



Museums Empowered

Sample Application ME-260034-OMS-26

New York Botanical Garden

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$245,944
Amount of cost share:	\$288,624

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) will create a unified, mission-aligned professional development experience that strengthens both core museum and library competencies and emerging artificial intelligence (AI)–ready practices for NYBG staff. The project will generate flexible, in-person, and virtual sessions paired with self-paced recordings and job aids, with the goal of building essential skills in AI literacy, knowledge stewardship, communication, and operational effectiveness. The project will provide structured guidance and support for department-specific training priorities and also create a standardized set of training resources on responsible AI use with an AI-supported learning archive, making it easier for staff to find, revisit, and apply guidance at the point of need while maintaining verification, privacy, and human oversight standards. As a result of the project, NYBG will expand staff knowledge and skills through tailored training in AI literacy, digital literacy, leadership, and cross-departmental collaboration while improving staff performance, reducing avoidable rework, and strengthening retention across the institution.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG)

PROJECT TITLE: Workforce Innovation and Leadership Development (WILD)

I. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) respectfully requests \$245,944 to support a two-year professional development initiative to foster staff growth, enhance staff retention, and strengthen staff's understanding of and alignment with NYBG's mission. NYBG's dedicated team of approximately 414 full-time and 280 part-time staff, span horticulture, science, education, public engagement, communications, security, and maintenance, and play an essential role in advancing NYBG's strategic plan. This plan underscores NYBG's commitment to growth, innovation, and resilience across all departments. NYBG's workforce supports various functions essential to NYBG's operations and public engagement. This range of roles brings varied learning and development needs, and it now includes the need to build practical AI literacy and organizational AI readiness across teams. IMLS funding will allow NYBG to build a culture of professional development that is accessible, actionable, responsive, and embedded. Our proposed plan will result in the development of both institution-wide resources and opportunities for staff across all levels and functions to take an active role in their professional development journey and adopt AI-enabled tools thoughtfully, safely, and effectively.

Museums Empowered Goal and Associated Objectives

NYBG will implement a comprehensive professional development initiative, **Workforce Innovation and Leadership Development (WILD)**, structured around three key pillars: **Grow in Minutes**, **Branch into Growth**, and **Sprout Library**. This project aligns with the **Museums Empowered (ME) Goal 3, Organizational Management**, specifically **Objective 3.2**, as we seek to strengthen and support NYBG staff through programs that are informed by staff needs assessments and that will cultivate a resilient, skilled workforce. The proposed project also connects to the agency's broader goals in digital technology with an explicit **AI literacy** and **AI readiness** component.

Advancing NYBG's Strategic Plan

This project will advance NYBG's strategic plan, which includes **Management Excellence** as one of its five key objectives. Under this key objective, NYBG aims to enrich the employee experience, invest in professional development, and promote AI readiness. WILD will advance this objective by:

- Creating an AI-ready professional development experience that supports staff through tailored learning, cross-departmental collaboration, and pathways for growth and leadership.
- Enhancing access to professional development opportunities for all staff members across departments and roles.
- Breaking down barriers to growth with flexible learning options and support for divisional projects that address unique team needs.
- Building shared AI literacy and promoting a culture of responsible adoption and human judgment.
- Building a robust and resilient team prepared to adapt to NYBG's goals and to enhance the visitor experience.

Needs and Challenges WILD Will Address

WILD addresses critical needs and challenges identified through an initial staff needs assessment—that informed NYBG's strategic plan and resulted in the expansion of the Learning and Development (L&D) team—and through a needs assessment with new hires. These needs assessments highlighted onboarding and professional development gaps, such as inconsistent training, information delivery, and a lack of essential learning resources. Current training practices are fragmented, leading to disparities in quality and accessibility, making it difficult for employees at all levels to understand their roles and fully connect with NYBG's mission. NYBG recognizes the need for increased investment in L&D to fully realize a responsive program that will support staff buy-in and sustain gains in skills.

Given these findings, we propose to implement WILD to centralize and standardize professional development efforts and enhance employee engagement and growth, creating a unified training framework that promotes consistent access to essential skills, including AI literacy, and fosters a cohesive organizational culture. By enhancing cross-departmental learning, WILD aims to break down silos and reflect NYBG's collaborative spirit. As articulated in current research: “[staff] tend to operate in fragmented worlds, isolated in their own museums, unaware of the existence of expertise on effective professional development gained through research, experimentation and shared through publications and conferences.”^[1] Additionally, the L&D team will ensure accountability in staff development, tracking progress to align

with NYBG's strategic goals and fostering a more empowered and resilient workforce for long-term success.

Primary Audience for WILD and Involvement in Planning

The primary audience for the WILD program includes NYBG's workforce of approximately 700 employees, comprising full-time, part-time, and temporary/seasonal staff. The primary audience for WILD includes:

- **New Hires (283 annually):** New employees often need more training to integrate their experience into NYBG practices and to initiate a professional development journey. Recent new hires have already informed the planning process by articulating the challenges they have encountered, particularly in information overload and consistent job-specific training. Their input has shaped WILD's focus on staggered information delivery and standardized modules.
- **Temporary and Seasonal Staff (202):** This group requires efficient, accessible training to integrate during peak seasons quickly. WILD addresses this with tailored onboarding through Grow in Minutes.
- **Frontline and Part-Time Employees (157):** These employees need training in customer service and digital literacy to effectively represent NYBG. WILD includes flexible, role-specific training to support their needs.
- **Department Managers and Supervisors (114):** Managers play a crucial role in training staff but need more standardized resources. The Branch into Growth pillar provides support to create tailored training programs, with the understanding that managers know what will advance their teams but need support to design and enact projects. The L&D team will also partner with managers to continue sharing best practices across teams.

WILD's development is shaped by feedback from employee groups addressing the everyday challenges NYBG staff face. The L&D team held listening sessions with staff to identify training needs and obtained feedback from department managers. This process articulated the need for access to training for mission-centered work and specific job skills. By centralizing training with the L&D team, WILD creates a unified framework that benefits all employees, fosters a cohesive culture, and strengthens NYBG's mission fulfillment. Staff feedback from NYBG's digital literacy trainings and early AI learning sessions has also been instrumental in shaping WILD. We learned that employees desired more comprehensive and accessible AI literacy resources, which WILD will provide. The success of these efforts has shown the value of involving staff in planning and underscores the need for expanded professional development opportunities.

Ultimate Beneficiaries of WILD

Cultivating a resilient, skilled workforce at NYBG through WILD ultimately benefits the people we serve, including public visitors (1.2 million annually), local communities, researchers, and partner organizations. WILD strengthens core competencies that have immediate benefits for these ultimate beneficiaries. For example, staff training in public-facing service and communications, including plain-language writing, accessibility basics, and customer service scenarios, will help frontline teams provide clearer wayfinding support, more consistent responses to visitor questions, and more usable written materials across touchpoints. Similarly, training in collections and knowledge stewardship, including metadata hygiene, version control, and documentation practices, will strengthen the reliability and findability of internal information that supports research and public interpretation. Initiatives like Grow in Minutes will build practical AI literacy that helps staff communicate clearly, streamline routine work, and make better-informed decisions while maintaining strong human judgment. As NYBG staff welcomes visitors, these skills in AI readiness can help teams respond more quickly to questions, improve consistency in information sharing, and support the design of programs and communications that are accurate, accessible, and mission-aligned. Over time, these combined practices, alongside AI literacy and readiness, will strengthen outreach and collaboration with local communities and partners by enabling staff to coordinate projects more efficiently, develop materials more effectively, and redirect time toward priority activities.

II. PROJECT WORK PLAN

Project Activities

WILD Project Activities will be organized under three main program pillars described below.

(1) Grow in Minutes: we will develop and execute **20 Grow in Minutes sessions** during the project period. To accommodate the schedules and preferences of all NYBG staff members, these flexible monthly training sessions will be available in-person, virtually, and as recordings for asynchronous viewing. Offering sessions each month at various times and days ensures maximum accessibility and participation across different departments and staff levels and builds communities of practice, which help develop essential skills on their schedules. Additionally, we will provide supplementary learning materials and resources for each session, allowing employees to continue learning independently.

Across the 20 sessions, we will offer multiple tracks with concrete competencies, including: (a) AI literacy and durable skills (problem framing, evidence testing, and source verification for AI-assisted drafting and analysis); (b) knowledge stewardship and documentation practices (metadata hygiene, version control, and finding information quickly); (c) public-facing service and communications (plain-language writing, accessibility basics, and customer service scenarios); and (d) operational and leadership essentials (project planning, feedback conversations, and cross-team collaboration). Each session will include a short practice activity and a take-home job aid so that learning transfers into daily workflows.

Grow in Minutes has already been successfully piloted at NYBG with a steady cadence of short, high-interest sessions that bring staff together across divisions. The proposed project will expand this initiative by offering repeat sessions and themed learning tracks, increasing consistency across divisions, integrating practical AI literacy into relevant topics, and capturing session recordings and companion job aids in the Sprout Library for self-paced review on any device. Building AI literacy resources for Grow in Minutes will be critical for this project, and the team will incorporate previously developed digital literacy content while developing new AI readiness modules.

(2) Branch into Growth (Cultivating Division-Centered Learning and Development): we will develop customized professional development frameworks in collaboration with managers during the project period. By leveraging the expertise of NYBG L&D staff and addressing departmental needs, we will assist divisions in creating innovative, flexible opportunities that align with NYBG's strategic goals. Divisions will work with HR to build learning frameworks, adapt to the evolving needs of their teams, and foster a culture of continuous growth, innovation, and AI readiness. While managers will identify their division's professional development needs, the L&D team will refine their goals, craft project plans, evaluate opportunities for enhanced development, and determine metrics to evaluate success. L&D team members will also ensure planning aligns with HR best practice and support managers through efforts to ensure that team members acquire the training they need specific to their role. This approach encourages and facilitates partnerships and promotes a culture of collaboration and shared learning. It also allows department team members to participate on their terms and in alignment with their schedules and needs. We will also monitor the progress of projects and evaluate their impact on staff development and organizational goals.

Branch into Growth is designed to scale proven, staff-generated solutions by building on NYBG's existing Seeds of Growth microgrant program, which supports staff-generated ideas. During the project period, we will identify and scale a set of high-leverage Seeds of Growth successes into repeatable learning assets, such as onboarding playbooks, cross-training maps, workflow documentation, service scripts, and AI-ready decision tools (for example, a verification workflow for AI-assisted summaries or a prompt-and-review checklist for drafting). For each project, L&D will support managers in translating the pilot into a lightweight toolkit (purpose, steps, roles, templates, and a short training plan), and we will define simple indicators of adoption (use logs, quick pulse surveys, or manager observation) to ensure the work becomes part of routine practice rather than a one-time initiative.

(3) Sprout Library (E-Courses and Workplace Trainings): we will create at least **20 standardized training modules** to be offered through NYBG's Learning Management System (LMS). These modules will cover critical topics such as compliance, AI literacy and responsible AI use, leadership skills, and other essential competencies needed across the organization. By ensuring that all modules provide a consistent learning experience with measurable outcomes, including assessments and feedback mechanisms, we aim to strengthen staff capability to contribute to NYBG's mission. The training modules will be fully integrated into the LMS for easy access, tracking of employee progress, and reporting on completion rates and learning outcomes. We will regularly review and update the training content to keep it current with industry best practices and organizational needs. Sprout Library will be built as a flexible learning archive, pairing structured e-courses with just-in-time, searchable resources (short videos, one-page job aids, templates, and scenario playbooks) so staff can learn at their own pace and return to guidance at the moment of need. Modules will be designed for mobile and tablet access for employees who do not have regular workstations, and most learning objects will be available in short, "in-minutes" formats with optional deeper dives. To make the archive truly usable, we will implement AI-supported navigation features that recommend modules by role and task and help staff quickly locate the right resource, while emphasizing that AI outputs must be grounded in authoritative content and validated through source checks, privacy safeguards, and human oversight. Example Sprout Library module clusters include: Responsible AI Use at NYBG (fundamentals, limitations, verification, bias checks, and data stewardship), Collections and Knowledge Stewardship (metadata quality, file naming and version control, and preservation-minded documentation), Service and Communication Essentials (plain-language writing, accessibility basics, and common visitor scenarios), and Supervisor Foundations (onboarding, coaching, and performance support).

Training Content, Competencies, and Communication

To respond to the varied professional realities of NYBG staff, WILD will organize learning into a set of recurring competency domains that will be reinforced across all three pillars. Training content and competencies will include:

- **AI literacy and durable skills for AI-assisted work**, including problem framing, evidence testing, source verification, bias recognition, and ethical tradeoff navigation, applied to common workflows such as drafting, summarizing, policy interpretation, and knowledge-sharing.
- **Collections and knowledge stewardship**, including description standards and metadata quality, authority work, digitization and file management practices, and documentation habits that protect institutional memory.
- **Visitor-facing service and communications**, including plain-language writing, accessibility and usability basics, customer service fundamentals, and effective internal communication across teams.
- **Operational excellence and project execution**, including process mapping, project planning, cross-department coordination, and continuous improvement practices that reduce avoidable rework.
- **People leadership and coaching**, including strong onboarding practices, feedback and performance conversations, and team learning habits that sustain transfer from training to daily work.

Across all pillars, we will develop and implement an internal communication strategy to inform all staff about available learning opportunities and how to access them. Establishing channels for employees to provide feedback on the sessions and modules will allow us to improve the offerings continuously. We are committed to ensuring that all activities are designed and executed for broad participation, with accessible formats and practical support that helps staff build confidence with new AI-enabled tools. Additionally, we will utilize digital collaboration platforms to enhance virtual learning and cross-departmental projects.

Project Team

- The project will be led and managed by **Sujay Pandit, Ph.D., Senior Director for Learning Operations and Strategy at NYBG**, who brings extensive experience in advancing professional development in complex cultural organizations. Dr. Pandit will oversee all project activities from planning and design to implementation and evaluation and will manage the part time staff. He will ensure that WILD aligns with NYBG's strategic goals and adapts as needed for ongoing relevance and impact.
- **James Vickers, AVP of Employee and Volunteer Engagement at NYBG**, will support Dr. Pandit and contribute expertise in staff and volunteer relations, enhancing program alignment with NYBG's mission and meeting the workforce's varied needs, including for AI-ready learning.
- NYBG will hire two graduate students to assist in program implementation. One, a **Student Instructional Designer** will develop engaging and accessible course modules for Grow in Minutes and the Sprout Library, ensuring content meets NYBG's educational standards. Second, a **Student Researcher and Designer** will gather and analyze participant feedback, supporting data-driven program adjustments and continuous improvement.

Time, Financial, Personnel, and Other Resources for WILD

The WILD program is a two-year project. In the first three months, the team will hire graduate students, procure equipment, develop an internal communication strategy, and begin foundational development of content. From months four to twenty-two, training modules will be rolled out with quarterly feedback incorporated for real-time program improvements, and L&D staff will partner with managers on a staggered basis to plan and execute department-specific activities. The final two months will involve a detailed evaluation, assessing impact data, and making recommendations based on feedback.

Personnel resources are vital to this project's success, with Sujay Pandit leading the project and James Vickers providing strategic guidance and support. Graduate students will support course development and program evaluation. Laptops and tablets will allow staff without workstations to participate in online learning opportunities and will also be used by the graduate students to facilitate content creation, data collection, and analysis. Subscription to a Learning Management System (LMS) will allow easy access, tracking, and reporting on training modules and staff progress. NYBG will procure licenses for Articulate Rise 360, an LMS and specialized e-learning authoring tool to create interactive and accessible training modules for flexible learning in the Grow in Minutes and the Sprout Library.

Organization and Structure of Project Team to Support Engagement

To support broad participation, we have organized a team to ensure all NYBG staff access meaningful professional development. In addition to the project team roles detailed above, each NYBG department will appoint a Departmental

Lead to represent its unique training needs, ensuring that development opportunities in WILD are relevant and accessible across roles, from horticulture to visitor services.

To accommodate different schedules, Grow in Minutes will continue to offer short live sessions (in-person and virtual) paired with recordings, job aids, and optional micro-lessons housed in Sprout Library so staff can review content self-paced via NYBG's LMS on-site and remotely. For department-specific needs, the Branch into Growth will empower teams to create tailored training programs, with extended HR support for departments with fewer resources. This structure ensures all staff, regardless of department size or role, can access professional development that aligns with NYBG's mission and goals. The project team will draw on frameworks from prior digital learning efforts and Branch-Out Staff Engagement Gatherings to support consistent participation and confident adoption of new tools. By adopting proven strategies from these initiatives, we will create an environment where staff members feel supported and empowered to build skills, including AI literacy, through WILD.

Project Risks and Mitigation

Two risks to the success of the WILD program are uneven participation across departments and potential technical barriers to accessing training. We have proactively developed targeted strategies to address these risks to ensure successful implementation and broad participation in WILD.

First, **the risk of uneven participation across departments** could result in disparities in training outcomes and limit the program's reach. Some departments may engage more actively than others due to varying workloads, team structures, or perceived relevance of the training. To mitigate this, each department will have an assigned **Departmental Lead** to advocate for participation in WILD initiatives and encourage team engagement. Regular outreach to departments with lower participation rates will be conducted, offering additional support and tailored incentives to promote involvement. Additionally, we will implement feedback loops to identify engagement gaps early on, allowing the team to adjust approaches and tailor communications as needed. This structured support system will ensure that all NYBG staff, regardless of department, have access to and benefit from the WILD program. The WILD program has strong backing from NYBG's CEO and management, highlighting a commitment to a growth-oriented culture. This leadership support ensures WILD aligns with NYBG's mission and goals. Executive endorsement will be key in our communications, with regular updates and involvement in program milestones to emphasize its value and encourage staff participation in learning and development. Additionally, we will draw on learnings from past NYBG engagement gatherings, which successfully engaged staff across various departments through high-interest, cross-functional events. We will also work with departmental leads, communities of practice, and peer AI champions to encourage involvement.

Second, potential **technical barriers** risk staff access to the LMS and other digital resources, especially for those with limited digital literacy or technology access. To ensure all employees can fully engage in the program, we will provide **introductory digital literacy training** as part of the Grow in Minutes initiative, empowering all staff members to navigate digital tools like the Articulate courses confidently. For ongoing support, the L&D team will be available to address technical challenges, troubleshoot issues with LMS access, and offer alternative access methods, such as in-person sessions or printed materials, for those who prefer them. This multifaceted approach will minimize technical barriers, ensuring that all staff members, regardless of their digital skills, can participate meaningfully in WILD.

Tracking Progress Toward WILD's Intended Results

We will employ a comprehensive evaluation and feedback system to track progress toward the program's goals.

Quarterly Progress Reports will be central to this approach, with the L&D team analyzing participation rates, module completions, and engagement across WILD initiatives like Grow in Minutes, Branch into Growth, and the Sprout Library. Regular surveys will measure improvements in staff confidence, practical understanding, and readiness to use AI tools responsibly, and will be benchmarked against baseline responses collected at the start of the program. These reports will help us identify trends, allowing for timely adjustments to keep the program aligned with NYBG's strategic goals.

In addition to participation and completion data, we will evaluate capability growth through short, scenario-based assessments and rubric-scored work products tied to concrete competencies (for example, problem framing, source verification, and evidence testing in AI-assisted drafting; or accurate application of metadata and documentation standards in knowledge stewardship tasks). We will also track transfer to practice through **30- and 90-day follow-ups, manager observations, and lightweight evidence logs** indicating that staff are using Sprout Library job aids, checklists, and playbooks in real workflows. By Month 24, we expect at least 70% of staff to report recurring on-the-job use of WILD

tools at least monthly and 80% of participating staff to meet or exceed expectations on the core AI-ready rubric areas (problem framing, verification, and responsible-use judgment).

III. PROJECT RESULTS

Intended Results and How they Address NYBG's Identified Needs and Challenges

WILD will create a unified, mission-aligned professional development experience that strengthens both core museum and library competencies and emerging AI-ready practices for NYBG staff. By addressing the current gaps in training consistency, accessibility, and departmental alignment that have been identified in staff needs assessments, WILD will foster a cohesive learning environment that improves performance, reduces avoidable rework, and strengthens retention across roles and departments.

Grow in Minutes will offer flexible, short live sessions (in-person and virtual) paired with self-paced recordings and job aids, building essential skills in AI literacy and durable judgment, knowledge stewardship, communication, and operational effectiveness. At the same time, Branch into Growth will provide structured guidance and support for department-specific training priorities that address role- and team-specific needs. The Sprout Library will centralize standardized training resources in compliance and responsible AI use and will serve as an AI-supported learning archive, making it easier for staff to find, revisit, and apply guidance at the point of need while maintaining verification, privacy, and human oversight standards. By investing in the development of staff at all levels, NYBG seeks to improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention.

As evidenced in contemporary educational technology research: "The integration of e-learning processes into best practices of the organization fosters a seamless blend between formal and informal learning, essential for knowledge flow and organizational adaptability."^[2] This reinforces WILD's approach to blending structured and informal learning opportunities, enhancing staff adaptability and skill transfer. WILD will bridge the current disparities in staff training experiences and build a supportive, skilled workforce prepared to meet NYBG's strategic goals. This will lead to a more engaged, resilient, and mission-driven team capable of connecting meaningfully with NYBG's varied audiences and contributing effectively to its educational and public engagement initiatives.

Impact on NYBG Staff's knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes

The WILD program will lead to significant positive shifts in the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes of NYBG staff, our primary audience. Through WILD, staff will develop a deeper understanding of NYBG's mission and see their roles as integral to its success, fostering a stronger connection to the organization's goals and values. Staff knowledge and skills will expand through tailored training in AI literacy, digital literacy, leadership, and cross-departmental collaboration. Grow in Minutes will empower employees to acquire essential skills flexibly, while Branch into Growth will scale promising Seeds of Growth projects into repeatable, department-specific learning tools and training experiences, fostering a proactive approach to professional development. Researcher Cynthia Robinson posits: "Effective PD [professional development] needs to be 'intensive and sustained...involving significant numbers of contact hours over long periods of time. Activities with longer duration are said to provide greater opportunities for comprehensive analysis of subject content.'"^[3] Staff behavioral shifts will include increased engagement, accountability, and a more mission-focused approach to responsibilities. Staff will feel more equipped to contribute, resulting in higher morale and motivation. WILD will strengthen staff knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to using AI tools responsibly, including understanding capabilities and limitations, protecting privacy, verifying outputs, and maintaining human oversight in decision-making and public-facing work. Ultimately, WILD will foster a unified, skilled, and motivated workforce better prepared to advance NYBG's mission. NYBG will measure the changes in staff knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes as described in the Performance Measurement Plan.

Advancement of Organizational Growth at NYBG

The WILD program will catalyze organizational growth and change at NYBG by creating a unified, mission-driven approach to professional development, aligned with our strategic plan. By centralizing training through initiatives like Grow in Minutes and The Sprout Library, WILD ensures that all staff, from horticulture to visitor services, gain essential skills in AI literacy, digital literacy, organizational policies, and other competencies. This shared foundation will strengthen communication and collaboration across departments, aligning daily operations with NYBG's mission and values. WILD will also foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation. Through Branch into Growth, departments can address specific training needs and promote cross-functional partnerships, empowering staff to take initiative and

develop solutions tailored to their roles. As NYBG staff acquire new skills, broaden their perspectives, and connect more deeply with the NYBG's goals, WILD will create a more resilient, adaptable, and engaged workforce capable of advancing NYBG's mission to educate, inspire, and connect with audiences meaningfully.

Products That Will Result from WILD and Making Them Accessible to Staff

The WILD program will produce a range of tools and resources to support long-term staff development and organizational alignment at NYBG. Essential products will include a centralized training curriculum for staff across all departments, covering foundational skills in AI literacy, digital literacy, communication, and leadership. Each staff member will work with their manager to create a **Personal Learning Agreement**, establishing individual learning goals and tracking progress over time. These agreements will be integrated into annual performance reviews, ensuring that professional development remains an ongoing priority and linked directly to staff growth and performance.

To further support development, staff who complete training modules will receive certificates of completion, which will be added to their personnel files as part of performance and career planning. **Branch into Growth** will result in designed department-specific training materials and projects, encouraging innovation tailored to unique departmental needs. WILD will also yield quarterly progress and impact reports to assess the effectiveness of each initiative, with a comprehensive final report summarizing achievements and lessons learned throughout the program. Collectively, these products will reinforce a culture of continuous learning and accountability, embedding NYBG's mission and values into the core of its workforce development efforts.

Sustaining WILD's Benefits Beyond the Conclusion of the Period of Performance

To sustain the benefits of the WILD program beyond the grant period, each initiative includes built-in strategies for long-term impact and continuity. By developing "**internal champions**" within each department, we create a network of trained staff members who can lead and support ongoing professional development, ensuring that the knowledge and skills gained through WILD continue to be applied and shared across teams. These champions will play a key role in maintaining momentum, adapting training content to evolving needs, and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Additionally, WILD's **centralized training resources**, such as materials for Grow in Minutes events and Sprout Library, will remain accessible on NYBG's LMS, allowing staff to revisit essential training materials and access new modules as they are developed. By integrating Personal Learning Agreements into **annual performance reviews**, NYBG ensures professional development goals remain part of employees' growth trajectory.

Building upon early AI learning efforts through WILD ensures that these practices and learnings on responsible use of AI become embedded in NYBG's culture. By institutionalizing this work, we will maintain momentum and continue strengthening AI literacy beyond the grant period. The successful models established by these programs will serve as a foundation for ongoing professional development and staff engagement in executing NYBG's mission.

Finally, the **quarterly feedback and evaluation processes** established during the grant period will continue, enabling NYBG to assess ongoing training needs and make data-informed adjustments to reinforce WILD's lasting impact. WILD will remain central to NYBG's commitment to workforce development and mission alignment through these measures.

REFERENCES

- ^[1] Robinson, C. (2019). Thoughts on the History of Professional Development Programs in Museums. *Journal of Museum Education*, 44(2), 124.
- ^[2] Trentin, G., & Bottino, R. M. (2012). Educational Technology Diffusion in Organizations: A Call for Systemic Vision and Organizational Development. *Educational Technology*, 52(2), 54–60.
- ^[3] Robinson, C. (2019). Thoughts on the History of Professional Development Programs in Museums. *Journal of Museum Education*, 44(2), 127.

New York Botanical Garden
Workforce Innovation and Leadership Development (WILD)

Year 1 Schedule of Completion												
Activity	Sep-26	Oct-26	Nov-26	Dec-26	Jan-27	Feb-27	Mar-27	Apr-27	May-27	Jun-27	Jul-27	Aug-27
PROJECT PLANNING												
Project Planning: General Activities												
Recruit and hire Graduate Students												
Train Graduate Students												
Project Planning: Internal Communication												
Develop overall communication strategy												
Implement communication channels (email, intranet)												
Execute ongoing internal communication strategy												
Project Planning: Technical Developments												
Procure equipment and technology for WILD												
Set up digital collaboration platforms												
Utilize digital platforms for collaboration												
Provide technical support and accomodations												
Project Planning: Evaluation & Program Design												
Review needs assessments from past programs and best practices												
Evaluate ways to ensure inclusivity in all activities												
Ensure inclusivity measures are in place												
Establish feedback mechanisms (surveys, forums)												
Collect and analyze feedback												
Quarterly progress reviews and adjustments												
GROW IN MINUTES												
Identify key topics (digital literacy, etc.)												
Prepare session schedules												
Develop content outline for 10 (Year 1) learning sessions												
Create learning materials for initial sessions												
Set up supplementary resources												
Develop communication strategy for sessions												
Establish feedback mechanisms												
Conduct monthly learning sessions (in-person/virtual)												
Provide supplementary materials for each session												
Collect feedback after each session												
Quarterly review of feedback and adjust sessions												
BRANCH INTO GROWTH												
Establish program practices and refine planning												
Develop internal communication strategy on												
Branch into Growth												
Communicate development opportunities to managers												
Establish feedback mechanisms and review criteria for overall program												
Provide guidance to divisions on designing projects												
Implementation of department projects												
Monitoring and support for departmental projects												
Quarterly review and adjustments												
SPROUT LIBRARY												
Plan module development roadmap												
Identify critical topics for modules												
Set up LMS infrastructure												
Develop content for initial modules (Modules 1-5)												
Develop remaining modules (Modules 6-20)												
Test LMS integration with initial modules												
Develop communication strategy for LMS usage												
Establish feedback mechanism												
Launch initial modules on LMS												
Launch modules in batches (every 2 months)												
Integrate modules into LMS												
Provide ongoing LMS support to staff												
Collect feedback after module completion												
Regularly review and update content												
Implement updates based on feedback												
Provide refresher training for staff as needed												

New York Botanical Garden
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[illegible]