



NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-260948-OLS-26

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$150,000

Ginanda Gikendaasomin Library, located in remote northern Wisconsin, will enhance community well-being through promoting the Ojibwemowin language, Indigenized Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEM) and Tribal farm & food sovereignty programming, and digital literacy. Grant funds will support weekly Ojibwemowin classes, a summer STEM camp, cultural workshops, and digital literacy training. The project will benefit the entire Red Cliff community, engaging school-age youth, teens, young adults and elders.

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.

Organizational Profile: The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Ginanda Gikendaasomin – We Seek to Learn Library

Tribal Governance and Education Division

The Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa is a federally recognized tribe located in the northernmost point of Wisconsin on the shores of Lake Superior. Red Cliff is governed by a nine-member Tribal Council elected by Red Cliff tribal members. All Council members are elected annually and hold office for two years, with elections staggered to maintain continuity from year to year. The Tribe is one of the largest employers in Bayfield County with approximately 300 employees as of December 2025.

The Education Division is divided into the Early Childhood Center and the Education Department, under which the Ginanda Gikendaasomin Tribal Library operates as a tribal program. Of the many programs operated through this Division, community-oriented informal education and enrichment activities are implemented by the Library. The Library Director administers and oversees library-based programming and staff. The Red Cliff library offers a central space for traditional knowledge to be shared and reinforced to build a strong cultural identity and resilience to risk-taking behaviors; and access to books, staff resources, computers and internet, and programs that support educational and employment goals. Importantly, these offerings are designed to be relevant to the Red Cliff community, which is in many ways a very different demographic than the community served by the Carnegie Bayfield library only four miles away.

The first Red Cliff library was housed in the former Catholic school on the reservation. As the aging building became too expensive to operate, the library was moved in 2015 to the Tribal Administration building. For over a decade, the partnership with faculty and students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) has nurtured the professional growth and development of library staff resulting in greater efficiency of library operations. The collection of Native materials also continues to grow. In April 2021, the library moved into a new building designed specifically to house the library. After many years without adequate facilities or culturally relevant materials, the Ginanda Gikendaasomin has built strong community engagement, with patrons utilizing the lending library and participating in the breadth of programs, activities and events that the library hosts.

Setting

According to the 2023 Tribal Census, there are 1,313 residents within the Red Cliff reservation (2023 Tribal Census), of which approximately 85% are enrolled Red Cliff tribal citizens. An additional 601 Tribal citizens reside in surrounding Bayfield County (Red Cliff enrollment office, January 2026). Native Americans make up 7% of the County's total population (2024 ACS 5-Year Survey).

Age and income demographics reflect strong differences between Red Cliff citizens and Bayfield County as a whole. The median age on the Red Cliff reservation is younger, at thirty-five years old (2023 Tribal Census), compared to the median age of fifty-five for residents in Bayfield County (US Census 2024 ACS 5-year Survey). The Red Cliff enrollment office reports that approximately 43% of Red Cliff tribal citizens are under the age of forty (including the Reservation and greater Bayfield County), with 25% under eighteen years old. The proportion of elders age 60+ in each community further affirms demographic differences. Whereas elders comprise 17% of Red Cliff citizens (including the Reservation and greater Bayfield County) (enrollment office), elders make up 42% of the non-tribal County population (2024 ACS). Approximately 80% of total student enrollment at the K-12 Bayfield School are Native American, primarily from Red Cliff.

There is a similarly wide gap in income between Red Cliff citizens (median household income of \$35,000, 2023 Census) and non-tribal citizens of Bayfield County (median income of \$71,151, 2024 ACS). The 2023 Tribal Census documented that 50% of respondents had an annual income less than \$35,000 (2018 Tribal Census). As to educational attainment, 11% of Red Cliff residents have achieved a Bachelors Degree or higher, compared to 35% of Bayfield County residents as a whole.

1. Project Justification

1. a. What current need, problem, or challenge will your project address and how was it identified?

The Red Cliff Ginanda Gikendaasomin (*We Seek to Learn*) Tribal Library provides essential programming tailored to the cultural, educational and social needs of the Red Cliff community. Red Cliff is the smallest reservation in Wisconsin, encompassing 22 square miles of rolling agricultural and forested lands bordered on the north by the shoreline of Lake Superior. The USDA Economic Research Service designates this community of 1,313 as a Level 4 Frontier and Remote area, defined as a ZIP code area 15 minutes or more from urban areas of 2,500-9,999 people – the most remote classification within this system. Red Cliff is also within a Health Professional Shortage Area and Medically Underserved Area as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration. In this rural community, the Red Cliff Tribal Library offers a much needed “third place,” fostering community, informal learning and social connection in a safe, welcoming environment open to all.

Since emerging from the COVID pandemic, Ginanda Gikendaasomin Library has become a community hub with a robust, year-round calendar of varied activities drawing participation from community members of all ages (see attached calendar and activity flyers for examples). Library-based services include support for patrons to pursue education and employment goals by offering access to and assistance with internet, computer stations, and employment-related informational and skill-building workshops, as outlined in the workplan of the current (2023) Enhancement grant. The library also hosts numerous cultural activities, a monthly book club featuring works by Native authors, and monthly sharing circles facilitated by a respected elder/knowledge keeper. The Red Cliff library, with its extensive Native-oriented collection and culture- and language-based programs, is recognized within the community as a place that affirms cultural identity and indigenous knowledge.

The Tribal Census offers insight into community priorities and interests. As a formal, quality-assured survey instrument, the Red Cliff Tribal Census accurately reflects the strengths, assets and needs of the Red Cliff community. Certain priorities have remained consistent from the first census conducted in 2018 (97% response rate) to the follow-up conducted in 2023 (90% response rate). Three of the top priorities with implications for library-based programming include **Mental Health/Substance Abuse** (top priority in both surveys); **Ojibwe Language & Cultural Preservation**; and **Employment & Education**.

In open-ended responses, many Census respondents expressed that the ability to practice and be close to their culture is what they value most about living in Gaa-Miskwaabikaang (the Red Cliff reservation). This was also reflected in a separate survey of library patrons in 2024. The sample size was small (26) but representative of the library’s regular clientele. Of the twenty program options listed on the survey, the top two were Anishinaabeg Cultural Arts (85%), and Teachings and Talking Circles (77%), followed by Digital Literacy/Computer Classes (65%).

In Native communities, connection to culture is an important social determinant of health and is a key protective factor positively associated with health and social outcomes, captured in the slogan, “Culture is Prevention.” A growing body of research in this area forms the basis for initiatives such as the CDC’s Tribal Practices for Wellness in Indian Country and similar projects funded and promoted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration and other agencies. The Red Cliff Tribal Action Plan to address alcohol and other substance abuse (2019, 2024) includes specific objectives focused on promoting culture and language, integrating elder wisdom and participation, and increasing opportunities for traditional healing practices and ceremonies.

In 2018, Red Cliff Tribal Council declared a State of Emergency in response to crisis of widespread abuse of prescription opiate medication and illegal drugs. That same year, Red Cliff elders and other community members

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

initiated a community-wide planning effort to lead the community on a path toward regaining fluency in Ojibwemowin (Ojibwe language). Surely this was no coincidence; at the heart of the crisis was the community's need for deep healing. As stated in the resulting Red Cliff Ojibwe Language 5-Year Comprehensive Plan, *"In order to heal the traumas plaguing our community, understanding and remembering our way of life and language is the light that will bring our people out of the multi-generational traumas that have been inflicted upon us."*

Red Cliff Tribal Library staff recognize that libraries can play an important role in promoting community health and mental wellness through regular, family-friendly and intergenerational programming that educates and brings people together. As such, we intend to utilize FY26 IMLS Enhancement funds to directly and indirectly address the priorities and interests identified above by:

- 1) Expanding avenues for community-based language & culture revitalization;
- 2) Implementing "Indigenized" Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programming; and
- 3) Closing the "digital divide" by promoting digital media/information literacy.

Project Focus 1: Expanding avenues for community-based language & culture revitalization

In 2020, Tribal Council adopted the Ojibwe Language 5-Year Comprehensive Plan ("Language Plan"). This was followed, in 2021, by a Tribal Council Resolution establishing Ojibwemowin as the official language of Red Cliff. At the time, the vision of creating an Ojibwemowin immersion school or program within the Bayfield School seemed an aspirational, perhaps impossible goal, given the absence of first-language speakers of Ojibwemowin at Red Cliff. However, the commitment to reviving community proficiency in Ojibwemowin fueled major efforts that have begun to turn the tide.

In 2021, with seed funding from the Administration for Native Americans and tribal funds, Red Cliff initiated the Ojibwe Language Trainee Program. The program employs a cohort of six to ten Red Cliff language trainees to engage in intensive language training for approximately two years. The Trainee Program contracted with teachers in the region who have dedicated their lives to developing fluency and bring extensive experience in learning, developing curriculum and teaching Ojibwemowin. The program very intentionally supports trainees in becoming teachers themselves, with the goal of "growing our own" to build long-term capacity for perpetuating language learning throughout the community in both formal and informal settings.

To date, twelve trainees have moved through the program, with eight currently in the third cohort. Three former trainees are now kindergarten/first grade teachers in a new Ojibwemowin immersion program at Bayfield School. This program began enrolling students in Fall 2024 - a direct outcome of the capacity built by the Red Cliff language trainee program. Two former trainees are experienced facilitators of community language tables, which are opportunities to learn and practice speaking Ojibwemowin in an informal setting. The current assistant instructor of the Language Trainee program is a former trainee from the initial cohort.

As a space that the community already looks to for culturally based programming, the library is well-positioned to grow in its role as a hub for language learning. This element of the project will include language and cultural arts activities including language tables and language games facilitated by language trainees; "Word/Phrase of the Week" published in the quarterly Library newsletter and the weekly Tribal newsletter; and cultural crafts such as beadwork, birchbark basketry, and regalia making. Ojibwemowin will be integrated into these activities as much as possible, with vocabulary and phrase booklets available to encourage language use.

Project Focus 2: Implementing “Indigenized” Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEM) programming

The 2020 Language Plan reflects the understanding that language embodies cultural knowledge and practices; therefore, any pathway to revitalizing the language must also include a commitment to bringing cultural practices back into the daily life of the community. The 2020 Language Plan outlined a process for integrating language and culture in the delivery of programs and services of every tribal division and department.

Within the Education Division, such a process was already underway. The Indigenous Arts and Sciences program (IAS) was a long-term Tribal-School-University project with the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Earth Partnership program. Working with teachers from Bayfield School, Red Cliff’s IAS program integrated Ojibwe traditional land-based knowledge with mainstream science practices to guide land and water stewardship utilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) practices. This approach was highly aligned with the tribe’s cultural revitalization efforts, with the stated goal of integrating community, place, and culture into ecological restoration efforts, aiming to “Indigenize” science education. The program provided funding for one staff to facilitate this process with teachers and implement a STEM-based outdoor learning program at Red Cliff (“Learning from the Land”) that was highly integrated with cultural teachings. A significant output of the project was the development of classroom curriculum available to teachers at Bayfield School (and beyond), but which is also adaptable to nonformal, community based educational activities and programs.

The close of the project in 2024 suspended the IAS program, reducing the capacity of the Education Department to regularly offer land-based cultural activities with a prominent STEM orientation and purpose. **The proposed project aims to re-introduce this programming by implementing activities that highlight the STEM-related aspects of traditional seasonal land-based activities made available to the community by other tribal programs.** This element of the project may include activity days produced in conjunction with staff from the Treaty Natural Resources Division (TNR) and the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO). These departments have established events and activities to engage community members in maple syruping, harvesting and processing fish and game, harvesting wild rice and medicines, gardening and similar activities. The proposed project will complement these seasonal programs by offering activities that highlight the Traditional Ecological Knowledge embedded within these practices. These activities also form a meaningful context for building Ojibwemowin vocabulary and sharing the teachings that are embedded in the language and vocabulary related to each activity. With the leadership of the IMLS Project Director, the Library will continue engaging youth in science through participation in the Wisconsin Science Festival, especially encouraging students to develop projects based upon indigenous STEM. The project also includes library-based STEM activity days to engage youth in varied STEM activities throughout the school year. A wealth of resources are available to support this programming, including the curriculum developed by the IAS program, staff from the TNR and THPO departments, and the Red Cliff Ojibwemowin trainees.

This approach to science education can also play a role in generating interest among Red Cliff youth to pursue careers in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Native Americans are highly underrepresented group in STEM, yet Native nations play a vital role in monitoring and protecting natural resources, underscoring the need for more Native scientists. Additionally, rural areas such as Red Cliff face an ongoing and dire need for medical professionals. Yet at the Red Cliff Community Health Clinic, only one-third of positions requiring an advanced degree and one-half of assistant-level positions requiring on-the-job training are currently filled by Red Cliff tribal members. Approximately forty percent of positions within the Natural Resources Department are held by tribal members.

Offering place-based, technology-enhanced field experiences—such as those that include Native language, stewardship protocols, and seasonal practices— can engage Native youth in science and math in a way that

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

encourages them to recognize that “science” is not something outside of daily life and has always been part of Anishinaabe lifeways. Such initial engagement is a first step toward bringing more native youth into the STEM professions that are in high demand at Red Cliff and elsewhere.

Project Focus 3: Closing the “digital divide” by promoting digital media/information literacy

In the 2024 survey of library patrons, 65% of respondents indicated an interest in digital literacy and computer classes. The library has been able to provide direct service in this area through participation in the Click! And Learn program of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board. Through this program, a Digital Navigator holds regular hours twice a month at libraries throughout Bayfield County. The patrons that drop in during his regularly scheduled hours at the Red Cliff Library come in with a range of questions and challenges. Many need help troubleshooting their devices; others come in to borrow tablets or laptops and receive basic instruction on how to use them, create passwords, and navigate the internet. While the number of drop-in visitors is not high, the type of assistance requested indicates that the digital divide is very real at Red Cliff.

The problem of online disinformation is also of concern. While this is a worldwide phenomenon, a Red Cliff Community Facebook page provides a local example of online discourse which created high levels of conflict and animosity. The disinformation and lack of civility in the discourse was so great that the community member who managed the page eventually shut it down. This experience highlighted a need for more awareness and training in how to evaluate online information as well as guidance in the ethics and standards for online discourse. The fact that these stories are common does not diminish their impact, which is especially great in a small community such as Red Cliff, where the people involved also have personal ties and relationships.

Elders in particular are at risk of online abuse, in part because they are less adept with online technology, and in part because elders are so heavily targeted by bad actors. Recognizing the need for greater awareness to keep elders safe, the Digital Navigator offered a presentation about recognizing malware and avoiding online scams over the lunch hour at the Elderly Nutrition Center. Fifteen people in attendance stayed past lunch and were highly engaged.

Youth, and teens in particular, face different kinds of risks that are equally significant.

The need for a program that promotes digital and information literacy is clear, but this element of the project is in the early stages of development. Delivery of effective programming in this area requires deliberate and intentional planning. The project as proposed includes several activities such as workshops at the library or locations where people often gather such as the Elderly Center and youth-led media campaigns. The American Library Association and other media-oriented organizations offer a multitude of free resources. We also envision partnering with the Bayfield School and the Boys and Girls Club of Gichigami.

The long-standing partnership with the University of Wisconsin School of Library and Information Studies (iSchool) will be especially valuable in providing meaningful guidance in developing this element of the program in a way that is both strategic and effective. The Digital Navigator will also provide important program support.

1.b. Who is the primary audience for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?

Working toward the goal of whole community wellness, the proposed project is not specific to a single age group or other demographic. Activities and events will be designed appropriately to engage school-age youth, teens, young adults and elders. Many activities are by their nature, and by custom, intergenerational; for example, youth and elders were among the twenty participants at a recent Red Shawl workshop, sewing shawls to be worn in commemoration of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives. In contrast, within the digital literacy component of the proposed project, programming related to online safety for youth and for elders would be designed separately, reflecting necessary differences in program content and style of delivery.

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

Community engagement with current programming is a good indicator of interest; and patrons regularly share feedback with staff during and outside of program events. The activities in the schedule of completion are proposed as likely, to be finalized based upon availability of facilitators and support of collaborating parties. However, we also intend to gather input on the proposed workplan from library patrons and the broader community before finalizing the schedule.

Within the first three months of the project, the Library will host an Open House, inviting guests to weigh in on specific programming or activity ideas within the three proposed program areas and to offer additional recommendations. A survey instrument will also be available at the event and additionally will be conducted more broadly through a social media campaign. Specific programming decisions will thus be built around the interests, needs, and desires identified with this input. Planning meetings with internal (tribal) and external (non-tribal) community project partners will also inform these decisions as participants identify mutual goals, capacities, interests and needs.

2. Project Workplan

2.a. What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?

Specific activities and sequence are outlined in the Schedule of Completion.

2.b. Who will execute each activity? Be sure to identify all key staff.

As the Project Manager, the **Red Cliff Library Director** will dedicate 70% of their time to IMLS Enhancement project activities. In addition to grant/budget management and reporting, the Project Manager's role will largely involve program coordination rather than direct service. These duties include meeting with partners to develop events and activities, identifying facilitators, developing purchase orders and requisitions for supplies and services, scheduling, and promoting and facilitating program delivery. The Project Director will also attend local/regional and national conferences to share, learn from and network with other professionals.

Collaboration and partnership are an essential feature of program delivery within the current IMLS Enhancement grant project; the Library Director/Project Manager will build upon the partnerships already in place and develop relationships with other community entities as needed to fulfill program goals. The experience of the Library Director has shown that new programming also evolves organically through these deepening professional relationships. As a citizen of Red Cliff, the Project Manager's familiarity with the community's desires, interests and needs is a valuable asset. (Position Description and Resume attached).

The part-time **Library Assistant** will continue to provide essential support in planning, coordinating and facilitating events and programming. As a tribal citizen and lifelong resident of Red Cliff, the Library Assistant has developed an extensive network of local knowledge keepers to lead workshops and local bookshops and other businesses who frequently provide material support such as books, blank journals, and other program supplies. The Library Assistant also assists in promoting events, coordinating promotions with the tribe's Communications Specialist, distributing/posting event flyers at multiple locations throughout the Reservation, maintaining the monthly events calendar and maintaining engagement on the library's Facebook page. This position is funded by the IMLS NALS Basic grant and other tribal funds. This position is not included in the FY26 Enhancement grant budget.

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

The Red Cliff Library has a long history of collaborating with other tribal departments, local businesses, the Bayfield School, and the University of Wisconsin School of Information Science – Tribal Libraries, Archives and

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

Museums program (TLAM). With little to no operating/program budget, collaboration has been both a function of necessity as well as a means of achieving mutual, community-wide goals. Because most of these relationships are long-standing and ongoing, stakeholder involvement in planning is also ongoing.

Library staff actively participate in a monthly networking and planning meeting with staff from Health Services and Behavioral Health, Family Violence Prevention, the Boys and Girls Club of Gichigami, the Early Childhood Center, the Red Cliff Housing Authority and the Ojibwe Language Trainee program, along with multiple staff from the k-12 Bayfield School, where Red Cliff children make up 80% of the enrollment. These meetings are not specific to project planning for the Library but are fertile ground for new ideas that frequently evolve into partnering on specific initiatives. This regularly scheduled opportunity helps to ensure that library programming complements or fills gaps in other educational, social and cultural program offerings. It also provides an opportunity to discuss challenges and share experiences, ideas and resources for evaluating and improving participant engagement, program effectiveness, outreach strategies and similar topics.

2.d. 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?

Most program activities will be based at the Red Cliff Library. For larger gatherings, depending on the nature and audience of the activity, the Cultural Center and the Boys and Girls Club of Gichigami are options. For nature-based STEM activities, the “outdoor classroom” is always available.

The Ginanda Gikendaasomin Tribal Library is highly experienced in leveraging additional resources through creative collaborations and coordinated planning to advance mutual goals. Collaboration can also allow for cost-sharing to cover costs of program/event supplies and materials and for program facilitators. A list of primary project partners is provided below.

Staff from the Natural Resources Department will provide valuable expertise in planning and facilitating STEM activities, as community engagement is within the scope of their workplans. Teachers from Bayfield School who participated in the Indigenous Arts and Sciences project will also be valuable resources, along with the curriculum that was developed through the IAS project. Red Cliff Language Trainees program can provide support for language-based activities; apart from facilitating language tables, these staff can assist in providing signage, language based games and signage for the library. The program also expects to continue partnering with the Click! And Learn project of the Northwest Workforce Investment Board, which provides a Digital Navigator onsite twice monthly.

Indirect costs are budgeted to cover costs of staff support from multiple departments including Finance, Property and Procurement, Planning, Information Technology, and Compliance.

Current and potential partners and their roles in proposed activities include the following:

Red Cliff Treaty Natural Resources Red Cliff Tribal Historic Preservation Office	• Field-based opportunities/field trips and Tribal Farm activities built around STEM/IAS curriculum and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. • Project will coordinate participation by youth at TNR Open House, and event with activities and opportunities to meet and chat with staff in all Natural Resources program areas (Fisheries, Water Resources, Wildlife) • Youth participation in seasonal activities (rice harvest, sugarbush, fish harvest and processing, gardening, gathering wild plants/medicines)
Red Cliff Ojibwemowin Trainees	• Language tables; facilitating language-based games and activities for families
University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison School	• Planning for Digital/Internet literacy workshops

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

Library and Information Studies (iSchool) Northwest WI Workforce Investment Board School District of Bayfield Boys and Girls Club of Gitchigami	• Planning & coordination of youth-driven media/digital literacy campaign
School District of Bayfield Red Cliff Early Childhood Center Boys and Girls Club of Gitchigami	• Activity and event planning as part of monthly networking meeting • Promotion of IMLS project events and activities
Annual Red Cliff Unconventional Opportunity Expo	• Annual Expo coordinated by Red Cliff Economic Development, Housing, Health Services, and Human Resources • Offers STEM-related employers and presentations

2.e. How and with whom will you share your work's general results or lessons learned?

The Project Manager is a member of several professional associations including the Wisconsin Library Association, the American Library Association (and by extension, the American Indian Library Association), and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums. These associations offer multiple opportunities for networking, sharing results, and engaging in discussions related to project challenges and lessons learned. As a current graduate student in the UW-Madison School of Library and Information Sciences (iSchool), the Project Manager works closely with the iSchool's TLAM initiative, which has been a significant partner of the Red Cliff Library since its earliest days.

3. Project Results

3.a. What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, challenge, or opportunity you have identified (in Project Justification)?

The three distinct program areas within this project are intended to enhance the social and cultural connection that are essential to individual and community wellbeing. Active participation in cultural activities increases knowledge but also deepens relationships between participants, strengthening social networks while creating a shared sense of identity. The project also seeks to ensure that no community members are left behind and have the skills required to navigate an increasingly digitized media and information landscape.

Ojibwe language and cultural practices are a holistic asset to the Anishinaabe people. Language embodies traditional knowledge, spiritual values, and the means to effective social and environmental relationships. It is intimately connected to the well-being of Ojibwe people and creates a powerful, positive sense of identity that is a key protective factor in times of stress. Engaging in activities like book discussions, crafting, and singing with the drum deepens interpersonal relationships that are also critical to personal and collective wellbeing. The Indigenous Arts and Sciences project at Red Cliff demonstrated that youth involved in the program showed an understanding of how outdoor experiences and skills, environmental science and Ojibwe language and cultures are intertwined in their learning and their lives. Offering field-based STEM activities coordinated with the Natural Resources Department and Bayfield School will ensure that youth have continued opportunities to build this awareness.

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

Participation in current library programming reflects the value of this programming to the community. The library sees consistent levels of engagement in ongoing/monthly activities, with an average of seven to ten participants, many of them "frequent flyers". Most notable are the monthly Agindaasodaa! Book Club; Sharing Circles; Wiikweyaang Nagamo Ikwewag Women's Drum group; and Crafters' Niche. The Digital Navigator who is on site twice a month typically works with three to four individuals who drop in for assistance with utilizing their

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) Library Project

FY26 NAG-Enhancement NARRATIVE

digital devices or to check out laptops or tablets.

Special events planned for larger groups, frequently at offsite locations, draw higher participation. Highlights include the Red Shawl workshop last March, an intergenerational activity which engaged twenty community members; and a small business networking event in December which drew twelve participants. The Catch a Dream College and Career Fair in November 2025, held offsite at the Legendary Water event center, drew sixty participants and nine vendors. A workshop on Avoiding Malware and Online Scams hosted by the Elderly Nutrition Center engaged fifteen elders.

Gauging results such as “social and cultural connectedness” and shifts in beliefs and values are not readily quantified. As described in an evaluation report from the IAS project, such outcomes emerge in *stories* of family practices and price in being a member of the community; stories, too, are data. Surveys will be implemented as appropriate, recognizing the limitations of these instruments. Short-form interviews and annual listening sessions with project participants can be valuable. Transcribing these stories and comments and uploading into Word Cloud software is one way to extract themes and key “takeaways” from qualitative evaluations.

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

Ginanda Gikendaasomin (We Seek to Learn) project utilizes multiple avenues for sharing lessons learned and successes. The Library has initiated a quarterly newsletter to update the community about library services and programs, to introduce local community members to library staff, and promote future events and programming. Library staff also actively maintain the Ginanda Gikendaasomin Facebook page. While more oriented to providing information and promoting events, representative photos and community comments and “likes” are another way of sharing results and successes with the public. The Education Division Administrator supervises Library staff and programs, and reports regularly to Tribal Administration and Tribal Council to share program updates, successes and challenges.

A monthly **calendar of activities and events and informational flyers** are published through the online tribal weekly newsletter, Facebook page, and are posted or made available at key locations around the Reservation such as Peterson’s Grocery Store, the Clinic, the Administration building, the Senior Center, New Hope Housing Center, Boys and Girls Club, and Legendary Waters Resort and Casino; and are also posted on bulletin boards throughout the neighboring towns of Bayfield, Washburn and Ashland. Examples of flyers and monthly event calendars are attached.

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

It is impossible to guarantee the long-term sustainability of *programs*, as the funding landscape is by nature unpredictable. But there is little doubt that the *benefits*, or outcomes, of this project will extend beyond the project period.

As described in 3a and 3b, many of the benefits of this project are intangible; yet they are very real. Once something is learned, it is not easy to “unlearn” it. Participants who learn how to spot online scams and suspicious emails or learn to be cautious of AI-generated imagery will take that knowledge with them. This is especially true for social-emotional learning. If, as intended, project activities result in deepening participants’ sense of connection to their language, cultural practices and teachings, and to the land, participants will carry these experiences with them, along with the resulting sense of confidence, resilience and well-being.

Schedule of Completion

YEAR 1															
Oct. 1, 2026 - Sept. 30, 2027		SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	
Administrative	Internal Grant Kickoff meeting														
	Project Mgr, Education Div. Administrator, Accountant, Planner, Compliance Officer	X													
	Travel to ALA Conference										X				
Language & Cultural Arts	Weekly Ojibwemowin classes: 12-week sessions					X	X	X	X					X	
	Ojibwe Games - language learning games, traditional games, Bingo, etc.			X		X		X		X		X			
	Ojibwemowin storytime		X		X		X		X						
	Regalia making, ribbon skirts/shirts									X					
	Cultural arts: beading, finger weaving, dreamcatchers, quillwork, moccasin making, birchbark basketry, regalia making		X			X			X						
	Language awareness (words of the day/week, expressions - Quarterly Library or Weekly Tribal Newsletter)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Indigenized STEM Education	Planning for STEM education programming		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
	Wisconsin Science Festival - October 15-25, 2026 and TBD Oct. 2027		X												
	Take & Make Kits w/ STEM activities			X		X			X						
	Seasonal Science displays and activities: sugarbush, fishing, berry harvesting, ricing						X			X		X		X	
	Tribal farm & food sovereignty programming - Gathering, harvesting, processing, preparing foods and medicines grown at Tribal Farm											X		X	
	Science Camp, STE(A)M Camp, or similar multi-day youth program														
Digital & Information Literacy	Planning for digital literacy programming		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
	Digital Literacy educational event		X			X			X			X			
	Media/Information literacy, online safety - media campaign (newsletter, FB page			X	X		X	X		X	X				

Schedule of Completion

YEAR 2														
Oct. 1, 2027 - Sept. 30, 2028		OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	DEC
Administrative	INTERIM & FINAL Financial and Performance Reports (10/1/2026-9/30/2027)			X										X
	Travel to ATALM Conference	X												
Language & Cultural Arts	Weekly Ojibwemowin classes: 12-week sessions	X	X	X										
	Ojibwe Games - language learning games, traditional games, Bingo, etc.		X		X		X		X		X			
	Ojibwemowin storytime	X		X		X		X						
	Regalia making, ribbon skirts/shirts								X					
	Cultural arts: beading, finger weaving, dreamcatchers, quillwork, moccasin making, birchbark basketry, regalia making	X			X			X						
	Language awareness (words of the day/week, expressions - Quarterly Library or Weekly Tribal Newsletter)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Indigenized STEM Education	Planning for STEM education programming	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
	Wisconsin Science Festival - October 15-25, 2026 and TBD Oct. 2027	X												
	Take & Make Kits w/ STEM activities		X		X			X						
	Seasonal Science displays and activities: sugarbush, fishing, berry harvesting, ricing					X			X		X		X	
	Tribal farm & food sovereignty programming - Gathering, harvesting, processing, preparing foods and medicines grown at Tribal Farm										X			
	Science Camp, STE(A)M Camp, or similar multi-day youth program & Planning					X	X	X	X		X			
Digital & Information Literacy	Digital Literacy educational event	X			X			X			X			
	Media/Information literacy, online safety - media campaign (newsletter, FB page)		X	X		X	X		X	X				