and their patrons.

The Library Freedom Institute will create a network of advanced librarian-trainers to deploy privacy education and infrastructure systematically. Participants will commit to a six-month course consisting of approximately five hours of weekly instruction and coursework, which would cover in-depth privacy issues, privacy education, and technologies. We will begin the Institute with a pilot group of ten participants using real-time two-way webinars, discussion forums, blogs, and a mailing list all as part of instructional delivery. Coursework will consist of weekly readings and hands-on assignments. Expert guest lecturers from the privacy and security world will assist our staff in creating high-quality lectures and materials. Participants will meet once in person during the six-month period for an intensive day-long workshop. At the close of the Institute, graduates will deploy their knowledge in their home libraries, with continued support from LFP. We will evaluate this pilot course with feedback from both participants and guest lecturers in order to run the cycle one more time during the IMLS grant period (this time with 30 participants), and to create a model for future Institute cycles.

3. Schedule
Our two-year work plan will consist of six months of initial planning and curriculum development, followed by six months running a pilot Institute, six months of pilot program evaluation used to revise curriculum and design the full training program, and a final six months of running the full Institute.

4. National Impact
Our project supports many aspects of the "Community Anchors" IMLS project category:

● **Developing new programs that support and engage communities**
Our project is fundamentally about participatory privacy education and systemic privacy changes in libraries, and addresses a demonstrated need in our local communities. It relies on the existing infrastructure of libraries, preparing librarians to offer local workshops for patrons, to introduce free and open source software (FOSS) that enhances privacy, and to revise internal policies and procedures to more thoroughly support the ALA's commitment to patron privacy.

● **Partnerships and educational opportunities informed by other sectors and disciplines** Collaborative partnerships are essential to this project. The ACLU currently joins LFP for privacy trainings, helping librarians understand their responsibilities regarding patron privacy, and has helped craft strong library privacy policies. LFP's existing relationship with technologists at The Tor Project help us to stay abreast of changing privacy technologies and to deploy appropriate privacy infrastructure in libraries. NYU will leverage these and its own partnerships with expert organizations to bring in guest lecturers and develop training materials.

● **Investigating widespread community challenges and communicating findings**
We are committed to adaptability. We will make all of our materials open-source so that they can be shared and redeployed in different library environments. All of these materials will be available on our website. Our privacy trainings will help create: a set of new practices for shifting the privacy paradigm in libraries, a base of trainer-librarians across the country conversant in privacy best practices, and an open-source curriculum that can be widely used and adapted.

The Library Freedom Institute will further support the IMLS agency-level goals of preparing the public to fully participate in their communities and global society, and of reinforcing public libraries as community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality. Our trainings will teach librarians to lead classes that establish the library as a place where community members can learn to use the Internet with greater confidence. This expands their opportunities to learn and interact with each other, and also helps them to be more self-reliant citizens. The Internet can be a hostile place, with ever-present threats to privacy and security. By offering privacy education, libraries can help communities engage with the digital world without sacrificing safety or autonomy. The Library Freedom Institute will help libraries distinguish themselves as privacy-protective spaces in their local communities.

5. Diversity Plan
We will specifically seek out a diverse group of librarians to train, and we are particularly committed to training librarians who work with marginalized communities. We believe that privacy is not merely a civil liberty, but is also an issue of economic and social justice, because the loss of privacy affects historically marginalized communities more deeply than it does the general population. Marginalized groups have generally had less access to discussions and resources about preventing and mitigating privacy threats. Privacy education can empower these communities to use the Internet freely and safely, and can reposition libraries as centers of privacy in the public imagination.

6. Projected goals and outcomes
●Run Library Freedom Institute twice, first as a pilot, then using pilot evaluations to revise the program for a higher target enrollment
● Evaluate and build upon these first two programs in order to create a standard for future cycles
● Develop a robust repository of privacy resources and training strategies for librarians that is fully shareable and replicable
● Build on the strong community ties that librarians already have by providing them tools and training to become local experts on privacy
● Create a cadre of librarian-trainers to assist with privacy education in libraries across the country
● Improve privacy practices within libraries
● Bolster libraries' public image by repositioning them as privacy-protective spaces in the 21st century

7. Advisory Board
We already have written commitments from a diverse group of library community leaders eager to serve on our advisory board, including: Internet Archive Director Brewster Kahle, Simmons LIS intellectual freedom professor Laura Quilter, Ferguson (MO) Public Library Director Scott Bonner, Free Ebook Foundation Director Eric Hellman, and Cherry Hill (NJ) public librarian T.J. Lamanna.

8. Budget
NYU requests IMLS support of $248,472. Direct costs for NYU total $226,680 ($37,458 for salaries & wages, $6,072 for fringe, and $183,150 for a subcontract to LFP) and F&A of $21,792 per negotiated rate (31.8% X MTDC DHHS 9/7/16). LFP's budget consists of $166,500 in direct costs ($112,500 in personnel costs inclusive of fringe, $48,000 in travel; and $6,000 in materials, supplies, and local transport) and indirect costs of $16,650 per 10% de minimis rate allowed per program guidelines.