



NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-259250-OLS-25

Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$89,276

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation will improve library operations through increased staffing as well as language and culture-based educational programming for tribal members. The project will support increased library hours as well as monthly cultural programming focusing on Shoshone Language and culture and history. This will connect tribal members to important resources such the language archive, historical documents, and other educational materials. The aim is to increase patron usage of these library resources to support the well-being and educational goals of Northwestern Shoshone tribal members.

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

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation (NWBSN) is a federally recognized tribe with headquarters in Ogden, Utah. The Northwestern Band of Shoshone have historically occupied the regions of Northern Utah and Southeastern Idaho. Federal recognition was provided through the Treaty of Fort Bridger of 1868. Today the NWBSN tribal government consists of eight elected council members, an appointed executive director and nine staff members. The departments include childcare, cultural resources, housing, healthcare, and environmental protection.

Historically, the NWBSN did not have a reservation, but today maintain allotment and fee land outside of the town of Portage, Utah. This area was once a Northwestern Shoshone settlement and vibrant community known as Washakie. Today tribal membership sits at 579 with most tribal members residing in Northern Utah in the cities of Ogden, Brigham City, and along the Wasatch Front mountains. Tribal youth who attend K-12 number 150.

The *Growing our Library* project will allow us to support tribal members through tribal library services and ensuring access to our resources, providing opportunities for engagement and learning for the well-being and success of Northwestern Shoshone people. The project will be overseen by the cultural resources department.

Narrative

Project Justification

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation (NWBSN) *Growing our Library Project* focuses on increasing the capacity of our tribal library to support the education and well-being of tribal members through library services. In 2024 the tribal office was renovated, including the library. This allowed us to purchase new shelving and make improvements to library programming and educational services. While we have made initial gains, there is still room for growth and improvement.

The tribal council and cultural resource staff have identified two gaps in our library. First, library operations need improvement through increased staff, and second, we need to increase patron usage of library services and resources. Drawing on feedback from tribal members at tribal council meetings and events, staff have identified these two themes as our current challenges. The *Growing our Library Project* will address these gaps through two objectives: 1) improving library operations and 2) increasing library patronage through cultural programming. The intended result for the *Growing Our Library* project is to increase the effectiveness and impact of our tribal library.

Improving library operations through staffing will help the library provide daily services to tribal members. This is a crucial need as our staff is limited and the library is currently managed by the cultural resource manager who has additional responsibilities. Further, increasing library patronage through cultural programming includes the ongoing development of Shoshone Language and culture-based education classes and NWBSN family history workshops. Through the determined objectives and their subsequent

activities, we will be able to address the identified gaps and improve our ability to provide services to our tribal members.

Primary audience

The primary audience for this project is all NWBSN tribal members, but specifically parents, caregivers, and youth (K-12). Drawing on feedback from tribal members through tribal council meetings and events, staff have identified the need to improve library operations with more open hours and community access. Additionally, we have received feedback from tribal members asking for access to language, culture, and family history education. We have incorporated this feedback into the planning of the *Growing Our Library* project as we aim to meet the needs of tribal members through the tribal library services and events.

Project work plan

Project activities are organized to support the two main objectives of 1) improving library operations and 2) increasing library patronage through cultural programming. Associated activities support each objective allowing for project completion in a timely and successful manner.

Objective 1: Improving Library Operations

To complete this objective, the initial activity is to recruit, interview, and hire a part time tribal librarian. The responsibilities for this position include catalogue and database management, maintaining library operating hours, and implementing cultural programming. This individual is the primary contact for tribal members and tribal-facing library functions. In addition to the librarian, a part time staff assistant will be hired. This is

a supportive role reporting to the librarian and aids in executing primary operations such as opening the library, aiding patrons in checking out materials, and general database management. Both positions report to the cultural resource manager.

The NWBSN Cultural Resource manager is responsible for executing this activity and overseeing the development of a job posting, interviewing, selecting and hiring both positions in close collaboration with the tribal council. The cultural resource manager will serve as the project director and will oversee these two new staff lines. Improving library operations requires supplies and materials that can enhance the physical library space. This includes purchasing additional shelving, seating, books, printing costs, and consumable costs associated with creating materials for cultural programming events.

Objective 2: Increasing library patronage through cultural programming

Activities that support this objective include two main cultural programming events held in person at the tribal office during the grant cycle. This is the Shoshone Language and culture camp as well as the Shoshone family history workshops. The language camps are one day weekend events for families to learn Shoshone Language and culture. The family history workshops are focused on genealogy for tribal members as well as the history of the Northwestern Band to be held in the evening.

These events meet the identified needs of tribal members as expressed in council meetings and that we have heard at community events. Further, each of these events connects tribal members to specific resources that we have in our library. For example, our Shoshone Language archive as well as our tribal archive including family photos, historical

documents, and media. These are materials we want tribal members to engage with more deeply.

To aid in the facilitation of these events, the library will contract with a Shoshone language teacher for the language camps. The family history workshops will be conducted in house by our cultural resource manager who is also the tribal historian. Marketing and recruitment for the events will be done by librarian and staff assistant. These events will occur on an alternating basis every month.

Current resources & partners

The main resources for this project will come from within the tribe. The library falls under the direction the cultural resource manager. In addition, other departments such as NWBSN Childcare and NWBSN Housing have been strong stakeholders in providing the tribal library with support. These three departments have all contributed time to support in the development of the library's physical space as well as media and materials for tribal members. These departments are crucial stakeholders for library services.

An additional resource is the current network of tribal members who participate in language and culture activities. These individuals, mostly families, have been asking for cultural programs and library resources to learn the Shoshone Language as well as history. In addition, we have a small but powerful network of Shoshone cultural educators and elders that we work with to consult on educational programming and curriculum for our events. Through the *Growing Our Library* project, we envision the NWBSN Tribal Library will become a central location and resource for Shoshone Language and culture education for years to come.

Intended results

Objective 1: Improving Library Operations

The intended result for this objective is to improve library operations through staffing both the librarian and staff assistant. Staffing and operations are a critical and crucial issue to support the library. The tribe is limited in staff and needs individuals who are dedicated specifically to the success of the library. Staffing the library through a part time librarian and staff assistant will ensure stronger operations. This includes opening the library for patron hours Monday-Friday from 9:00am – 4:00pm. These positions provide the bedrock from which the rest of library operations, programming, and services can be developed and implemented.

Objective 2: Increasing library patronage through cultural programming

The intended results of objective two is to increase patron engagement with library materials and resources through cultural programming. Specifically, through the Shoshone Language and culture camps and family history workshops. The resources we want patrons to use include does not only include books, but also our Shoshone Language archive and historical documents. Results for this objective include increased attendance at cultural and educational events, as well as tribal member use of our available materials.

Defining success

Success is defined as having an operational and highly impactful tribal library at the end of this grant cycle. This includes hiring a librarian, staff assistant, and an active calendar of programming with regular attendance and tribal members accessing and using our tribal library resources.

How we will evaluate success

We plan to collect data that can further demonstrate the effectiveness of the library during the grant cycle. To do this, we will gather both qualitative and quantitative data using both formative and summative assessments. Qualitative data will be collected through surveys at both Shoshone Language camps, family history workshops, and other events specifically focusing on evaluation of library services, what patrons use and enjoy, and what aspects need improvement. This feedback will be used in planning and executing library activities and services.

Quantitative data will be collected in the form of attendance data at cultural program events, numerical data on patron usage of library resources including loans and special collection visits including our language archive, historical documents, books, and other resources. This will be collected through our database software we use for catalogue management. These resources will be promoted and used at our cultural programming events so as to market to patrons. Because the library is growing, we need both types of data to inform decision making of library services and operations.

Disseminating project results

Results, including any deliverables and lessons learned will be shared with our NWBSN Tribal Council and tribal membership at our annual NWBSN meeting. The primary audience is tribal members, therefore any public forum or opportunity for cultural resource staff to share their work and lessons learned is an impactful moment to share and gain feedback from tribal members. Project results will be shared with other stakeholders

including NWBSN Tribal Council and staff. Progress and results will be shared monthly at tribal council meetings.

Sustainability of the project

The sustainability of the project will require close collaboration between tribal departments to ensure that both the librarian and staff assistant roles are maintained, and cultural programming continues after the grant period has ended. It is our goal to establish these roles and demonstrate their need for library operations and services to tribal members. Maintaining these positions after the grant cycle will require cross-departmental support from NWBSN Cultural Resources, Childcare, and Housing all of whom have contributed to the tribal library.

Growing our Library

Through the Growing our Library project, we will meet our two goals to: 1) improve library operations and 2) increase library patronage through cultural programming. Through this project the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation Tribal Library will become the central community center to support tribal members in their well-being and educational success. Drawing on Shoshone Language, culture, and history we aim to meet our objectives, project activities and move our library forward.

Schedule of Completion: Growing our library

September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug
Part time librarian hired and employed												
Staff assistant hired and employed												
Purchase library supplies												
Shoshone Language Camp												
Family History Workshop												

Objectives

Improve library operations
Increase library patronage through cultural programming