

Title: ARL Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Institute: Scaffolding for Sustainable Systemic Change

Summary: The Association of Research Libraries (ARL), in collaboration with member libraries and allied organizations, is requesting \$97,942 for a one-year Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant in the **Planning** funding category and the **Community Catalysts** project category for research to further the development of a curricular framework and success metrics for a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) institute. The audience for this institute is staff at libraries and other memory organizations who have a desire to lead in these areas. The project has three interrelated parts, the first of which has been initiated and funded by ARL and partner library associations: 1) developing a curriculum through a) leveraging an existing ARL framework for competencies in racial equity jointly scoped by ARL, the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and the Public Library Association (PLA), b) researching best practices of existing offerings in this space; 2) convening experts to vet the findings and make recommendations; and 3) establishing success metrics that will demonstrate the institute's impact over the short and long term. This project will address two significant needs: 1) access to resources for sustaining diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces, and 2) benchmarks to chart the efficacy of DEI capacity building. The outputs will be an extensible, implementable curriculum and a set of success metrics for a diversity, equity, and inclusion institute that, following this planning period, will be piloted by ARL for the research library community, and which can also be customized and implemented in a broad range of contexts including public libraries, archives, and other memory and information organizations and institutions.

Statement of Need: ARL, in collaboration with allied organizations, has identified a common need among all research and public libraries for both greater access to resources for sustaining diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces, and clear benchmarks to chart the impact of such programs.¹ Historically, libraries have utilized a variety of *ad hoc* tools, methods, and programs - from workplace climate surveys and human resources best practices, to specialized consultants and staff development - as they have attempted to augment and enhance their capacity as diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizations. However, there remains little consensus around which programs work best for sustaining DEI, and how to measure success in the near- and long-term. Standalone programs aimed at sustainable transformation, such as the envisioned ARL DEI institute, with clear benchmarks for true systemic change, remain rare and untested. This planning grant seeks to address the above needs through leveraging existing preliminary research, analyzing the success characteristics and impact of existing DEI programs, and inviting expert feedback. The project will engage a researcher grounded in rigorous quantitative and qualitative methodologies as well as deep knowledge of DEI theories, possibly from institutes such as the National Center for Institutional Diversity at the University of Michigan, or the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University.

Project Design: ARL's Director of Diversity and Leadership, as the project director, will lead one project manager, and one researcher who will apply rigorous social science methodologies in conducting the bulk of the work outlined above. An Advisory Committee will include the project director, three members with content expertise in DEI and leadership responsibilities at member institutions or allied organizations (e.g. ALA, ACRL, PLA), the ARL Executive Director, and a member of the ARL Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. ARL will lead the overall project, be responsible for grant reporting, and provide facilities and infrastructure.

¹ See e.g. *Facing Change: Insights from the American Alliance of Museums' Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Working Group* (AAM, 2018)

<https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/AAM-DEAI-Working-Group-Full-Report-2018.pdf>

The iterative curriculum drafting, the development of success metrics, and the convening of experts will be led by the project manager, in collaboration with the researcher, who will leverage the environmental scan on DEI training curricula and methodologies from a variety of professional sectors recently completed by ARL Visiting Program Officer (VPO) Kiyomi Deards. The planning will also be informed by a framework for racial equity in libraries currently being funded and developed through a collaboration between ARL, ACRL, ALA, and PLA. Although some of ARL's work leading up to this project has focused on issues of racial equity, it is anticipated that the institute curriculum will address other pressing issues such as gender equity, accessibility, generational differences, and the like. The researcher will also conduct new research and analysis on existing DEI training programs' curricula and best practices for evaluating short- and long-term success.² The project manager and researcher are expected to provide some combination of the following: domain expertise, analytical skills, access to key decision-makers and partners, and project management skills. Over the course of the year, the project director will meet in person twice with the project manager and researcher: for a one-day kick off event, and for discussions and presentations regarding results and final recommendations with the Advisory Committee and a broader set of stakeholders, which may be held in conjunction with a national association meeting. An output of the project will be a report that includes an extensible DEI institute curriculum and associated metrics ready to be piloted in support of sustainable systemic change.

Diversity Plan: This planning grant for an ARL DEI Institute is, at its core, a project that will address the needs for the library workforce to be proficient within and committed to issues as they relate to DEI in libraries and other cultural heritage and information institutions. The project will intentionally engage a diverse set of contributors and stakeholders with a range of personal identities, expertise, and contributions toward developing a model for engagement and transformation that will lead to enduring systemic change within the profession and society.

National Impact: With the outputs of this planning grant, ARL member libraries and aligned institutions can pilot and iterate the modular curriculum and metrics for sustaining diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces. Ultimately, all types of libraries will be able to compare short- and long-range data and methods for collective benefit. This project will define what ARL can offer to further the common good through fostering leadership skills and critical competencies to advance DEI. The project will serve as a model for other library, archive, and cultural heritage organizations. ARL is a national leader in the field of DEI recruitment and leadership development and has successfully implemented IMLS and other grants.

Budget Summary: ARL seeks partial support for the salaries of the project director and ARL Administrative, Financial, and Communications staff (\$7,957) and a project manager (\$10,400). ARL will also coordinate a researcher (\$40,000) and their travel to two meetings (\$3,300). An additional \$6,600 will support the project director and external project manager's travel to two in-person meetings. Grant funds will also subsidize the Advisory Committee members' travel to two meetings (\$8,000). ARL requests \$2,500 to support meeting materials and technology. Total of all direct costs = \$78,757 + \$19,185 for indirect costs (= 24.36% of total direct costs) = \$97,942.

² Examples of existing programs include the [Racial Equity Institute \(REI\)](#), DeEtta Jones & Associates' [Equity Toolkit](#), and the IMLS-funded [Cultural Competence Learning Institute](#).