



Museums for America

Sample Application MA-20-17-0498-17

Project Category: Community Anchors

Funding Level: \$5,000 – \$500,000

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$415,852

Amount of cost share: \$449,164

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2018 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2017 applications. This year, the maximum that may be requested from IMLS is \$250,000. Be sure to use the instructions in the FY2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

Title: Anchor for Access and Inclusion - Making the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden More Accessible and Inclusive for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

Abstract

This “Anchor for Access and Inclusion” project is designed to advance a strategic objective of the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden (CZBG) to help CZBG become the most welcoming, accessible and inclusive zoo in the country for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families. Over a three-year period from October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2020, CZBG will partner with experts in the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC), to achieve three major objectives: 1) Through working with an Advisory Council of parents, increase the number and quality of inclusive opportunities for individuals with DD and their families at the CZBG; 2) Through training and practice, increase the knowledge of CZBG’s staff and volunteers regarding DD and how to more effectively support, include, and welcome families into the zoo; and 3) Through evidence-based visual and other sensory supports, help prepare individuals with DD and their families for visits and fuller engagement at the Cincinnati Zoo.

To accomplish these objectives, CZBG and CCHMC will undertake a work plan of activities including project planning and formulation, a program of both extensive and intensive staff training for all 244 full-time CZBG staff as well as 75 seasonal employees and 50 volunteers, preparation of visual and other sensory supports, formative evaluation that will be iterative throughout the three-year process, and summative evaluation and sharing of project results. To ensure that the project is truly collaborative and responds to the needs of the community, the CZBG/CCHMC project team will begin with a day-long logic model workshop led by consultants from the Lifelong Learning Group (LLG) to define and prioritize desired outcomes for the project’s three target audiences: Families participating in the project’s Advisory Council, Zoo personnel who participate in accessibility training, and families who come to the Zoo and use the accessibility resources created by the project. Success will be evaluated by outcomes for these groups related to IMLS Community goals; for example, families on the Advisory Council will: experience the Zoo as a welcoming, inclusive place to visit; see CZBG and CCHMC as community partners in addressing accessibility issues; be able to identify their personal contributions to the Zoo’s accessibility initiatives; and feel empowered to offer feedback on community accessibility issues and support others in doing the same. Staff who participate in training will: demonstrate improved knowledge about DD and accessibility considerations; report positive change in their awareness of and attitudes about accessibility; feel more prepared to support families of children with DD, anticipate possible barriers to accessibility, and address emergent accessibility issues as they arise; and consider improved accessibility and inclusion important to their work and the activities of CZBG.

CZBG staff and volunteers who undergo training will have the opportunity to practice their new-found knowledge and skills, through a post-training simulation event in the park for an invited group of about 100 children or youth with DD and their families. Zoo Education staff will have the opportunity to present programs to a demonstration classroom at CCHMC. The project will result in the creation of tangible products including staff training modules; visual supports like enhanced signage at the Zoo, video models useful for preparing for a Zoo visit, and sensory maps – all of which will be available on the Zoo’s website as well as on site. One calming space will be created to provide quiet and the opportunity to engage in low-stimulation activities. We expect that at least two publications will result from the project.

Because the project involves such substantial training and continual improvement through post-training practice, ongoing formative evaluation and correction, we expect the project benefits to be not only sustainable but also increasing in quality, leading to an increased number of people with DD and their families who can have a fully accessible visit to the Zoo. By the end of the project period in 2020, our own core staff will have become adept in basic training and accommodating people with DD in the park. An awareness module will be instituted into “Zoo Way,” our orientation training for every new full or part-time employee to the CZBG. The sharing and dissemination of project results through local media and networks of disability organizations as well as through professional conferences and publications may also sustain project benefits by extending any discoveries we make to other museums or public venues in our Greater Cincinnati community and beyond.

Narrative: Anchor for Access and Inclusion - Making the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden More Accessible and Inclusive for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

1. Project Justification

The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden (CZBG) requests a grant of \$415,852 over three years from The Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) 2017 Museums for America program in the “Community Anchors” category to support its initiative to become more accessible and inclusive for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families. While the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provides clear guidelines for public facilities such as zoos to address accessibility for individuals with physical disabilities, the current project aims to identify ways that CZBG can broaden its accessibility efforts to be more responsive to visitors with sensory, social, or other behavioral challenges.

Serving community is one of the four specific “pillars” of CZBG’s mission as approved by the Zoo’s Board of Trustees in 2005: *“Creating Adventure, Conserving Nature, Conveying Knowledge, Serving Community.”* Founded in 1873 as the Zoological Society of Cincinnati (still its legal name), CZBG is the second oldest zoo in America and a national historic landmark. Our unique 79-acre urban site offers the public one of the most diverse collections of plants and animals in the United States, and CZBG consistently ranks as one of the top zoos in the country. Perhaps because of our longevity, our record of “firsts” in animal breeding, our hosting the Cincinnati Summer Opera for 50 years, and our award-winning education programs serving over 330,000 children annually, CZBG has been a much-beloved anchor of the Cincinnati community for many years. Over 1.6 million people visited the Zoo last year, and CZBG has the largest membership of any cultural institution in the region, with more than 58,000 households. With a central strategic objective of *“Inspiring every visitor with wildlife every day,”* we believe every child – every person – in our community should have the opportunity to have that inspiration, to experience the Cincinnati Zoo!

In the past four years, the Zoo has undertaken a strategic effort to extend access to CZBG, and this has become one of the four strategies in our new institutional Strategic Plan (*see* Strategic Plan Summary). We began by creating access for economically challenged schools through our Living Classroom Education Access Fund, which since 2012 has brought over 58,000 low-income children and their teachers to the Zoo for a free, standards-based field trip. Other initiatives with community partners continue to focus on services with and to the low-income Avondale community immediately surrounding the Zoo. Now we are ready to engage with and serve another vulnerable and under-served part of our community: people with developmental disabilities (DD).

Two city blocks from CZBG is another, and nationally renowned, community anchor – Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC), the third-ranked pediatric hospital in the nation (US News & World Report, 2016). (Citations for this and all subsequent references can be found in the supplementary document References.) For this proposed IMLS Community Anchors project, CZBG will partner with disability experts from the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) Program in the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics (DDBP) at CCHMC to train CZBG’s staff and volunteers in order to build a culture of inclusion and acceptance across the institution. Evidence-based practices will help the team develop supports that will prepare individuals with DD and their families to actively engage in safe, comfortable, and inclusive opportunities at the Zoo.

Defining the Need in Our Community

Individuals with disabilities deserve to experience the same community opportunities that are available to their peers. Community inclusion is a right, and it is the responsibility of community organizations to be active partners in promoting inclusion that works to benefit all. By failing to meet the needs of these members of our communities, we all miss out on the richness of diversity that these families and individuals represent. Families of children with DD seek “typical family outings” that are meaningful, enjoyable, and interesting to their child (Langa et al., 2013) and provide a sense of community (Kulik & Fletcher, 2016). For years, professionals have focused on preparing families for these outings, but the community itself needs preparation and training.

It is estimated that 483,467 or 17.8 percent of Ohio’s children have a special health care need (National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs, 2009-2010). Data collected by Cincinnati Public Schools, the school district where CZBG is located, indicates that 19.4 percent of its students are being served by the Ohio Department of Education as a student with a disability (CPS Building Futures Dashboard, 2016). The most recent prevalence data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network (CDC, 2016) estimates that 1 in 68 children in the United States (1.5%) have been identified with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In the state of Ohio during 2013-2014, 7.84 percent of children with disabilities ages 3-21 who received special education services were reported as having ASD (Easter Seals Inc., 2015).

Families of children with DD such as ASD are often hesitant to participate in community activities such as visiting zoos and museums due to numerous barriers, including more negative emotions when participating in these types of activities (Lam, Wong, Leung, Ho, & Au-Yeung, 2010), feelings of criticism and judgment from the general public (Kulik & Fletcher, 2016) and feelings of isolation due to a lack of understanding and empathy from the general public and staff (Thompson & Emira, 2011). There are numerous horror stories reported in the media about families with a child with a disability, like an 11-year-old girl being denied access to a museum because of concerns that her wheelchair would get the museum’s carpet dirty (Daily Mail Reporter, 2013).

What CZBG Needs in Order to Prepare

Staff Training: Not only do families desire education for community staff (Autism Speaks, 2012), staff members in various community settings have also identified this need and recognized information and training as the top supports that would encourage and assist them in serving individuals with ASD in their settings (McConkey, Mullan, & Addis, 2011). Although studies have shown that staff and volunteers are supportive of access programs, there are reported gaps in knowledge and training regarding sensory processing difficulties, behavior management strategies, and how to engage individuals with DD (Leichtman et al., 2014; Kulik & Fletcher, 2016).

Various instructional strategies have been used to train paraprofessionals to work with individuals with ASD (Rispoli, Neely, Lang, & Ganz, 2011). Training courses incorporating didactic sessions, video clips, and small group discussion focused on features of ASD, associated challenges, and strategies for managing behaviors have resulted in positive changes in staff members’ perception towards children with ASD, including increased patience, understanding, empathy and insight into their challenges (McConkey et al., 2011).

Visual Supports: Families of individuals with ASD have identified their child’s unpredictable behavior in public (Langa et al., 2013) and new places (Kulik & Fletcher, 2016) as a significant barrier to participating in community activities such as visiting museums. Visual supports, an evidence-based practice for children with ASD (National Autism Center, 2015), help individuals prepare for new situations and transition between activities. Although inclusion and accessibility literature related to ASD and museum centers including zoos is scarce, initial data do suggest that web-based visual supports can help families prepare and set clear expectations for their children with ASD. Tools such as web-based accessible pre-visit materials like sensory guides, social narratives, and other supports have been useful in preparing for and structuring a visit to museums (Langa et al., 2013; Leichtman et al., 2014). Video modeling, a mode of teaching that involves a learner viewing a video recording of a model performing a targeted behavior or skill, has been established as an evidence-based practice for teaching individuals with ASD in a variety of domains (National Professional Development Center on ASD, 2010). The use of video modeling to prepare individuals with DD for visits to zoos so that they can more fully engage in exhibits is an innovative practice that has not yet been formally investigated.

Children with ASD and other DD often demonstrate sensory processing differences that can trigger extreme responses to various stimuli including noises, lights, smells, and crowded places (Tomchek, Huebner, & Dunn, 2014), leading to unpredictable behavior and limited participation in community activities. Supports have been utilized in the past to improve museum and aquarium experiences such as the use of sensory guides and maps to define sensory qualities of an area, sensory tools and the availability of quiet spaces (Leichtman et al., 2014; Ideishi, Willock & Thach, 2010).

Community Benefits

During the three-year project period (October 2017- September 2020), this project will directly benefit the hundreds of staff and volunteers working at the CZBG by providing them with training as well as practice regarding

DD and how to better support individuals with DD in the zoo setting. This project aims to impact thousands of individuals with DD and their families who visit CZBG by developing evidence-based supports that incorporate principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Because multiple initiatives are designed to universally benefit other patrons with and without disabilities, it is difficult to summarize what could be the true impact in our community. Individuals with DD (as appropriate) and their families will be involved in the planning of all initiatives by serving on an Advisory Council that will be key to project success (described further below).

This project will address the goal of the Museums for America program of promoting museums and libraries as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality. The Museums for America grant presents a rich opportunity for collaboration between two world-class community anchors to serve individuals with DD and their families. Because of the number and diversity of its visitors, CZBG has the opportunity to influence public knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. The partnership between CZBG and CCHMC can play a critical role in training Zoo staff and increasing access to and participation in inclusive environments for individuals with DD and their families. Funding from IMLS can provide the exact inputs needed to help us open the doors to thousands of Cincinnati families to enjoy their community without barriers. Right now, access is just a dream for many families. With support from IMLS, we can help make these dreams a reality.

2. Project Work Plan

The overarching goal of the proposed project is to make the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden the most welcoming, accessible and inclusive zoo in the country for individuals with developmental disabilities. We have three **major objectives** in pursuit of this goal: **1) Through working with an Advisory Council, increase the number and quality of inclusive opportunities for individuals with DD and their families at the CZBG; 2) Through training and practice, increase the knowledge of CZBG’s staff and volunteers regarding DD and how to more effectively support, include, and welcome families into the zoo; and 3) Through evidence-based visual and other sensory supports, help prepare individuals with DD and their families for visits and fuller engagement at the CZBG.**

To accomplish these objectives, CZBG and CCHMC will undertake a work plan of activities including project planning and formulation, a program of both extensive and intensive CZBG staff training, preparation of visual and other sensory supports, formative evaluation that will be iterative throughout the three-year process, and summative evaluation and sharing of project results. (For timing and sequence of activities, *see* Schedule of Completion).

Project Planning and Formulation Activities

Research Trips: In the project’s first two months, four key CZBG and CCHMC team members will take two “best practices” research trips, each at locations with facilities that are taking a lead in creating accessibility for individuals with DD and their families. Preliminarily, these facilities include the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago (one trip), and the Nashville and Birmingham Zoos as well as Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee (second trip).

Advisory Council: Also in the project’s first two months, CCHMC partner Dr. Jen Smith will tap her extensive networks to identify and recruit 15-20 families representing different disabilities, age groups, and socioeconomic status who will agree to serve as an Advisory Council to the project over its three-year duration.

Logic Model Workshop: In January 2018, to ensure that our project is truly collaborative and responds to the needs of the community, the CZBG/CCHMC project team will hold a day-long logic model workshop led by consultants from the Lifelong Learning Group (LLG), who will also provide evaluation services for the project. In the logic model workshop, the project partners will more specifically define and prioritize the desired project outcomes in conversation with the project’s Advisory Council. As a starting point, the CZBG/CCHMC partners have identified general target outcomes related to the project objectives as follow:

Families participating in the project’s Advisory Council will...

- Experience the Zoo as a welcoming, inclusive place to visit
- See CZBG and CCHMC as community partners in addressing accessibility issues
- Be able to identify their personal contributions to the Zoo’s accessibility initiatives
- Feel empowered to offer feedback on community accessibility issues and support others in doing the same

Zoo personnel who participate in accessibility training will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate improved knowledge about DD, accessibility considerations, and UDL ▪ Report positive change in their awareness of and attitudes about accessibility considerations ▪ Feel more prepared to support families of children with DD, anticipate possible barriers to accessibility, and address emergent accessibility issues as they arise ▪ Consider improved accessibility and inclusion important to their work and the activities of CZBG
Families who use the resulting accessibility resources will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience the Zoo as a welcoming, inclusive place to visit ▪ Perceive Zoo Spaces, Interactions, and Views (cf. Heimlich, Hayde, & Bray, 2016) as offering equitable access opportunities for families of children with DD ▪ See CZBG and CCHMC as community partners in addressing accessibility issues

Training Activities for CZBG Employees, Volunteers, and Seasonal Staff

Annual Trainings: CCHMC’s Dr. Jen Smith will lead training sessions for CZBG staff and volunteers to better prepare them to engage with children and youth with DD. Topics will include facts, strengths, and challenges associated with DD; possible challenges specific to the zoo setting; and effective behavior supports. Final decisions about length, frequency, and location of these trainings will be made during the project logic modeling. For budget purposes, we have assumed that all CZBG full-time employees (244 at present) will have an annual 2-hour “basic training,” in January or February each year. Two other groups will receive the 2-hour basic training each year of the project – a select group of 75 of our approximate 250 seasonal employees, and a group of 50 key volunteers (from a total of nearly 900) who interact most closely with the visiting public or manage those who do. Lastly, a group of 11 key full-time staff who interact closely with visitors will have an annual all-day intensive training.

In all cases, CZBG staff and volunteers participating in training will complete a pre- and post-knowledge assessment regarding DD and effective and inclusive strategies in facilitation for audiences with these disabilities immediately before and immediately following completion of the training session. This instrument will consist of 20 multiple choice questions covering topics introduced in the training session. Evaluation of the training will also ask participating CZBG staff and volunteers to respond to the predetermined IMLS Performance Measure Statements for community projects, as well as to the more project-specific evaluation criteria developed by LLG.

Post-training Simulation Event: The six members of the project team, the 11 key staff who have had the intensive all-day training, as well as many of the 244 full time employees, 75 seasonal staff, and 50 volunteers will get the opportunity to participate in a 2-hour post-training “practice” event at CZBG, of about 100 people recruited by CCHMC representing multiple developmental disabilities and age groups. The event will allow the group listed above to practice their new-found skills, as well as the families involved, in a controlled setting.

Continued Training through Practice: The Kelly O’Leary Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TKOC) at CCHMC, in collaboration with Cincinnati Public School District, operates a Demonstration Classroom of 6-10 individuals with DD at CCHMC just two blocks from the Zoo that offers the opportunity for CZBG educators to present programs to and interact with children and youth with DD. We anticipate participating in this opportunity twice a month over six months in Year 1 of the project.

Activities to Create Visual and Sensory Supports for Fuller Engagement at the Zoo

Preparatory Visual Supports: A number of visual supports will be created in consultation with the Advisory Council and results from continuing research to help families prepare for a visit to the Zoo. Examples of helpful supports that we expect to produce are: An Accessibility Guide to the Zoo that would be available in hard copy and on the Zoo’s website; A Sensory Map of the Zoo showing where visitors might encounter particular sounds, smells, tactile opportunities, crowds, and quiet spaces; written social narratives, visual schedules, and lists of rules/expectations; and video models, which as mentioned in the Project Justification have not been fully explored for effectiveness in settings like zoos – we intend to produce one video focused on a general visit to zoo and at least one other centered on experience at an exhibit, for example, feeding a giraffe.

On-site Sensory Supports: We will design – again with Advisory Council consultation – supports that will be available to families as they enter the Zoo, including: A selection of sensory calming materials for each family to compose their own customized “kit.” Items for the kit might include noise-cancelling headphones, fidgets, portable

personal fans, scratch and sniff stickers, sunglasses, chewy tubes, and lantern. Another on-site support will be disability-friendly signs throughout the Zoo that provide descriptions of exhibits and possible triggers for children and youth with DD. Also while at the Zoo, families will be able to identify CZBG staff who have been trained and can assist them through the use of a different color or marking on ID tags for trained employees. Finally, we will create one calming area in the zoo keeping in mind best practices, allowable space, and areas of high foot traffic. These spaces will feature soft lighting, soft furniture, and the opportunity for low-stimulation activities.

Evaluation Activities

Independent, outcomes-based evaluation of the project will be conducted by Dr. Joe E. Heimlich and Ms. Dolly Hayde of the Lifelong Learning Group (LLG), an independent research and evaluation group at COSI, Columbus, Ohio. LLG has been engaged with CZBG’s evaluation efforts since 2012, including previous IMLS-funded projects. Thus the present plan builds on the Zoo’s existing visitor experience frameworks, which are summarized in a “Views/Spaces/Interactions” model developed in 2016 by Dr. Heimlich, Ms Hayde, and a CZBG project leader (*see* Recipeforsuccess supplemental document). Human subjects review and approval will be sought for the evaluation components of the project. Evaluation will serve in formative and summative capacities, providing the team with ongoing feedback and recommendations on process and outcomes throughout.

The evaluation will address three overarching questions that will serve the project team, as well as add value to the informal learning field’s understanding of accessibility related to DD; to address these questions, LLG will use multiple methods, as described in the table below. For evaluation of the collaborative project activities and their outcomes, evaluators will collect data concurrently with project efforts and provide results and feedback to partners to support rapid integration and improvement of target resources and program activities.

Evaluation Question	Proposed Methods	Timing	Key Referents
To what extent did participation in the project Advisory Council support short- and medium-term outcomes for families of children with DD (focusing on increased feelings of support, inclusion, and agency)?	Online parent questionnaire Focus group interview of Advisory Council	Beginning of Y1, Y2, and Y3 End of Y3	IMLS Performance Measures: Community Recommendations for evaluating accessibility (e.g., Museum of Science, 2001; Visitor Studies Services, 2015)
To what extent did the staff training result in increased knowledge about accessibility, increased confidence about supporting accessible visitor experiences, and positive change in attitudes about accessibility among Zoo personnel?	Online team knowledge assessment Online team reflective questionnaire Team focus group interview	Pre- and post-trainings (rolling basis) Post-trainings (rolling basis) End of Y3	Focus topics from training design (to emerge as part of project planning) Retrospective pre/post design for self-reported data (Rohs, 1999); IMLS Performance Measures: Community Strategies for supporting adults’ social learning (Imel, 1996; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007)
To what extent and in what ways did the individual elements of the project (i.e., on-site sensory kits, visual supports, improved signage, quiet areas, events, etc.) work together and separately to support improved accessibility for families of children with DD?	<i>Formative</i> Family event experience interviews Parent rating rubric for individual resources (e.g., visual aids, signage, etc.) <i>Summative</i> Online parent questionnaire	Post-events (rolling basis) Aligned to resource development (rolling basis) Beginning of Y3	Culturally responsive approaches (SenGupta, Hopson, and Thompson-Robinson, 2004) CZBG’s Visitor Experience Design Framework (Heimlich, Hayde, & Bray, 2016); Universal Design for Learning in cultural institutions (Museum of Science, 2001; ASTC, 2016) IMLS Performance Measures: Community

Risks to the Project

We consider the risks to the project to be low. While the specific partnership between CZBG and CCHMC is newly formed, the two institutions have provided services and programming to each other and collaboratively to the community for many years. The emerging partnership for this project is engaging and strong and will be our most significant collaboration in support of our respective goals to serve community. Financial risk to the project for CCHMC would be extremely unlikely; it will be centered in CCHMC's LEND program, which just this year had its funding renewed for 5 years (2016-2021) at \$3.5 million. One of 52 LEND programs in the U.S. funded by the Maternal Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Cincinnati LEND program has been in operation since 1969. From the CZBG side, financial risk is somewhat higher: 15% to 20% of our annual operating funds come from a county tax levy, which comes up for renewal in 2018. The last renewal levy was passed with more than 80% voter approval, so defeat is unlikely, but if it occurred, the final year of the project (2020) might be affected. Any such event would be immediately discussed with IMLS.

Financial, Personnel, and Other Resources Needed to Carry Out the Project Activities

Financial Support: As shown in the budget, \$865,016 will be needed to carry out the project over the three-year period from October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2020. The requested IMLS grant of \$415,582 would provide 48% of total project costs, and the remainder will be provided by CZBG from a variety of sources including contributions from individual, corporate and foundation donors as well as general operating support (admissions, membership, and a local county tax levy). CZBG has a strong record of experience in developing and managing complex federal budgets involving cost sharing, including other IMLS grants, a National Parks Save America's Treasures grant, and a U.S. Department of Education grant.

Experienced Management and High-Quality Personnel: CZBG's VP and COO, S. David Jenike will serve as project director, providing overall direction and assurance that the project's objectives and outcomes fulfill the IMLS Community Anchors performance goals and align with and enhance the Zoo's strategic plan. Mr. Jenike, who has been with CZBG since 1990, will contribute 3% of his time to the project as a cost share. Senior Director of Visitor Experience, Strategy and Fun, Rhiannon Hoeweler, works closely with Mr. Jenike in her role as director of one of the CZBG's largest and most successful departments and will manage the project, dedicating 35% of her time with the grant covering 50% of her time and CZBG covering the other 50%. Ms. Hoeweler was hired in 2008, when the Zoo undertook the comprehensive strategic planning that led to CZBG's focus on visitor experience and engagement, and she has been key to all visitor experience initiatives undertaken since that time, including the new strategic emphasis on expanding access to the Zoo for underserved members of the Greater Cincinnati community. Ms. Hoeweler will lead an implementation team of four key staff, including Manager of Member Experience & Fun, Elizabeth Sullivan (20% of her time), Manager of Visitor Experience & Fun, Alyssa O'Connell (15% of her time), Director of Planning & Exhibit Design, Dean Violetta (5% of his time), and Communications Manager, Michelle Curley (1% of her time) as well as the project efforts of the Zoo's graphic designers and videographer. Qualifications for all of these individuals, as well as the project partners, are reflected in the attached resumes.

Strong Partnerships: To provide the critical training and expertise needed to accomplish the project's goals and objectives, CZBG will subcontract with the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC). Our key consultant there will be Dr. Jennifer Smith, Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics in the College of Medicine at UC. Dr. Smith, a Clinical Psychologist, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, and applied researcher, is the Director of the LEND program previously described. Clinically, Dr. Smith specializes in the treatment of children and adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including ASD. She also serves as the Community Outreach Coordinator of TKOC at CCHMC, providing educational and training opportunities throughout the medical center and community.

As previously described, we will also contract with the Lifelong Learning Group (LLG) at COSI for the initial project logic modeling as well as the formative and summative evaluations of the project. Dr. Joe E. Heimlich, Co-Director of COSI's Center for Research and Evaluation, and Professor Emeritus with The Ohio State University, has worked in free-choice learning since the early 1980s, including extensive research and evaluation work with zoos and aquariums, including the NSF-funded *Why Zoos and Aquariums Matter* research and prior IMLS-funded logic

modeling and evaluation with the CZBG since 2012. Dolly Hayde, an LLG Research Associate, will work with Dr. Heimlich on this project, bringing expertise in evaluation of educational programming and exhibits, as well as previous consulting on visitor studies with the CZBG.

Sharing Project Results and Discoveries

Communicate to the Local Community: Because the Zoo and CCHMC are such prominent institutions in Cincinnati, we are confident of having local media coverage of this project. We expect to inform city leaders about the collaboration, and to share results with other museums and other attractions – for example, sports venues for the Cincinnati Reds and the Cincinnati Bengals – that may be able to benefit from our experience. The project’s Advisory Council families will also be a strong voice in the community and are part of the CCHMC network of organizations advocating for people with disabilities.

Present Project at National Conferences: CZBG staff will present the project at the Association of Zoos & Aquariums Annual Conference, taking place in September 2020. Dr. Smith will also present the project at the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) national meeting in Washington, DC in December 2020.

Publish Articles: CZBG staff will also submit articles for publication(s) such as AZA’s *Connect*, the National Association for Interpretation’s *Journal of Interpretation Research*, and *Museums and Social Issues*. Dr. Smith will submit articles for publication in disability-related journals such as *Inclusion*, a journal of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

3. Project Results

The key result of our *Anchor for Access and Inclusion* project would be the achievement of our overarching goal – a Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden that is the most welcoming, accessible and inclusive zoo in the country for individuals with developmental disabilities. The project addresses the IMLS Agency-Level Goal 2: Community, and is organized around the Performance Goal to “Strengthen museums and libraries as essential partners in addressing the needs of their communities.” Of the four outcome-based Performance Measures for Grantees, our evaluation will apply best to the first: “My organization is better prepared to provide a program or service that addresses community needs,” and of the two for Community Partners, also to the first: “The museum or library offers programs, services, or resources that address community needs.”

In the evaluation design for the project presented in the text and chart on page 5, it can be seen that the Grantee responses will be incorporated into a team post-training questionnaire, and the Community Partner responses into a Year 3 parent questionnaire. The evaluation process will use multiple methods (as shown in the chart) to gather additional, more detailed measures of the project’s effectiveness and reach, starting from the initial set of desired outcomes shown in the Logic Model discussion and chart on pages 3-4; those desired outcomes grow directly out of the needs of the major audiences for the project: two Community Partners – the Advisory Council of parents and Zoo attendee families with DD more generally – and the Grantee, that is, staff and volunteers of the CZBG. The outcomes chart clearly identifies the changes in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes we hope for. Again, these outcomes are a “starter set” that may be revised and refined during logic modeling or ongoing formative evaluation.

Tangible Products

The project will result in creation of: Staff training modules; Visual supports, Video models and Sensory maps that will all be available on the Zoo’s website; as well as laminated Visual supports and Sensory maps available on site; Improved signage at the Zoo; One calming space; and at least two publications.

Sustaining Project Benefits

Because the project involves such substantial training and continual improvement through post-training practice, ongoing formative evaluation and correction, we believe the benefits will be not only sustainable but also increasing in quality, leading to an increased number of people with DD and their families who can have a fully accessible visit to the Zoo. By the end of the project period in 2020, our own core staff will have become adept in basic training and accommodating people with DD in the park. An awareness module will be instituted into “Zoo Way,” our orientation training for every new full or part-time employee to the CZBG. The dissemination of project results may also sustain project benefits by extending any discoveries we make to other museums or public venues in our Greater Cincinnati community and beyond.

Cincinnati Zoo Botanical Garden: Anchor for Access and Inclusion

Activity	Grant Year 3 (Oct 2019 - September 2020):			
	Oct - Dec 2019	Jan - Mar 2020	Apr - Jun 2020	Jul - Sep 2020
Training:				
2 Hour Basic Training for Employee & Volunteer Base		↑		
8 Hour Training for Key Staff		↑		
Visual and Sensory Supports:				
Sensory Map		↑		
Sensory Kit		↑		
Evaluation:				
Online Parent Questionnaire		↑		
Focus Group Interview of Advisory Council				↑
Online Team Knowledge Assessment				↑
Online Team Reflective Questionnaire				↑
Team Focus Group Interview				↑
Family Event				↑
Parent Rating Rubric				↑
Online Parent Questionnaire				↑
Share Learning:				
AZA Conference				↑
AUCD Conference				Dec 2020
Publish articles				↑
Local Organizations				↑