



# NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-260900-OLS-26

## Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Amount awarded by IMLS:       \$85,299

The Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Wisconsin will enhance its library services and deliver programs including basic job application readiness, maple sugar and maple syrup making camps, spearing, Ojibwe storytelling, hunting and foraging for traditional Ojibwe foods, food preservation, and drug and alcohol addiction awareness training. All the activities were identified as areas of interest by community members. Grant funds will also support travel for its library workforce to attend the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums conference. The project will provide direct benefit to the Tribal members as well as the local community.

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.

## Tribal Profile

Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians is located in rural northeastern Wisconsin. The Tribe is one the largest employers in the area with tribal government allocating funds from the gaming revenues to support a large number of health, education and welfare programs, including the Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library. The Tribe's mission is, *"To provide leadership for the betterment of tribal membership and descendants in the areas of health, education, welfare, economic / job development and the protection of natural resources."*

The Ben Guthrie-Lac du Flambeau Public Library first opened its doors to patrons in May of 1979. The library was made possible by a group citizens and the Tribal Council that felt it was important to establish a library facility in the community. The supervision of the library falls under the Tribe's education department thus the Tribe is the employer of library staff. As such, the Tribe provides a modest budget for the support of the library. The library director works with the town of Lac du Flambeau government, because they also provide a small budget to support the library. There is collaboration between both the Tribe and the town of Lac du Flambeau due to the Wisconsin statutes for Public Libraries.

The library board consists of five members. The Library's mission statement is as follows: *"The Ben Guthrie-Lac du Flambeau Public Library will provide free information and services to all residents of the Lac du Flambeau community, encompassing the Vilas County areas. This effort is sustained by being part of the northern region of the state public library system that connects us to the world by having free public computers. Our unique status as a Tribal library will be sustained by a continued succession plan."*

Our service area is officially within the boundaries of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. It is a twelve square mile beautiful area with 126 lakes. The reservation is a checkerboard land base meaning both Native and non-Natives live in the area through the Dawes Act of 1887. The library is part of the northern region of the State of Wisconsin library system and since we are also a public library we fall under the Department of Instruction (DPI) through the State of Wisconsin. Northern Waters and DPI helped connect us to the internet and the world of information. Their staff trained us to understand the computer system we are part of and have continued to be of support for any technical questions we have.

We serve anyone who walks in the door and requests a library card, regardless of their residence. We do have residents from nearby towns who use our library as well as summer residents from other towns, cities and states.

The library is involved and engaged in the community. In June of 2018 we went live to an on-line scanning system and we have not looked back. Currently we have up-to-date computers for public use, we collaborate with Tribal Departments to offer information and training on a number of subjects, but for the last five years have offered Ojibwe language and culture in our facility and continue to collaborate with the Director of the Ojibwe Language program to host an Ojibwe Language immersion camp for families each summer. We look forward, with great excitement, to the future as we move to offer more opportunities for learning and accessing resources for our patrons and will be directly involved in carrying out the work of the Geyaabi Bimaadizimagak Gidizhitwaawininaan, "Continue Our Way Of Life" Project.

## Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant 2026-2028

Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library  
Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Geyaabi Bimaadizimagak Gidizhitwaawininaan, “Continue Our Way Of Life”

### Project Justification

As the nation celebrates the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American independence, Tribes across the country have, “survived two centuries of settler-colonial policies – including forced removal from homelands, war, confinement on reservations, restricted access to sacred places, expropriation of natural resources, suppression of Indigenous languages and ceremonies, forced attendance at Indian boarding schools...” and more.<sup>1</sup> As a result, “American Indians and Alaska Natives suffer from disproportionately high rates of chronic mental and physical health conditions. These health inequities are linked to colonization and its downstream consequences.”<sup>2</sup>

Despite living in an environment and context with elevated levels of stress and adversity, Tribes and tribal members continue to demonstrate tremendous resilience.<sup>3</sup> In fact, multiple studies provide support for and add to the evidence that *culture is an important determinant of health and wellbeing for Indigenous peoples*.<sup>4</sup> To that end, our project proposes to support the following goals and objectives

Agency Level Goal: Champion Lifelong Learning

Objective: Advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all

NAE program objectives are as follows:

Objective 1. Serve the Learning needs and interests of the community

Objective 2. Improve Community well-being

Objective 3. Provide Access to and preservation of information and collections

Throughout the years of implementing library activities in the Lac du Flambeau community, the need for training and skill building remains persistent in the following areas: 1. how to effectively fill out job applications/job readiness, 2. how to hunt and forage for traditional Ojibwe foods, 3. how to prepare and preserve foods safely, 4. information and awareness training on drugs in the community, 5. Ojibwe language and cultural activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from: <https://www.nnctc.org/the-role-of-culture>

<sup>2</sup> John-Henderson NA, White EJ, Crowder TL. Resilience and health in American Indians and Alaska Natives: A scoping review of the literature. *Dev Psychopathol*. 2023 Dec;35(5):2241-2252. doi: 10.1017/S0954579423000640. Epub 2023 Jun 22. PMID: 37345444; PMCID: PMC10739606.

<sup>3</sup> [Hartmann et al., 2019](#); [Oré et al., 2016](#); [Reinschmidt et al., 2016](#); [Teufel-Shone et al., 2018](#)

<sup>4</sup> The Culture is Prevention Project: Measuring Culture as a Social Determinant of Mental Health for Native/Indigenous Peoples, Paul Masotti, PhD, John Dennem, MA, CADC-II, Shir Hadani, MSc, Karina Banuelos, MA, Janet King, MSW, Janice Linton, MLS, Bonnie Lockhart, ASW, and Chirag Patel

Community members have responded to requests for input on programming at the library and have overwhelmingly said they would like to see the activities, described above. All activities are family focused so that parents can share the experiences with their children, which is a cultural value within the Lac du Flambeau Tribal community. The approach of hosting family-focused multi-generational cultural activities also supports parents in spending time with their children and introducing them to participating in activities in the community.

### **Who is Our Target Group for This Project:**

The target group for this project are people of all ages from our tribal community in Lac du Flambeau, patrons who come to our library from Vilas, Oneida and Iron Counties, as well as tourists who visit our region and come to the library while they are here. We believe that direct experience to cultural and educational teachings is better than watching it on YouTube or social media.

### **What are the ultimate beneficiaries for the project?**

Tribal members, their descendants and non-native individuals who are patrons of the Lac du Flambeau Library who seek to learn about the Tribe and to participate in the project activities to improve their health and wellbeing.

### **Project work plan:**

Our project focuses on the following goal of Championing Lifelong Learning by advancing shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all. Objective 1. Serve the Learning needs and interests of the community. Objective 2. Improve Community well-being. Objective 3. Provide Access to and preservation of information and collections.

All of our proposed activities are advertised in the Tribe's e-newsletter. We also place posters in the community and submit them to the local paper in the column for Lac du Flambeau events. In addition, we post activities on the library website. These efforts demonstrate the broad audience we target for our activities.

### **Our proposed activities include the following: (please see the attached schedule of completion)**

- Basic job applications/readiness education sessions on a quarterly basis. Library staff will coordinate with our education office who will offer incentives to attend. Staff will work with the Tribe's Human Resources department and the HR department from the Tribe's Business Development Corporation, that manages all tribal businesses, except the Casino. The Lac du Flambeau tribe is the main employer for the county and job application and readiness sessions are meant to help younger adults apply for jobs. Unemployment of local tribal members remains high, so the training helps with job recruitment. **Key personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk, and Melissa Thompson from the Tribe's HR department. **When?** October, January, April and July of year 1.
- Maple sugar and maple syrup making camps are a traditional cultural activity in the community and are gaining interest. Teaching the younger generation to do these camps

takes time and practice. Staff will work with long time maple sugar makers and ask if they can observe, help and practice their new knowledge. **Key Personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk, Nutrition Educator, Kassandra Cedillo-Garcia, Melinda Walker from Tribal Natural Resources and local consultants, selected from input from stakeholders. **When?** March-April of 2027 year 1

- Spearing in northern Wisconsin is always a sensitive issue and our young men and women need to learn the history and the proper ways to prepare. This will be in coordination with the Voight Taskforce representatives. Voight representatives work with the state to set walleye harvesting limits in the ceded territory of Wisconsin. **Key personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk, Melinda Walker from Tribal Natural Resources and local consultants from the Voight Taskforce. **When?** April-May year 1.
- Story telling is a very important practice that is coming back. This is done when there is still snow on the ground. There are protocols that a person has to learn to be able to be considered a respected storyteller. Staff will work with elders in the community and invite traditional storytellers from other Native communities. **Key personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk and storytelling consultants selected from input from patrons and local stakeholders. **When?** December-February year 1.
- Foraging and/or hunting for wild native foods and processing them. We have had success in the past with foraging traditional foods and processing these items (berries, leeks and apples). There are many other indigenous plants that we have not been able to harvest that need to be introduced in our community. Due to community input, we plan to continue this activity to include a wider array of plants and native foods, including processing deer meat to be frozen or cooked. Some aspect of foraging and food preservation will be held during each year of the project. **Key personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk, Nutrition Educator, Kassandra Cedillo-Garcia, Melinda Walker from Tribal Natural Resources and local foragers, selected with input from stakeholders. **When?** Food Storage will be held November, March and June of Year 1, Foraging will be held April-September year 2. Deer Processing, October-December Year 2. Jam/Jelly making, July and September, year 2.
- Provide education on a quarterly basis regarding drug and alcohol addiction in the community. Methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl have taken too many of our community members. The Library Director will collaborate with professionals at the Lac du Flambeau Family resource center to develop education sessions throughout the length of the grant on a quarterly basis. At the education sessions we will invite family members, who have lost relatives to addiction, to make a painted tile in honor of their loved one. The project will include developing a memorial wall made from these tiles in the community to remind the community of the dangers of addiction and the great losses we've experienced. **Key Personnel:** Jeanne Wolfe, Library Director, Amanda McCoy, Library Clerk and Stephan Rencontre, Family Resource Center Staff. **When?** October, January, April and July year 2.

## Existing assets within the library and community

The Library Director will coordinate with Tribal programs for the activities in the work plan as follows: Melissa Thompson from the Tribal HR department will collaborate for job applications/job readiness; AODA Client Services Coordinator, Stephan Rencontre from the Family Resource Center, will collaborate with the activities and informational sessions around drug addiction and treatment. Library staff will provide the foraging education, jelly/jam making classes and deer processing in collaboration with, Melinda Walker, from the Tribal Natural Resources Staff and Kassandra Cedillo-Garcia the Food distribution nutrition educator. Deer Processing will be done in collaboration with members of the Voight Task Force and Storytelling will be done by **respected elders** who are known for their storytelling skills in Indian Country. The selection of a storyteller will be coordinated with input from community members who are knowledgeable about those with this traditional skill.

Throughout the length of the grant, we will set up activities around our gathering and foraging seasons. We will have our *Tribal Natural resources* department provide education in this area including the dos and don'ts of foraging, the best times for berries or medicines to be harvested and how to process them. Once we harvest plums, blueberries, apples, and blackberries, library staff will host lessons on how to clean, boil, strain them and how to prepare jars so that the process is sterile and there is a good seal.

The Tribe's spearing season is very popular in the community, but many people do not know how to spear or how to clean fish. The Library will collaborate with members of *the Voight task force* in order to draw attention to the spearing training opportunities. The Library will encourage interested patrons to participate in the experiential activity of spearing and cleaning harvested fish. Library staff will also develop a checklist for younger tribal members as they start to practice spearing, to use as a reference for when they prepare for their own spearing practice.

Maple sugar camps are growing in popularity each year, but many patrons have not experienced the process and often don't know where to start. There is a tremendous amount of hard physical work that goes into a sugar camp. Not only is the collection hard work but how to start your equipment gathering and taking care of the equipment to use each year is time consuming. Our program will provide experiential opportunities for patrons to learn how to tap trees, store and then boil sap and how to respect the area in the sugar bush and leave it clean for future years. We will work with *Tribal Natural Resources Department* and *local tribal consultants* recommended from input from patrons and community members, who have a strong background in maple syrup and sugar making.

Drug addiction is hitting Indian Country hard. The number of overdoses in our community are devastating as methamphetamine, heroin, and fentanyl have come to the reservation. Educating people about drugs over and over again is needed. To battle this, we purpose to use our professional staff from our Tribal *Family Resource Center* to provide quarterly educational

sessions for the community starting in year 2 of the project. After each education session staff will invite the participants to create a painted tile, commemorating a relative lost to addiction.

### **What are the risks to the project? How will you mitigate them?**

**Risks related** to the project will depend on the activities: for instance, Food processing such as jellies and jams would present the risk of burns from sterilizing jars and pouring hot liquid into jars and the processing time in a water bath. We will mitigate these risks by having individual work stations for these sessions: providing clear instructions for handling hot items, having protective items such as hot pads or hot mitts, non-skid heat resistant pads for hot jars, tongs for lids and rings and etc. Work areas will be prepared prior to participant arrivals and clear instructions will be provided. In addition, instructors will walk around to observe whether the participants are following along correctly and provide assistance as needed. The Library Director will go over education sessions prior to the actual event and will make sure all is in place before the activity.

For foraging, staff need to be aware if participants are allergic to insect bites or bee stings and be prepared for this. Prior to the session staff will go over the terrain and the physical demands that foraging will call for, such as: bending, squatting, kneeling. Staff will make sure participants have proper equipment such: bug dope, gloves, digging tools, long sleeves and all of these requirements will be discussed prior to foraging. In terms of deer processing, participants will be provided with information on the physical demands of processing a large animal for freezing or cooking and what that will entail. Library staff, the nutritionist and Natural Resource staff will provide supervision of the process and provide guidance and assistance as needed.

Spearing will be conducted similarly, where participants are provided information ahead of time related to the amount of exertion necessary for participating and they will have supervision and assistance from members of the Voight Task Force and the Library staff. Spears and fillet knives will be used by adults and supervised closely. Participating children will be there with their parents and be able to observe the processes and assist when it is safe to do so.

### **Who will plan, implement and manage your project?**

Jeanne Wolfe, the Library Director will plan and implement the project, in collaboration with other library staff and tribal programs such as: The Human Resources Department, The Tribal Natural Resources Department, The Family Resource Center, the Food Distribution Program and the Voight Task Force. During the year the Tribe has events that get tremendous community involvement. The Director plans to set up an information booth that will spell out the education and experiential learning sessions and take names of those who are interested. The Director will pick an event of the Tribe to share the information. September has an event titled “Wild Rice Festival”, where the attendance is in the hundreds. The Director will have an information booth at this event. The Director will also go over the information with all program managers (HR, Family Resource Center, Tribal Natural Resources, the nutrition educator, the Voight Task Force and community consultants) that she will be collaborating with, so everyone who is participating in the events will have accurate information about the goals and proposed outcomes of the activities and the project as a whole.

**What time, financial, personnel, and other resources do you need to carry out the activities?**

The project will use existing library personnel and will increase one staff member (the Library Clerk) to thirty-two hours a week to work with the Library Director on the coordination of the activities. While we are asking for the Library Clerk's hours be funded through this grant, the Tribe will cover the cost of the benefits and fringe. The project will pay traditional story tellers for sharing their knowledge and funds are requested to compensate knowledgeable foragers and hunters. We anticipate that the Library Director will absorb the communication and coordination of the activities into her daily work schedule as she has done in previous successful projects.

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

The Library Director, Jeanne Wolfe, will share reports on the project with the Tribal Administrator, who will report to Tribal Council. She will also participate in the yearly Community Expo to share information on the activities and to seek input from community stakeholders in problem solving any barriers to achieving the intended outcomes. In addition, the Library has a weekly column in the Tribe's e-Newsletter and will share information on the activities and outcomes there.

**Our Project's Intended Results**

Due to the persistent requests from patrons and local stakeholders for the training and experiential learning experiences in our proposal, we anticipate increased knowledge and practice in all the activities we propose in this project. We also anticipate that the cultural activities in particular (spearing, sugar camp, foraging) will likely increase resiliency among participants. With that said, we are unsure of how to measure improvements in resilience, but we will use pre-post tests to determine if participants have gained knowledge from their participation. We will also use feed-back and community input forms at community events such as the Community Expo, Wild Rice Festival and Lakes Fest to gauge our participant's sense of whether their experiences during the proposed activities were valuable to them. The input will be used to improve experiences and activities for the second year of the project.

**Our Definition of Success** is related to the feedback we receive in pre and posttests, community input sessions and face to face communication during community events such as the Wild Rice Festival, Lakes Fest and the Community Expo. If we receive favorable feedback, we will know we have been successful. If we receive requests to host our activities again we will consider that a success. If we have more participants in year 2 than in year 1 we will consider that a success.

**How will we disseminate results of the project to the primary audience?** We will post all handouts and checklists provided during our activities on the Library website at <https://ldflibrary.org/>. As a recruiting tool for year two, we will post the results of our pre-posttests for each activity on the library website, so that our primary audience will know what participants learned and whether they valued the activity. In addition, if the activity pre-posttest(s) show a need to improve the activity, the library will also post an action plan to improve the activity for year-2 participants.

**How will we sustain the benefits of our project beyond the period of performance?**

The Lac du Flambeau Public Library will continue to collaborate with tribal programs and staff representing the Family Resource Center, the Tribal Natural Resources, the Tribal Food Distribution, the Voight Task Force and the Tribe's HR department. As a natural hub in the Lac du Flambeau community, the patrons and volunteers will continue to drive activities that support continued resiliency as they have provided a protective aspect for our survival as indigenous people.

### Schedule of Completion

## Native American Enhancement Grant 2026-2028

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