NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRAY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-259176-OLS-25

Aleut Community of St. Paul Island

Amount awarded by IMLS: $149,865

The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island will enhance a collection of oral histories available at tanamawaa.com to make them more accessible. The existing audio is not user-friendly to all audiences, and descendants of the storytellers and other interested community members require transcriptions and supplementary materials to fully grasp the context of the recordings. Focusing on 20 interviews with elders on St. Paul Island, as well as recovered 1994 audio interviews with Father Michael Lestenkof, the project will generate transcription for 40-50 hours of interviews for those who prefer or require written documentation. It will also index and supplement the audio recordings with additional descriptions, historical context, and photographs.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Tribal Profile
- 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.

Tribal Profile

"Aleut Community of St. Paul Island" is a title by which the federal government of the United States formally recognizes the tribe, which consists of the members of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island; or Unangax̂, as they identify themselves, who have a time-honored common bond of living together; a nation born, living, and self-governing before the United States was conceived.

The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government is a governmental venue consisting of approximately 100 employees through which the Unangax̂ of St. Paul Island can fulfill their intrinsic rights and responsibilities, and support, recollect, practice, and pass on their culture. It promotes, maintains, and protects cultural practices, awareness, preservation, self-governance, and self-determination for the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island and does much in its power to provide for the well-being of the community; continuously thinking outside the box in a challenging strive towards developing and keeping expertise and services that contribute to social and economic security and presence on the home island.

Tanax̂-Unaaĝim Maqax̂singin (TUM, "Office of Cultural Affairs"), the department of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government that will carry out the project, was established by tribal resolution in 2008. Its mission is to:

- Maintain, encourage, and preserve knowledge, materials, and practices of the time-honored values, beliefs, language, rituals, arts, technology, styles of dress, ways of producing and cooking food, and the spiritual, social, political and economic systems of past, present and future Unaaĝin-Unangan.
- Maintain, encourage, and preserve quality and productive interacting and existence of, by, and for citizens of Tanax̂-Amix̂ ["Saint Paul Island"] through education, artistry, and enriching, enlightening, literary, intellectual, technological, national, and social cultivation.

The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island is a community in transition, adjusting to the cultural shock waves of Euro-American contact and governance. Beginning with enslavement by the Czar of Russia's fur companies, through the 1867 Treaty of Cession to the United States of America with Marshall law and forced labor, the Unangax̂, or Aleut, people of St. Paul Island are on the front line of contact and efforts toward natural resources conquest. The Aleut people are survivors and have maintained dignity through a turbulent history exposing them to cultural, physical, and psychological trauma in the form of slavery, World War II Internment Camps, Native boarding schools away from home and family; corporal puishment for speaking their language; epidemics of disease filling the Island's cemetery; proselytization and condemnation of traditional spiritual practices; and overabundant interaction with the non-Native child welfare, justice, and corrections systems.

St. Paul Island, one of the five Pribilof Islands, is located in the middle of the Bering Sea, 300 miles from the Alaska mainland; 800 miles from Anchorage, the closest urban center; and 300 miles north of the Aleutian Chain. It is one of two inhabited islands in the Pribilof Islands with a population of less than 400 people, 95% of which are tribal members. Its total land and water area is 295 square miles and the island's land area is 40.32 square miles.

Project Narrative

Project Justification:

What current need, challenge, or opportunity will your project address and how was it identified? Describe how you have used reliable sources to define the need, challenge, or opportunity and develop the scope for the project.

Since 2008, the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island (ACSPI) Tanax̂-Unaaĝim Maqax̂singin (TUM, "Office of Cultural Affairs") has been working to keep ACSPI's knowledge of its history, culture, and Unangam Tunuu (Aleut) language alive. TUM staff are currently working on the Island Times Visits (ITV) project during which they are recording 20 interviews with elders who presently reside on St. Paul Island but have lived in one or both of the communities of the Pribilof Islands (St. Paul Island and St. George Island). The ITV project will be completed by August 2025. TUM has also audio interviews with Father Michael Lestenkof (FML) conducted in 1994. These interviews collectively total approximately 40-50 hours of audio recordings that capture the lived experiences and historical narratives of those who have played integral roles in shaping the present of the communities of the Pribilof Islands. The audio recordings of the completed ITV interviews as well as FML interviews are currently available on the TUM created website tanamawaa.com. However, audio recordings alone are not always accessible or fully comprehensible to all audiences. Many descendants of the storytellers and other interested community members require transcriptions and supplementary materials to fully grasp the context of the recordings. Hence, to ensure that the recorded oral histories are more user friendly, accessible, and understandable for current and future generations, there is a need to transcribe the audios, index topics covered, and supplement the interviews with additional audio, written descriptions, and photographs to clarify and enhance the information provided in the audio recordings.

The 2017-2022 Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) highlights the importance of preserving local culture, history, and economic narratives as a means of strengthening community identity and resilience. The findings from the CEDS report, alongside demographic and economic data, underscore the need for this project as a means of fostering cultural continuity and community engagement.

Who is the primary audience for your project and how have they been involved in the planning? "*Primary audience*" refers to those who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project. For example: K-12 youth, elders, parents/caregivers, other tribal departments, etc.

Bridging Generations: Documenting and Enhancing Oral Traditions of the Pribilof Islands project is designed to serve a broad primary audience that includes 345 youth, adults, and elders of St. Paul Island of whom approximately 310 are Unangax̂. Their participation has been a critical component in the planning and development of this project. The project originated from community-identified needs during the Island Times Visits project where community members expressed the necessity of enhancing ITV interview audios to make them more accessible and user friendly for current and future generations. Additionally, the project will serve an extended

audience beyond the island, which includes 5,000 users who visited tanamawaa.com in 2024, KUCB Unalaska and KSDP Sand Point radio station listeners, as well as future generations who will inherit a digital archive of these invaluable historical materials.

Project Work Plan:

What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence? Who will execute each activity? Be sure to identify all key staff.

Key Staff:

Project Director (PD) – TUM Department Grant Project Specialist Dr. Michael Crone has ten years of administrative experience in education and Federal contracting. He has had connections and regular travel to the St. Paul Island community for 24 years including five years of residence on the island. Dr. Crone has worked for the ACSPI's TUM Department for nine years. He has provided project direction for several Federal grants including previous IMLS grants all of which met financial and programmatic regulatory requirements. For this project he will provide overall leadership and oversight, ensuring that project activities align with the approved plan and budget. He will also participate in project meetings and work sessions, travel to St. Paul twice a year to oversee the project and prepare all progress and final reports.

Project Manager (PM) - TUM Department Director and Content Specialist Aquilina Lestenkof has attained Unaaĝim culture bearer status through direct instruction provided to her by preceding culture bearers of the Aleut communities of the Pribilof Islands. Aquilina has 31 years of experience of applying her locally attained knowledge to organizing and directing programs that have, and continue to, contribute to the education and wellbeing of Unangaŝ. For this project she will serve as an advisor to PD and will oversee the transcription, indexing, and enhancement of audio interviews.

The Project Assistant (PA) – PA will be hired by PD & PM to assist with administrative project tasks, transcription, indexing, and enhancement of the audios.

Project Activities and Sequence:

Timeline	Activity	Person Responsible
Year 1 Quarter 1	Hire a Project Assistant	PD & PM
	Develop a transcription framework and style guide	PD & PM
	Research and identify indexing software	PD & PA
	Identify indexing categories and metadata structure	PD & PM
	Establish protocols for accuracy review	PD & PM

Year 1 Quarters 2-4	Transcribe 8-10 ITV audio recordings	PA
	Conduct indexing of topics covered in each recording for easy searchability	PM & PA
	Supplement transcripts with contextual descriptions, historical background, and cultural explanations	PM & PA
	Gather and integrate relevant photographs and written descriptions to provide visual context	PM & PA
	Review the enhanced interview content with ITV elders.	PM
	Publish enhanced content on tanamawaa.com	PA
	Archive all transcriptions and supplementary materials alongside the original recordings	PA
	Hold community event(s) to showcase the finalized materials and gather feedback	PD & PM
Year 2 Quarters 1-4	Transcribe remaining 10-12 ITV audio recordings and Father Michael Lestenkof interviews	PA
	Conduct indexing of topics covered in each recording for easy searchability	PM & PA
	Supplement transcripts with contextual descriptions, historical background, and cultural explanations	PM & PA
	Gather and integrate relevant photographs and written descriptions to provide visual context	PM & PA
	Review the enhanced interview content with ITV elders.	PM
	Publish enhanced content on tanamawaa.com	PA

	Archive all transcriptions and supplementary materials alongside the original recordings	PA
	Hold community event(s) to showcase the finalized materials and gather feedback	PD & PM

How have you involved stakeholders in the planning and development of the project and how will you incorporate their input throughout the project?

Community involvement has been central to the planning and development of this project. The need for the project was first identified by community members who participated in community feedback sessions regarding the ITV project. Their feedback highlighted the need to make the recorded narratives more accessible and comprehensible to current and future generations. The project team has also engaged with the Pribilof School District to explore how the materials can be enhanced for use in educational programming. Stakeholders will continue to be involved in the project implementation process through Tribal Meetings, community feedback sessions, and surveys. Elders who participated in the ITV interviews will review and approve the transcripts and supplemental materials of the enhanced audio recordings.

What existing resources within the Tribe, assets within the library or community, and/or potential partners will you use during this project to aid in its success?

Bridging Generations: Documenting and Enhancing Oral Traditions of the Pribilof Islands project will leverage the existing ACSPI infrastructure and TUM's qualified staff who will provide administrative support, oversight, and logistical coordination for the project. TUM will utilize the 1994 Father Michael Lestenkof audio interviews and completed Island Times Visits interviews with elders residing on St. Paul Island. The ACSPI Library and Archives will serve as a physical and digital access point for transcriptions, indexed recordings, and supplementary materials. The project's digital home tanamawaa.com will serve as the primary distribution point for transcriptions and enhanced stories. The ACSPI's IT department will aid in maintaining and securing digital content, while ACSPI's enhanced broadband access will ensure timely uploading and sharing of project materials. TUM will continue to partner with KUHB St. Paul Island radio station and will establish new partnerships with KSDP Sand Point and KUCB Unalaska radio stations to increase the reach of the project to the Aleutian East and West Boroughs.

How and with whom will you share your work's results and lessons learned?

The PD and PM will include results and summaries of lessons learned in quarterly reports to the Tribal Council, articles to the annual ACSPI newsletter, and at the bi-annual meeting of ACSPI membership. The PD will also provide informal updates on findings to other Unangax̂ communities in the region through his participation in weekly teleconference meetings with other communities in the region. Annual reports to IMLS will be completed by the PD as required.

Project Results:

What are your project's intended results and/or product(s), and how will they address the need, challenge, or opportunity you identified in the Project Justification section?

This project aims to produce the following results:

- Complete transcriptions of 40-50 hours of St. Paul Island elder oral histories to ensure accessibility for those who prefer or require written documentation.
- A comprehensive index of topics to allow users to efficiently navigate and reference key themes and events.
- Supplementary cultural and historical materials which will provide additional details and explanations to enhance understanding.
- Digital archive for long-term preservation to ensure continued access through tanamawaa.com.

By providing written transcriptions, indexed themes, and supplementary descriptions, this project will address key accessibility and preservation concerns. It will enhance understanding of history, culture, place, and community, and will ensure that St. Paul Island elder narratives can be effectively shared across generations, especially with younger community members who may not be familiar with historical references made in the recordings. The project will also provide clarity on colloquialisms and cultural nuances that might otherwise be lost without written documentation. Additionally, creating an indexed and enhanced collection of these histories ensures that they can be easily referenced, studied, and used in educational or cultural settings. Access to enhanced recordings will enrich the learning experiences of youth and students, helping them understand aspects of their cultural heritage and history more deeply. Pribilof School District teachers and educators will gain access to culturally relevant materials that can be integrated into school curricula, helping to teach students about their Pribilof Islands heritage in a more engaging and comprehensive way. Overall, by achieving these results, Bridging Generations: Documenting and Enhancing Oral Traditions of the Pribilof Islands project will address the identified need by making historical knowledge more accessible, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering deeper community engagement with St. Paul Island's history for generations to come. ACSPI runs a variety of educational, cultural, language, and community programs throughout the year onsite. These programs will be adapted, informed, and improved via access to these enhanced oral histories.

How do you define success for this project, and how will it be evaluated?

The project success will be measured by meeting the following objectives:

1) 100% of interviews transcribed, indexed, and enhanced with supplemental information by the end of the project.
2) At least 80% of elders surveyed express satisfaction with how their stories are transcribed, indexed, and enhanced.
3) At least 80% of community members surveyed report high satisfaction with the quality of the transcriptions, indexing, and enhancement materials.

4) At least a 5% increase in website visits on tanamawaa.com after Year 2.
5) 100% of all materials successfully archived for long-term storage ensuring access for future generations.

To assess the effectiveness of the project, the Project Director will implement an internal evaluation plan that includes:

- *Quarterly Progress Reviews* during which, the Project Director will assess milestones met, challenges faced, and corrective actions needed.
- *Community Events/Feedback Sessions* where community members will provide feedback on the accessibility, accuracy, and relevance of transcriptions, indexing, and supplementary materials.
- *Website Analytics* which will track user engagement with the tanamawaa.com to measure interest and accessibility.
- *Final Evaluation Report* will prepare a comprehensive analysis of project achievements and successes, lessons learned, and recommendations for future initiatives.

How will you disseminate the results (deliverables, lessons learned, etc.) of the project to the primary audience?

All transcriptions, indexed topics, and supplemental materials will be available for the primary audience on tanamawaa.com. The results and deliverables will also be disseminated through local gatherings, cultural events, and ACSPI Tribal meetings. The Pribilof School District will have access to the materials for incorporation into history and cultural studies curricula. Radio partners KUHB St. Paul Island, KSDP Sand Point, and KUCB Unalaska will air the interviews and will have interview transcripts available on their websites. By using multiple platforms for dissemination, the project ensures that its impact is broad, accessible, and sustainable.

How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

To ensure the long-term impact and sustainability of this project beyond the grant period, all transcriptions, indexed topics, and supplementary materials will be archived on tanamawaa.com and the ACSPI's digital repositories to ensure permanent access. The ACSPI and the Pribilof School District will incorporate the materials into educational and cultural programs, ensuring continued use in classrooms and community discussions. The materials will be referenced in future cultural and historical initiatives, ensuring that the work done through this project serves as a foundation for ongoing documentation and storytelling. By embedding the project's results into existing community structures and digital archives, the benefits of this project will be sustained well into the future, ensuring that the voices of the Pribilof Islands' elders remain accessible for generations to come.

Schedule of Completion Year 1	Months											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hire a Project Assistant												
Monthly project meetings												
Develop a transcription framework and style guide												
Research and identify indexing software												
Identify indexing categories and metadata structure												
Establish protocols for accuracy review												
Quaterly project review and report to Tribal Council												
Transcribe 8-10 ITV audio recordings												
Conduct indexing of topics covered in each recording for easy searchability												
Supplement transcripts with contextual descriptions, historical background, and cultural explanations												
Gather and integrate relevant photographs and written descriptions to provide visual context												
Review the enhanced interview content with ITV elders.												
Publish enhanced content on tanamawaa.com												
Archive all transcriptions and supplementary materials alongside the original recordings												
Hold community event(s) to showcase the finalized materials and gather feedback												
Prepare annual report for IMLS												

Schedule of Completion Year 2	Months											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Monthly project meetings												
Transcribe remaining 10-12 ITV audio recordings and FML interviews												
Conduct indexing of topics covered in each recording for easy searchability												
Supplement transcripts with contextual descriptions, historical background, and cultural explanations												
Gather and integrate relevant photographs and written descriptions to provide visual context												
Review the enhanced interview content with ITV elders.												
Publish enhanced content on tanamawaa.com												
Archive all transcriptions and supplementary materials alongside the original recordings												
Quaterly project review and report to Tribal Council												
Hold community event(s) to showcase the finalized materials and gather feedback												
Conduct internal project evaluation and prepare final report for IMLS												