



# NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-260878-OLS-26

## Chickasaw Nation

Amount awarded by IMLS:       \$75,889

The Chickasaw Nation Tribal Library in Ada, Oklahoma will promote equity and access to digital learning tools in a modernized space. Funding will be used to purchase iPads equipped with educational apps and cultural and language resources in addition to space-efficient shelving, modular desks, and benches to increase seating and workspace areas. The funding will enable the creation of individual “learning nooks” for quiet study. Library users will have the opportunity to share feedback about using the iPads and learning nooks through satisfaction surveys throughout the project. Chickasaw students, educators, researchers, elders and other community members will benefit from the project’s focus on increased accessibility and user-friendly enhancements.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Tribal profile
- Proposal 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.

Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants  
The Chickasaw Nation Tribal Library Modernization Project  
Tribal Profile

The Chickasaw Nation (CN) is a federally recognized First American tribe with over 81,000 enrolled tribal citizens across the United States (U.S.). The CN refers to Native Americans as First Americans. The CN's treaty territory, defined as a reservation which has not been disestablished, includes 7,648 square miles in south-central Oklahoma and encompasses all or part of 13 counties, including Bryan, Carter, Coal, Garvin, Grady, Jefferson, Johnson, Love, Marshall, McClain, Murray, Pontotoc and Stephens. Through tribal and federal resources, the CN works to meet the needs of Chickasaw and First American citizens as well as the communities in which they reside.

CN Governor Bill Anoatubby has worked to establish the mission, vision and core values that guide the daily business and operations of the tribe. The CN's mission, included in Governor Anoatubby's 2002 State of the Nation Address<sup>1</sup>, is "to enhance the overall quality of life of the Chickasaw people." The mission reflects the desire of the Chickasaw people to place high value on the well-being of Chickasaw families, fellow Chickasaw people and the CN. All CN employees must work toward and be committed to the same mission. The CN Department of Culture and Humanities (CNDCH) serves the mission of the CN through the provision of programs and services that preserve, enhance and promote the culture of the CN and its people.

Through this funding opportunity, the CNDCH proposes to modernize and improve the CN Tribal Library with space-efficient shelving, modular desks and benches to increase usable seating and workspace areas. In addition, the CN will develop a comprehensive evaluation plan for monitoring the use of digital learning tools, such as iPads, in an updated and modernized space. By updating the CN Tribal Library into a modern, flexible learning environment, the CNDCH will assist in pursuing the CN's mission to "enhance the overall quality of life of the Chickasaw people," as these upgrades will provide patrons with better access to cultural, educational and informational resources.



<sup>1</sup> <https://governor.chickasaw.net/News/Speeches/2002-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx>

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Narrative

## **Project Justification**

The Chickasaw Nation (CN) Tribal Library is a community-based family library located in Ada, Oklahoma that offers a variety of materials and services for people of all ages, including books, DVDs, general research assistance, computers and Wi-Fi. Operated by the CN Department of Culture and Humanities (CNDCH), the library is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and serves approximately 360 First American and non-First American community members per month. However, it is currently operating in a compact facility with outdated, bulky furnishings and limited portable technology. These constraints reduce available seating and work surface options, block flexible room arrangements and create environments that are not optimized for focused individual study or small-group collaboration. Thus patrons—particularly Chickasaw students, educators, researchers, elders and other community members who rely on the library for cultural and educational resources—have limited opportunities to engage with digital learning tools and conduct sustained on-site research or study sessions.

This project addresses this need by proposing a plan to modernize the library’s interior footprint and provide integrated, portable technology to support diverse learning modalities. This includes converting underused or inefficient areas into compact, low-distraction “learning nooks,” and to replace large fixtures with space-efficient shelving, modular desks and benches to increase usable seating and workspace areas without expanding the building footprint. This project supports Objective 2 of the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants program (NAE) goal, as it will promote increased equity and access to digital learning tools in a modernized space that is available to the community.

The CN identified this need through a combination of internal usage data, library staff observations, informal patron feedback and benchmarking against contemporary small-library best practices:

- Circulation and foot-traffic records show constrained peak-hour capacity and limited opportunities for patrons to abide in available workspaces.
- Staff reports and patron comments consistently cite insufficient work surfaces and lack of available on-site devices for research and digital learning.
- Comparative reviews of similar tribal and small public libraries indicate that small-scale furniture redesign combined with shared mobile devices (e.g., tablets) reliably increase patron engagement, visit length and program participation.
- Consultations with the CN Division of Literary Arts—which is within the CNDCH—identified modernization and technology access as priorities in the CN’s ongoing mission, which is “to enhance the overall quality of life of the Chickasaw people.”

The CN Tribal Library Manager and leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts participated in initial concept discussions and provided strategic direction, aligning the project with community and CN goals. Informal consultations with frequent patrons provided input on desired improvements (individual learning nooks, device lending and charging stations). These internal sources and aforementioned comparative best practices guided this project's scope: replace bulky fixtures with compact, modular furnishings; install space-efficient shelving to free floor space; create multiple learning nooks; provide library-managed iPads to support digital access, research and instruction.

The primary audiences for this project are Chickasaw citizens (including K–12 students, college students, elders and researchers), educators and community visitors who utilize the CN Tribal Library for cultural, educational and informational resources.

### **Project Work Plan**

The CN's proposed project will take place over a two-year period. Key staff for this project includes the following personnel:

- CN Tribal Library Manager (Project Director): the CN Tribal Library Manager will oversee project implementation and reporting and will act as the project liaison.
- CN Projects and Facilities Manager: the CN Projects and Facilities Manager will coordinate the new CN Tribal Library layout, overseeing installation and reconfiguration of supplies.

Please see below for a breakdown of project activities and associated timeframes:

#### *Phase 1 — Design and Planning (Months 1–4)*

*Responsible party:* CN Tribal Library Manager and CN Projects and Facilities Manager

- Conduct space survey and take final measurements; produce schematic redesign and furniture plan.
- Finalize furniture and iPad specifications; obtain vendor quotes and procure approvals.
- Review and approve final designs.

#### *Phase 2 — Procurement and Preparatory Work (Months 5–8)*

*Responsible party:* CN Tribal Library Manager

- Place orders for furniture, shelving, benches and iPads; schedule delivery windows.
- Prepare facility for installation (light repairs, painting touch-ups, electrical/outlet checks).

#### *Phase 3 — Installation and Space Reconfiguration (Months 9–12)*

*Responsible party:* CN Projects and Facilities Manager

- Remove and responsibly dispose of/recycle bulky fixtures.

- Install new shelving, desks, benches; create defined learning nooks. These fixtures include bookshelves and desk/bookshelf and bench/bookshelf combos, which will add space for additional resources and learning nooks.

*Phase 4 — Technology Integration and Staff Training (Months 13–16)*

*Responsible party:* CN Tribal Library Manager

- Configure iPads with required apps, content filters and accessibility features.
- Train CN Tribal Library staff on device checkout procedures, content management and basic troubleshooting.

*Phase 5 — Soft Launch and Community Orientation (Months 17–18)*

*Responsible parties:* CN Tribal Library Manager

- Open learning nooks and device lending with limited hours; collect initial usage data and patron feedback.
- Familiarize patrons on device availability and study-nook etiquette.
- Share recent upgrades with the community through avenues including, but not limited to, the following: the CN's MyNation webpage, ICCommunity posting e-mails and the CN's *Holisso* employee-directed ads page.

*Phase 6 — Full Launch, Monitoring and Evaluation (Months 19–24)*

*Responsible parties:* CN Tribal Library Manager

- Full public access; ongoing data collection on usage metrics.
- Weekly reports to leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts; quarterly library staff reviews and adjustments, as needed.
- Final evaluation and sustainability planning.

Please see below for potential risks and associated management/mitigation plans:

- *Risk:* Device damage/theft. *Mitigation:* utilize secure charging/storage station (already owned by the CN), mobile device management (MDM) remote-wipe and tracking and outlined checkout policies. MDM allows the CN to remotely wipe data off a CN-owned iPad, if necessary.
- *Risk:* Low patron adoption. *Mitigation:* announce updated library layout and resources to additional CN departments to spread awareness and increase student/patron engagement.
- *Risk:* Installation delays. *Mitigation:* contingency scheduling and phased installation approach to maintain access where possible.

During the project period, the CN Tribal Library Manager will convene quarterly with leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts to review design mockups, technology configurations and rollout plans, ensuring the needs of Chickasaw citizens and members of the surrounding

community remain central throughout design and implementation. Leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts will review and approve all major design and technology decisions at key milestones (end of design phase, pre-procurement, pre-launch). In addition, the CN Tribal Library will host weekly staff meetings to discuss any operational issues and patron feedback. When deemed necessary, changes will be applied. Community suggestion boxes in the library (already in place) will collect patron perspectives to inform adjustments. The project team will regularly communicate with leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts, sending weekly summary reports to support transparency and strategic alignment and to share project progress and lessons learned. Upon project completion, a one-page public summary, showing project results, will be shared with CN Division of Literary Arts leadership and library visitors via email, as well as posted in the library for community access.

The CN Tribal Library is fully staffed with personnel that have expertise in collection management and patron services. During project implementation, project staff will utilize internal CN teams to assist with installation, maintenance and minor remodeling support, as needed. Leadership from the CN Division of Literary Arts will provide support throughout the course of the project, reviewing progress through weekly reporting.

### **Project Results**

Upon project completion, the CN Tribal Library will become a more accessible, user-friendly location for patrons to better engage with cultural, educational and informational resources without increasing the building footprint. These updates include a reconfigured interior layout with space-efficient shelving, modular desks and benches that will optimize space and increase the number of usable study/work areas. Designated learning nooks will provide quiet, low-distraction individual study spaces, encouraging a peaceful environment for learning. In addition, iPads will be procured and be available to library patrons. These will have internet access and be prepared with educational and research apps and cultural and language resources that are aligned with CN priorities. CN Tribal Library staff will be prepared for these updates through device lending policy and procedures, staff training materials and user orientation resources. Project staff will track iPad and learning nook usage with data dashboards for ongoing project monitoring, in addition to patron feedback.

Success for this project will be defined by measurable increases in attendance, tablet usage, engagement and user satisfaction. A baseline evaluation will be conducted during the first month of the project—allowing project staff to compare gathered data throughout the project period—with interim analyses at Months 12 and 18. A final evaluation report will be developed by Month 24, synthesizing usage metrics, qualitative feedback and lessons learned. This report will include recommendations and a sustainability roadmap for continued operation and potential expansion.

The following metrics will be collected during the course of the project to monitor success and to aid in determining whether any adjustments are needed:

- Visitor attendance counts and average duration of visits (daily/weekly/monthly), monitored by library staff.
- Learning nook occupancy rates and duration times, monitored by a check-in/check-out system with library staff.
- iPad checkout frequency, duration and primary uses (research, education apps, cultural resources), monitored by sign-in/check-out logs for these devices.
- Patron satisfaction scores via short exit surveys, to be conducted monthly during the first six months of the project and then on a quarterly basis until the end of the project period.
- Staff reports regarding operational stability and incidents, monitored via regular staff logs and incident reports.

Project success will be maintained beyond the period of performance through a variety of strategic management plans the CN will implement. This includes monitoring device upkeep through MDM profiles and obtaining protective cases to reduce loss/damage and extend device lifecycles. In addition, device lending procedures and training materials will be integrated into regular library operations and staff roles to support knowledge transfer and device retention. Finally, project results will be used in future CN Tribal Library operation/expansion plans by demonstrating quantifiable increases in attendance and engagement.

## **Conclusion**

The CN Tribal Library Modernization project will transform constrained, underutilized space into an accessible, technology-enabled learning environment that serves Chickasaw citizens, students, educators and researchers. By pairing strategic furniture redesign with managed tablet access and a robust evaluation plan, the project will measurably increase patron engagement, extend study time and broaden access to digital learning tools. Regular reporting and leadership involvement will ensure the project remains aligned with tribal priorities and that lessons learned are quickly integrated. The planned sustainability measures will help preserve benefits beyond the two-year period of performance.

**Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants  
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Schedule of Completion – Project Year One**

[illegible]

**Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants  
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Schedule of Completion – Project Year Two**

[illegible]