# NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRAY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-259269-OLS-25

## Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

Amount awarded by IMLS: $150,000

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. will collaborate with cultural practitioners to hold cultural classes and develop associated materials to increase access to traditional knowledge, cultural practices, artforms, and language of the Unangax (Aleut) people. Tribal community members have expressed a need for greater access to cultural education, but their communities are remote and travel costs are high, which creates barriers to accessing literary resources, historic photographs, and collections. The project will create four Kalikaadan (booklets) that contain information on specific artforms, historic photographs or drawings, and bibliographical references. Project leads will make the booklets available to all community members through the Unangax Heritage Library and Archive. They will collect feedback and use it to refine the booklets.

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 Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit regional corporation conducting business and providing services throughout the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region. APIA was chartered by Congress under the ANCSA 43 U.S. Code§ 1606 (formerly the Aleut League) to provide social, educational, and health services for the Unangaŷ (Aleut) people of the Aleutian Islands, Pribilof Islands, and part of the Alaska Peninsula. APIA was chartered in 1976 as a non-profit corporation in the State of Alaska.




APIA Mission Statement: To provide self-sufficiency and independence of the Unangaŷ (Aleuts) by advocacy, training, technical assistance, and economic enhancement; To assist in meeting the health, safety, and well-being of each Unangaŷ community; To promote, strengthen, and ensure the unity of the Unangaŷ; and, To strengthen and preserve Unangaŷ cultural heritage.

APIA is governed by a 13–member board of directors and serves 13 tribes located in 10 communities in the Region: Agdaaguŷ Tribe of King Cove; Native Village of Akutan; Native Village of Atka; Native Village of Belkofski; Native Village of False Pass; Native Nelson Lagoon Tribal Council; Native Village of Nikolski; Pauloff Harbor Tribe; Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point; Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska; Pribilof Island Aleut Community of St. George; Pribilof Island Aleut Community of St. Paul; and, Native Village of Unga. Directors are appointed by each tribe and serve at the pleasure of the appointing tribal entity. This diverse geographic representation assures that the voice of each community is heard in setting policy and overall direction for APIA.

APIA's headquarters, Unangam Ulaa (home of the Aleuts), is located in Anchorage, Alaska, the largest city in the state and the hub of rural Alaska. APIA delivers services in accordance with our region's tribally established priorities. These include health care, education, social services, behavioral health, public safety, cultural preservation, and other core community needs. APIA's significant experience in providing a wide range of regionally coordinated programs enables our small, isolated tribes to experience a greater level of service and benefits than they would if they were acting alone. APIA has a staff of roughly 170 (100 in Anchorage, 70 in the Region) who deliver services through four departments: 1) Administration (includes Accounting and IT); 2) Health (Primary Care, Behavioral and Community Health); 3) Division of Family and Community Development; and, 4) Cultural Heritage.

In 1996, APIA established its Cultural Heritage Department (CHD) to highlight the critical role of cultural preservation in our people's well-being and identity. CHD has roughly 20 full-time, part-time, and on-call staff, including elders, artists/cultural practitioners, and interns who help carry out programs and projects: Unangaŷ Heritage Library and Archive; APIA Collections; Unangam Tunuu Achigaasalix (learning teaching our language); Cultural Healing Program; APIA Culture Camp; Repatriation; Empowering Unangaŷ Communities Through Workforce Development (Cultural Preservation Specialists); Unangam Tunuu Preservation Program, and, other cultural projects.

The Region is the traditional homeland of our Unangaŷ People. Tribal members reside in the Region, the Greater Anchorage Area, throughout Alaska and abroad. The total population in the Region is 8652, AI/AN population is 1530 (Census data 2024). The total number of tribal enrollees for all 13 tribes is estimated to be 5250 (APIA 2024).

Often called the *"Birthplace of the Winds,"* the Region is known for rain, wind, and fog and is a treeless, windswept landscape of steep, high volcanoes, tundra rich in berries, deep fjords and bays, and beautiful summer meadows. The Region makes up approximately 100,000 square miles of rugged natural beauty that is rich in maritime life, including all five species of salmon, fur seal, sea otter, and whales. The Aleutian chain of 14 large volcanic islands and 55 smaller ones lies on the Pacific Rim of Fire and marks a dividing line between the Bering Sea in the north and the Pacific Ocean to the south.

## Project Justification

**Current need:**
Access to cultural education, traditional knowledge, and related informational resources that can be distributed to participants in tandem with cultural classes.

Through this project, we will offer in-person classes and develop informational resources based on lessons focusing on Unangax̂ cultural material. Resources will be available for distribution to future participants in tandem with cultural classes. This will greatly benefit and enhance the efforts to pass on and strengthen generational ties to traditional ways of life and practices. It will also improve and build upon the materials available within our Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive.

This need has been identified through ongoing communications between the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) and tribal community members, including cultural practitioners and class participants. Additionally, these needs have been highlighted through regularly scheduled meetings with APIA's Board of Directors, who represent our thirteen tribal communities. After many discussions throughout our tribal communities, it has become well established that there is an urgent need to increase access to cultural education and traditional knowledge. This urgency is due largely to the fact that the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region, hereinafter referred to as 'the Region.' is comprised of thirteen tribal entities spread across ten remote geographical locations, separated by great distances and the hindering cost of travel. There is no road system to link our tribal communities to Anchorage or one another. The only modes of transportation to the region are commercial flights or the Alaska State Ferry System, which operates on a monthly rotation from May through September. To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to secure grant funding to offset the cost of travel for our cultural practitioners and to support a Project Coordinator to assist with in-person classes and program management.

Additionally, APIA has a long-standing commitment to promoting and supporting cultural education and traditional knowledge. Our mission is deeply rooted in Unangax̂ culture. We continue our work to inspire and become a positive force in our region and beyond by sharing traditional knowledge, promoting cultural pride, supporting local artists and instructors, and building community. Programming is carried out through in-person classes and gatherings,

where historical context and meanings are shared orally. These sessions provide rich, immersive experiences that allow participants to engage directly with cultural practitioners, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of traditions. By fostering personal connections, we can strengthen community bonds and ensure that knowledge is passed down accurately and meaningfully.

As part of cultural programming, the Project Coordinator will work alongside cultural practitioners during their cultural classes to distribute participant surveys and conduct interviews to collect the data and insights necessary for creating informational booklets, hereinafter referred to as 'Kalikaadan.' Cultural classes will take place in the Region as well as in Anchorage at APIA's culture camp (the largest gathering of Unangax̂ in the state).

Travel has been budgeted as follows:
Project coordinator travel 2x per year to attend in-person cultural classes in the Region.
Cultural Practitioner travel 1x per year to conduct cultural class at APIA's culture camp.

One additional cultural practitioner, located in the Anchorage area, will be hired to conduct a cultural class during APIA's culture camp, eliminating the need for additional travel costs.

Historical records, drawings, and photographs in the Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive, located in APIA's Cultural Heritage Department, will also be utilized to aid in the creation of the Kalikaadan.

The need for this project is furthermore identified in the priorities outlined in APIA's five-year strategic plan as follows:

APIA's Strategic Plan 2022-2026

PRIORITY 1. Preserving Our Culture: Making Elder & Youth Connections

- GOAL 1.2 Teach our youth/family & culture/language at school & home.
  - OBJECTIVE 1.2.2 Increased use of language and culture
- GOAL 1.3 Elder Interview Project—Preserve Traditions

  - OBJECTIVE 1.3.2 Sharing acquired cultural information through multiple forms of media
- GOAL 1.8 Engage artists to bring back traditional knowledge in communities.
  - OBJECTIVE 1.8.1 Support artists to participate in culture camps and classes.
- GOAL 1.8 Engage artists to bring back traditional knowledge in communities.
  - OBJECTIVE 1.8.2 Seek funding to commission artists

**Primary audience:**

This project will focus directly on cultural practitioners and the participants in their classes. It will benefit all Unangax̂ people by expanding access to cultural education through in-person cultural classes and the information provided within the Kalikaadan. The work being done through APIA's commitment to promoting and supporting cultural education and traditional knowledge made it possible to identify the course of action needed to plan and implement this project. This includes direct feedback from cultural practitioners, participants who have taken their classes, and tribal community members.

**Project Work Plan**

The main activities of this two-year project will include the following:

- Hire 4 Cultural Practitioners.
- Plan and implement 4 classes in the Region (two in Year 1 and two in Year 2).
- Plan and implement 4 classes in Anchorage at APIA (two in Year 1 and two in Year 2).
- Review and analyze survey data.
- Develop 4 Kalikaadan.

The Project Coordinator will carry out the following:

- Notify APIA Office of President/CEO, Accounting, Board of Directors, and Tribes of award and begin the post-award administrative process.
- Conduct outreach to Tribes to identify community needs.
- Hire Cultural Practitioners.
- Develop surveys.

- Plan and implement classes in the region and collaborate with APIA Culture Camp staff to incorporate project activities.
- Provide guidance and support to Cultural Practitioners.
- Distribute participation surveys to cultural practitioners and class participants to gather necessary data for performance measurement.
- Attend in-person cultural classes and participate in informal discussions with participants and with other tribal members as needed.
- Conduct research utilizing the Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive, APIA Collections, museum websites, and other libraries and archives for the creation of the Kalikaadan.
- Create reference lists and bibliographies.
- Share draft copies of the Kalikaadan with Elders and request feedback.
- Work with cultural practitioners to design and develop 4 Kalikaadan. Review and edit the Kalikaadan. Prepare a final draft for administrative review and approval. Publish and disseminate the Kalikaadan.
- Schedule regular meetings to ensure that the planning and development remain collaboratively driven by all active participants in this project.
- Include IMLS acknowledgement of support on all publications.
- Prepare reports and updates for APIA's Board of Directors, prepare newsletter articles, website content, and FB posts.
- Prepare and submit performance reports accordingly. APIA's Budget Reporting Coordinator will submit the financial reports.

Cultural Practitioners will carry out the following:

- Work with the Project Coordinator to plan classes, review logistics, prepare class material and supply lists, and do any preparation work.
- Conduct research utilizing the Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive, APIA Collections, museum websites, and other libraries and archives for the creation of the Kalikaadan.
- Create reference lists and bibliographies.
- Work with PC to design and develop a Kalikaadan. Review and edit the Kalikaadan.

- Assist PC with developing and distributing participant surveys and reviewing and analyzing data.
- Provide cultural education in one or more of the following traditional crafts (not to be considered an exhaustive list):
    - Drum making
    - Beaded headdresses
    - Regalia sewing
    - Skin sewing
    - Mask carving
    - Ivory carving
    - Tool making
    - Bentwood hunting visors
    - Traditional foods preparation
    - Model kayak construction
    - Jewelry and adornment
    - Unangam tunuu (language)
    - Traditional Dance
    - Full-size kayak building

**Key staff:**

Project Coordinator:

Erin Levesque, APIA's Cultural Healing Coordinator, a full-time employee, will plan and implement all activities. 20% of her time will be supported by this award (400 hours in Year 1 and 400 hours in Year 2). She will work with tribes to identify preferred classes, locations, and dates. She will work directly with the Cultural Practitioners to create the Kalikaadan. They will access APIA's Collections and Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive to conduct literary research, review photographs and other forms of media, access museum summaries and inventories, and study collections to compile information to develop the Kalikaadan.

Ms. Levesque oversees day-to-day program operations and the implementation of culturally-based programs and services within the Cultural Heritage Department at APIA. Erin works closely with regional tribal communities and other Cultural Heritage Department staff, including the library and collections staff, to plan, organize, and implement cultural gatherings and events. She reports to Millie Jackson, the Cultural Heritage Department Director.

The Project Coordinator will also process hire and travel paperwork, create class surveys, oversee IMLS budget and expenses, prepare program updates for APIA's Board of Directors, prepare newsletter articles, create social media posts, collect data, and prepare and submit required IMLS performance reports. (Financial reports will be prepared by APIA's Accounting Department, whose services are covered under our indirect costs.)

Cultural Practitioners:

APIA has long-standing relationships with over 20 Unangax̂ cultural practitioners. Consultations with our Tribes will identify which Cultural Practitioners will be hired to conduct cultural classes and aid in the creation of the Kalikaadan. 100% of their time will be supported by this award. They will impart their traditional knowledge through instruction in a variety of art forms and cultural traditions and share the cultural and historical significance of these traditions and art forms through the Kalikaadan.

They will work closely with the Project Coordinator to plan all details, prepare any materials needed, and conduct their cultural classes. Create a reference list or bibliography to include in the Kalikaadan to provide additional educational resources for participants, and they will assist in gathering information from class participants through sign-up sheets, liability waivers, etc. They will research to gather information by utilizing the Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive, APIA Collections, museum websites, and other resources to compile culturally relevant historical information for the development of a Kalikaadan, which will also contain bibliographical information, historical photographs, and other relevant information. They will aid in the design, review, edit, and publishing processes for the Kalikaadan.

Millie Jackson, Cultural Heritage Director

Ms. Jackson is not included in the budget as her salary/fringe is supported by other departmental operations funding (non-federal), therefore, a cost share is not needed. Ms. Jackson oversees all department projects and programs and is a full-time exempt employee with 28 years at the Association. She will provide minimal oversight of this project. She will review and approve administrative documents and expenditures, ensure required reports are completed and submitted on time, and provide written and verbal progress reports to APIA's Board of Directors. As a contingency, she is available to fill gaps or assign other qualified department staff in the event of the absence of the Project Coordinator. If this occurred, a budget modification would be requested. Please see Ms. Jackson's Resume in the Supporting Documents.

**Project Results**

The intended results of this project are to increase access to cultural education, traditional knowledge, and related informational resources. This will be done by coordinating and hosting the cultural classes with enthusiastic participation from tribal community members who show a vested interest in moving the traditions of our people forward into future generations through the development of the Kalikaadan, which will be made available to future class participants and tribal community members. The Kalikaadan will be archived in the Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive with digitized versions and hard copies that will be made permanently available at no cost to tribal members.

The collective data gathered via participation surveys and the feedback acquired through ongoing communications with Tribal community members, Cultural Practitioners, and APIA's Board of Directors will guide the performance measurement standards for this project.

The successful completion of this project will be the first in a series of similar endeavors in which we will utilize the existing relationships between APIA and the many cultural practitioners throughout our region to enhance access to cultural education and informational resources. All results will be shared widely within our tribal communities and relied upon to guide the continued expansion of cultural connection. We see this project as a long-term commitment and, as such, will work to secure the resources necessary to sustain program initiatives beyond the current period of performance. Additionally, the Kalikaadan produced as a result of this project will serve as a template and be used as an example for the development of future booklets.

| **Year 1** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planned Project Activities | Month 1 | Month 2 | Month 3 | Month 4 | Month 5 | Month 6 | Month 7 | Month 8 | Month 9 | Month 10 | Month 11 | Month 12 |
| | Sept '25' | Oct '25' | Nov '25' | Dec '25' | Jan '26' | Feb '26' | Mar '26' | Apr '26' | May '26' | Jun '26' | Jul '26' | Aug '26' |
| Consult with Tribal leaders to determine what cultural classes would be the most beneficial in their communities | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Work with Cultural Practitioners to plan and coordinate details of each class | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purchase supplies for cultural classes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distribute pre and post-class surveys to registered participants | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implement cultural classes | | | | | | X1 | | X1 | | X2 | | |
| Conduct oral interviews with Cultural Practitioners and participants during classes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Document project activities and data collection | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Access Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive to conduct research and collect related data for the creation of the Kalikaadan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly meetings with Cultural Practitioners | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop 2 Kalikaadan: create draft, review, and edit. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Publish and distribute Kalikaadan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Annual performance report submission | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Year 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planned Project Activities | Month 1 | Month 2 | Month 3 | Month 4 | Month 5 | Month 6 | Month 7 | Month 8 | Month 9 | Month 10 | Month 11 | Month 12 |
| | Sept '26' | Oct '26' | Nov '26' | Dec '26' | Jan '27' | Feb '27' | Mar '27' | Apr '27' | May '27' | Jun '27' | Jul '27' | Aug '27' |
| Consult with Tribal leaders to determine what cultural classes would be the most beneficial in their communities | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Work with Cultural Practitioners to plan and coordinate details of each class | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purchase supplies for cultural classes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distribute pre and post-class surveys to registered participants | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implement cultural classes | | | | | | X1 | | X1 | | X2 | | |
| Conduct oral interviews with Cultural Practitioners and participants during classes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Document project activities and data collection | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Access Unangax̂ Heritage Library and Archive to conduct research and collect related data for the creation of the Kalikaadan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Develop 2 Kalikaadan: create draft, review, and edit. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Publish and distribute Kalikaadan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Annual performance report submission | | | | | | | | | | | | |