



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANTS FOR LIBRARIES

Sample Application LG-260728-OLS-26
Project Category: Community-Centered Implementation

Lake Superior State University

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$75,714
Amount of cost share:	\$0

Lake Superior State University will produce: a replicable, tested archival literacy module embedded in pre-service teacher education; an open-access practitioner guide for teacher educators and their library and archive partners; a curated, annotated repository of model archive-based lesson plans tied to Michigan and national curriculum standards; and a documented partnership model adaptable by teacher preparation programs in other rural, regional, and tribal-serving communities. Partners include public libraries, historical societies, tribal archives, and cultural centers across the eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The project will deliver a tested, replicable archival literacy module integrated into College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education's pre-service teacher education curriculum. The module will have been piloted with an estimated 40-60 teacher candidates across two cohorts and refined through formative evaluation. The project will produce an open-access practitioner guide for teacher educators and their library and archive partners. The guide will address the full arc of building and sustaining a community archive partnership in teacher preparation: from identifying collections and establishing partnerships, to integrating archival literacy into methods coursework, to assessing candidate learning and sustaining the work institutionally.

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 most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Rooted in Place:

Building Teacher Capacity to Use Community Archives for Place-Based Learning

Lake Superior State University | College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education

IMLS National Leadership Grants for Libraries | FY2026 | Community-Centered Implementation | Objective 1.1

INTRODUCTION

Lake Superior State University (LSSU), through its College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education (CoGLEE), requests \$75,714 in IMLS funds to implement Rooted in Place: Building Teacher Capacity to Use Community Archives for Place-Based Learning — a two-year Community-Centered Implementation project that addresses a critical and underexamined gap in teacher preparation. Most pre-service teachers are trained almost exclusively with commercially packaged, nationally generalized curricula that cannot capture the historically rich, locally specific knowledge held in community archives. In the Upper Peninsula of Michigan — a region shaped by Indigenous peoples whose presence long predates statehood, by the copper mining era that fueled the Union's Civil War effort, by immigrant labor communities from dozens of nations, and by the ecological complexity of the Great Lakes — this gap is not merely a pedagogical problem. It is a failure to connect students and future citizens to the full story of American history as it was lived and documented here.

As the nation marks the 250th anniversary of American independence, IMLS has identified historical education and archival practices as a priority. Rooted in Place responds directly to this call. Community archives in the Upper Peninsula — held in public libraries, historical societies, tribal cultural centers, and local repositories — contain primary sources that illuminate American history from multiple, authentic perspectives: the treaty records and oral history collections of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Bay Mills Indian Community; the labor newspapers and immigrant society records of Keweenaw copper country; the ecological survey data and Great Lakes naturalist archives that document centuries of environmental change. These collections are largely invisible to K–12 instruction, and the teachers best positioned to use them — those trained at regional institutions like LSSU — receive little systematic preparation in archival literacy or ethical primary source integration.

Rooted in Place adapts established archival engagement practices — developed by the Society of American Archivists, the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources program, and IMLS-supported archival education initiatives — to the specific institutional context of LSSU's CoGLEE teacher preparation programs. The project will produce: (1) a replicable, tested archival literacy module embedded in pre-service teacher education; (2) an open-access practitioner guide for teacher educators and their library and archive partners; (3) a curated, annotated repository of model archive-based lesson plans tied to Michigan and national curriculum standards; and (4) a documented partnership model adaptable by teacher preparation programs in other rural, regional, and tribal-serving communities. Partners include public libraries, historical societies, tribal archives, and cultural centers across the eastern Upper Peninsula. No cost share is required; LSSU requests \$75,714 in IMLS funds across two project years.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The Need: A Region Rich in History, Underserved in Archival Education. The Upper Peninsula of Michigan is a place of extraordinary American historical depth. The Anishinaabe peoples — including the Ojibwe communities of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Bay Mills Indian Community — have inhabited the Great Lakes region for thousands of years, maintaining archives of treaties, cultural knowledge, and community memory that represent irreplaceable primary sources. The copper mining industry that transformed the Keweenaw Peninsula beginning in the 1840s drew laborers from Cornwall, Finland, Croatia, and dozens of other nations, leaving behind a rich documentary record of immigration, labor organizing, and ethnic community life. During the Civil War, Michigan regiments drawn from Upper Peninsula communities fought in some of the conflict's most consequential engagements — their letters, photographs, and muster records held in libraries and historical societies across the region. The Great Lakes themselves are documented in naturalist surveys, fisheries records, and ecological archives stretching back to early American settlement, offering primary sources for environmental history unlike any available in nationally packaged curricula.

Yet K–12 teachers in the Upper Peninsula — and the pre-service teacher candidates who will soon join them — are prepared almost entirely with curricula designed for a broad national audience. These materials, however carefully constructed, cannot reflect the particularity of place: the local labor strike, the specific treaty, the ecological change visible in a century of water-quality records from Lake Superior. Research in place-based education consistently demonstrates that locally rooted learning deepens civic identity, strengthens student engagement, and supports culturally sustaining pedagogy (Sobel, 2004; Gruenewald & Smith, 2008). Recent empirical work confirms that the emotional bonds young people form with their places and communities — cultivated through locally grounded instruction — are among the strongest predictors of long-term community attachment and civic participation (Carrasco-Cruz & Cruz-Souza, 2025). When schools draw curriculum from generic national materials rather than local archives and community knowledge, they inadvertently train students to be consumers of a standardized national narrative rather than active participants in the particular history of the places they inhabit. For rural and remote communities like those of the Upper Peninsula, where depopulation and economic fragility are real concerns, this matters enormously.

Community archives are the obvious corrective — but only if teachers know how to find, evaluate, and ethically use them. Most do not. There is no systematic preparation in archival literacy in LSSU's current teacher education curriculum, and there is no documented model for how a regional university's teacher preparation program can partner with community archives and tribal cultural centers to produce such preparation. This is the gap *Rooted in Place* addresses.

The Established Model: Community-Centered Implementation projects must adapt an existing model to a local context. *Rooted in Place* draws on three well-established and complementary models. First, the

Society of American Archivists (SAA) and the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) jointly published *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (2018), which defines the competencies students and researchers need to work effectively and ethically with primary sources — including skills in evaluating provenance and context, navigating finding aids, and understanding archival arrangement. This framework provides the archival literacy learning objectives and pedagogical scaffolding at the core of the *Rooted in Place* module, adapted here for pre-service teacher candidates rather than undergraduate researchers. Second, the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) program has produced extensive resources for K–12 primary source integration, including teacher professional development frameworks and lesson plan templates — resources that are nationally tested but oriented toward national collections, and that require adaptation for local and community-held archives. Third, IMLS-funded projects including the Wayne State University / Walter P. Reuther Library's Bridging the Gap initiative have developed models for connecting archival professionals with educators in urban and regional contexts. *Rooted in Place* explicitly adapts these frameworks to the specific institutional context of a rural, regional university working with community archives and tribal cultural centers in a resource-limited environment — a context none of these models directly addresses.

Who Will Benefit. The immediate target group is LSSU pre-service teacher candidates enrolled in CoGLEE social studies courses across both project years — an estimated 40–60 candidates in total. These candidates will graduate into K–12 classrooms across the Upper Peninsula and, increasingly, into rural and regional school systems elsewhere in Michigan. The ultimate beneficiaries are the K–12 students they will serve, who will gain access to instruction grounded in locally held primary sources rather than generic national materials. The broader library, archives, and teacher education communities will benefit from the open-access practitioner guide and lesson plan repository, which are designed for adaptation by other rural, regional, and tribal-serving institutions. Community archive and library partners will benefit through deepened relationships with LSSU's teacher preparation programs and through increased visibility and use of their collections.

PROJECT WORK PLAN

Overview of Activities. *Rooted in Place* unfolds in two integrated phases across a 24-month period of performance (September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2028). *Rooted in Place* is structured around two pilot cohorts of pre-service teacher candidates, both enrolled in CoGLEE's Social Studies Methods course — which is offered once annually, in the spring semester. This course structure drives the project timeline: Year 1 fall and winter are devoted to community engagement, landscape assessment, and module development, culminating in a first developmental pilot in Spring Year 1; Summer Year 1 is used to analyze pilot data and refine the module; the refined module is then piloted with a second cohort in Spring Year 2, followed by final packaging and dissemination. This two-cohort design ensures that the module undergoes a documented revision cycle and that findings rest on evidence from multiple groups of teacher candidates. The project is led by the Project Director, an assistant professor in LSSU's CoGLEE with scholarly expertise in place-based learning, primary source pedagogy, and community archival engagement. The Project Director will be supported by a part-time Project Coordinator (10

hours/week, both years) and a Student Assistant (Year 1 only). The Community Advisory Team will convene regularly throughout the project, ensuring that community archive partners and Indigenous cultural knowledge holders have meaningful input into all phases.

Year 1 (September 2026 – August 2027): Community Engagement, Needs Assessment, and Module Development.

Year 1 activities begin in fall 2026 with the convening of the Community Advisory Team (CAT). The CAT will include: representatives from at least three community archive and library partners in the eastern Upper Peninsula (including representatives from tribal archives or cultural centers affiliated with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Bay Mills Indian Community); K–12 educators currently working in UP schools; CoGLEE faculty colleagues; and a consulting archival educator or library science professional. The CAT will meet in fall 2026 to launch the project, in winter 2027 to review the draft module before the spring pilot, and in summer 2027 to debrief the first pilot and guide revisions. Indigenous CAT members will have explicit input into protocols for working with tribally held or culturally sensitive materials, following the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance and established culturally sustaining archival practices.

Concurrently in fall 2026, the Project Director and Project Coordinator will conduct a landscape assessment: a systematic inventory of accessible community archival holdings in the eastern Upper Peninsula, documenting collection scope, access conditions, copyright and cultural sensitivity considerations, and educational potential. The assessment will also include a structured review of existing archival literacy frameworks — including the SAA/RBMS Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy, the LC TPS curriculum, and relevant IMLS-funded project documentation — to identify what can be directly adapted for the CoGLEE context and what requires original development. Partner agreements will be finalized by December 2026.

In winter 2027, the project team will draft the archival literacy module for CAT review: a structured set of learning experiences to be embedded in CoGLEE's Social Studies Methods course. The module will include: (1) foundational instruction in archival literacy — how archives are organized, described, and accessed, and how primary sources are evaluated for reliability, perspective, and context; (2) guided engagement with partner collections, both physically and digitally; (3) culturally sustaining pedagogy frameworks for working ethically with Indigenous and community-held materials; (4) lesson plan design workshops in which teacher candidates create and peer-review archive-based lesson plans for use in their field placements; and (5) structured reflection protocols for candidates to document their learning. The CAT will review the draft module in February 2027, and feedback will be incorporated before the spring pilot launch. This first pilot is explicitly developmental: the module is expected to be refined, not perfected, and formative data collection is built into the pilot design from the outset.

The first pilot will run during Spring semester 2027 (approximately January–April), with archive and library partners co-facilitating selected sessions. Teacher candidates will design and, where possible, implement archive-based lesson plans in their spring field placements. Formative evaluation data — including pre/post archival literacy assessments, candidate reflections, and lesson plan quality reviews — will be collected throughout. The Project Director’s summer 2027 salary supports intensive analysis of first-pilot data, documented revision of the module, and drafting of the practitioner guide. The Project Coordinator will compile evaluation data and manage partner communications.

Year 2 (September 2027 – August 2028): Piloting, Evaluation, and Dissemination.

Fall 2027 is devoted to preparation for the second pilot: finalizing revisions to the module based on first-pilot analysis, confirming partner roles and session schedules, and updating data collection instruments. The refined module will be piloted with a second cohort in Spring semester 2028 (approximately January–April). As with the first pilot, archive and library partners will co-facilitate selected sessions, and teacher candidates will design and implement archive-based lesson plans in their field placements. Because this cohort encounters the revised module, comparison of formative data across the two cohorts will constitute the project’s summative evaluation of module effectiveness.

Formative and summative evaluation will be guided by the project’s Performance Measurement Plan. Data collected across both pilots will include: pre/post archival literacy assessments (effectiveness); candidate reflections and lesson plan quality reviews (quality and effectiveness); partner and CAT satisfaction surveys (quality); and milestone completion tracking against the Schedule of Completion (timeliness). Cross-cohort comparison — first pilot versus revised second pilot — will provide evidence of module improvement and establish a baseline for future replication.

In spring and summer 2028, the project team will finalize and package all deliverables: the open-access practitioner guide, the curated lesson plan repository, and the documented partnership model. The practitioner guide will be written for audiences beyond LSSU — specifically for teacher educators at other rural, regional, and tribal-serving institutions who wish to build similar community archive partnerships. It will include explicit guidance on: identifying and accessing community archives; building ethical partnerships with Indigenous cultural knowledge holders; adapting archival literacy instruction to local collections; and sustaining archive-based learning beyond a single grant period. The CAT will meet one final time in summer 2028 to review deliverables before public release. All materials will be released under Creative Commons licensing and hosted on a publicly accessible repository.

Staff, Partners, and Qualifications. The Project Director holds a doctoral degree and has scholarly expertise in place-based learning, social studies education, and community archival engagement. CoGLEE faculty colleagues bring complementary expertise in methods instruction and field supervision. The Project Coordinator position will be filled through LSSU's student or staff hiring processes; position

qualifications will include experience with project coordination, community outreach, and preferably library or archival work. Community archive partners — to be confirmed through partnership letters submitted as Supporting Documents — bring collection expertise, archival professional knowledge, and established community relationships that are essential to the project's success. The CAT structure ensures that community voices, including Indigenous knowledge holders, shape project decisions rather than merely validating them.

Stakeholder Engagement and Evaluation. Stakeholder engagement is embedded throughout the project rather than treated as a discrete activity. The CAT structure, described above, ensures meaningful community input at every phase. Formative evaluation data — collected continuously from candidates, partners, and mentors — will be used iteratively to improve the module during the project period. A summative evaluation report will be produced at project close, documenting outcomes against the Performance Measurement Plan and identifying lessons learned for the field.

PROJECT RESULTS

Intended Deliverables. By August 31, 2028, Rooted in Place will have produced the following results:

(1) A tested, replicable archival literacy module integrated into CoGLEE's pre-service teacher education curriculum. The module will have been piloted with an estimated 40–60 teacher candidates across two cohorts and refined through formative evaluation. It will be documented in sufficient detail for adoption and adaptation by other teacher preparation programs.

(2) An open-access practitioner guide for teacher educators and their library and archive partners. The guide will address the full arc of building and sustaining a community archive partnership in teacher preparation: from identifying collections and establishing partnerships, to integrating archival literacy into methods coursework, to assessing candidate learning and sustaining the work institutionally. Special attention will be given to culturally sustaining practices for working with Indigenous-held or community-sensitive materials.

(3) A curated, annotated repository of model archive-based lesson plans. Plans will span K–12 grade levels and multiple subject areas, will be tied to Michigan and national curriculum standards, and will include implementation notes based on candidate field experience. The repository will be organized for browsability by grade band, subject, and archive type, and will be released under Creative Commons licensing.

(4) A documented partnership model. The model will describe the organizational structures, roles, agreements, and communication protocols developed between CoGLEE and its community archive partners — serving as a template for other institutions seeking to build similar relationships.

Addressing the Need. These deliverables directly address the gap identified in the Project Justification: the absence of archival literacy preparation in pre-service teacher education at regional universities. Teacher candidates who complete the module will enter K–12 classrooms prepared to use community archives — and specifically the rich, historically significant collections of the Upper Peninsula — as primary source material for instruction. The K–12 students they teach will encounter American history, including the American stories of Indigenous peoples, immigrant laborers, Civil War soldiers, and Great Lakes communities, through the primary sources that document those stories rather than through the filtered lens of national textbook publishers.

Adaptability and Replicability. The model is designed for replication. The practitioner guide, partnership model, and lesson plan repository are all framed around transferable principles rather than LSSU-specific content, and the project's documentation will explicitly address what conditions are necessary for the model to succeed in other contexts. Rural and regional teacher preparation programs — of which there are many across the Upper Peninsula, the rural Midwest, and tribal-serving institutions nationally — face very similar challenges: locally rich archival resources, no systematic teacher preparation in archival literacy, and limited capacity to develop such preparation without external support. The Rooted in Place model is designed precisely for this context.

Dissemination. Project results will be disseminated through multiple channels to reach the intended beneficiary communities. The Project Director will present findings at regional and national conferences including the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) annual conference, the Society of American Archivists annual meeting, the Michigan Association of School Librarians, and the American Educational Research Association (AERA). The open-access repository will be announced through IMLS's own dissemination channels, through the LC Teaching with Primary Sources network, and through CoGLEE's professional networks. A project summary article will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal in archival science or teacher education in Year 2. The practitioner guide and lesson plan repository will be linked from partner organization websites to ensure ongoing discoverability.

Sustainability. The archival literacy module will be integrated into CoGLEE's standing curriculum upon project completion, ensuring that the learning it produces continues beyond the grant period without requiring additional external funding. Partnership agreements with community archives and libraries will be formalized during the project and designed to be maintained as ongoing institutional relationships rather than grant-dependent contracts. The open-access repository will be hosted on a platform with a sustainability plan (to be specified in the Digital Products Plan) ensuring long-term availability. The project's documented outcomes will also position LSSU for follow-on National Implementation funding through IMLS if the Community-Centered Implementation model demonstrates strong results — a pathway explicitly anticipated in the IMLS program structure.

REFERENCES

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Schedule of Completion — Year 1

September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027

Rooted in Place: Building Teacher Capacity to Use Community Archives for Place-Based Learning

Activity	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT												
Convene Community Advisory Team												
Archival landscape assessment												
Review archival literacy frameworks												
Finalize partner agreements												
CAT Meeting #1 — project launch												
MODULE DEVELOPMENT												
Draft archival literacy module												
CAT Meeting #2 — module review												
Revise module / develop data												
FIRST PILOT — Social Studies Methods, Spring 2027 (Jan–Apr)												
Module delivery — Cohort 1												
Partner co-facilitation sessions												
Candidate lesson plan design & field												
Formative data collection												
CAT Meeting #3 — pilot debrief												
ANALYSIS & REVISION (Summer 2027)												
Analyze first-pilot data												
Revise module for second pilot												
Draft practitioner guide (initial)												
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION												
Project coordination & documentation												
Interim performance report												

Legend:

Key milestone

Ongoing activity

Inactive

Schedule of Completion — Year 2

September 1, 2027 – August 31, 2028

Rooted in Place: Building Teacher Capacity to Use Community Archives for Place-Based Learning

Activity	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
PREPARATION FOR SECOND PILOT												
Finalize module revisions												
Confirm partner roles & session												
Update data collection instruments												
CAT Meeting #4 — pre-pilot review												
SECOND PILOT — Social Studies Methods, Spring 2028 (Jan–Apr)												
Module delivery — Cohort 2												
Partner co-facilitation sessions												
Candidate lesson plan design & field												
Summative & formative data collection												
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION & DELIVERABLE PACKAGING												
Cross-cohort evaluation analysis												
Finalize practitioner guide												
Curate & annotate lesson plan												
Document partnership model												
CAT Meeting #5 — deliverable review												
Publish repository (Creative Commons)												
DISSEMINATION												
Conference presentations (NCSS, SAA)												
Journal article submission												
Partner & network announcements												
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION												
Project coordination & documentation												
Final performance & financial report												

Legend:

Key milestone

Ongoing activity

Inactive