

## **Uncovering Black Lives Project: Investigating the information community and collections of African American Genealogists**

This three-year Laura Bush 21st century Early Career Development Research in Service to Practice Grant at Syracuse University, requests \$328,728 (cost share an additional \$156,413) for LaVerne Gray, Ph.D. Assistant Professor at the iSchool, to investigate the African American genealogical community. The project seeks to examine information behavior, explore familial collection building, and support dissemination of unearthed histories of African Americans and serve as a Community Catalyst.

### **Statement of Broad Need:**

African American genealogy became popularized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the publishing of *Alex Haley's Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (1976). The subsequent airing of the television mini-series became a catalyst for the active engagement of the nation in the pursuance of ancestry, heritage, and identity. The revelatory narrative told both in the text and in the broadcast, introduced, many viewers to a historical tale centered on the saga of one American family. Alex Haley's family became an historical representation of what was both assumed and unknown of African American contributions to American History. As a result of Haley's groundbreaking work and with the advent of the internet and technological tools to research ancestors, genealogy is popularized in media with television shows like, *African American Lives* (Gates, 2006). This project aims to examine information behavior, explore familial collection building, and support dissemination of unearthed histories of African Americans through investigating genealogy work.

The genealogical path for African Americans is a distinct and intimate journey in the discovery of self through the use of personal, municipal and community archives. The work of the African American Genealogist whether hobbyist at varying levels and professionals alike reflects the continuity of the struggles to resist placement of the Black experience at the margins. The practice of African American genealogy can be defined as an "attempt to reclaim history, to regain culture, and to gain knowledge and a sense of place that has been denied (Dula, 200, p. 134)." It is at once an "exercise critical nostalgia as a method for historical engagement in the performance and analysis of memory practices" (Huell, 2020). Burroughs (2001) makes the case for researching genealogy for African Americans as follows: to give our children heritage, to understand family, to learn about history, to foster pride and self-esteem, can be emotional. The reclamation and memory practices catapult a familial ancestral connection to history and places them within it. In other words, history is not what happens to someone else, lineages connect the individual a unified and undiscovered past.

Theoretically the project is framed by the informational behavior concept of *information community*, defined as a "partnership of institutions and individuals forming and cultivating a community of interest around the provision and exchange of information, or knowledge, aimed at increasing access to that information or increasing communication, and thereby increasing that knowledge" (Fisher, Unruh, & Durrance, 2005). The genealogical community is a catalyst for exchange of research processes and methods in the pursuit of self-acknowledgement in the oft-neglected histories of African Americans. Human information behavior focuses on the transactional use of information by people in all settings in a multitude of circumstances. This encompasses both intentional and passive modes of exchange that is purposeful (Fisher & Julien, 2009; Pettigrew, Fidel, & Bruce, 2000; Wilson, 2000). As defined in the literature, information behavior is a meta-theoretical sub-discipline in Library and information science which conjoins theories related to "how people need, seek, give and use information in different contexts" (Pettigrew, Fidel, & Bruce, 2001, p. 44). Information in the context of this case is viewed as space, social environment, and knowledge (Buckland, 1991) which is "intangible: one cannot touch it or measure it in any direct way. Knowledge, belief, and opinion are personal, subjective, and conceptual" (p.351). The behavior is examined through activities associated with the community-based activism engaged by the mothers.

Conceptual frameworks of information behavior traditionally are concerned with cognitive, social, and multi-faceted approaches to research (Pettigrew, Fidel, & Bruce, 2000). The idea of community as a site for information draws on the concept of information community. An information community is described as a "partnership of institutions and individuals forming and cultivating a community of interest around the

provision and exchange of information, or knowledge, aimed at increasing access to that information or increasing communication, and thereby increasing that knowledge” (Durrance, 2001, p.64). This definition exists in the realm of internet based online communities. The characteristics of the information community stress togetherness and information interdependence amongst community members.

- Information Communities emphasize collaboration among diverse information providers
- Information Communities anticipate and often form around people’s needs to get and use information
- Information communities effectively exploit the information sharing qualities of available technology and yield multiplier effects for stakeholders
- Information communities transcend barriers to information-sharing
- Information communities connect people and foster social connectedness

In the context of project, the African American genealogical community is extended to include facets of identity bonds that locate a shared desire for finding oneself in the context of a neglected history that is misunderstood. The use of the collective with “such as participation in family history associations, discussion lists, family reunions or other community gatherings where family, extended kin or clan histories are shared, then they are more likely to become part of the contested stories that constitute collective memories. (Hackstaff, 2010) Amongst the individuals within the space is a connection through proximity, commonality, and marginalization. The social space therefore produces communication aspects associated with ‘informatics’ or ‘informing’ the members unifying practices for community good. This view promotes community in relationship with practices, coalescing in participation through seeking activities.

In the African American genealogical landscape, there is the sociological concept of *reconciliation*, signifying the restoration of “lineages, families, and knowledge of the past and to make political claims in the present” (Nelson, 2016, p. 6). Reconciliation occurs through the practice of collecting artifacts and building familial collections in order to contribute to the historic record. The past is made present through reconciliation. A divergence of the concept is recognizing the complexities of identity by connecting with Africa through DNA (Lawton, Forman, & Sudel, 2018) and subsequent enslavement predicated on the social constructions of race and culture (Abel, 2018). Through science and documentation, the popularity of locating the self and community by biological means is tempting. The euphoric experience of a knowledge that was lost in the middle passage is regained. However, Nelson (2016) explicates that “DNA can offer an avenue toward recognition but cannot stand in for reconciliation” (p. 164).

Reconciliation can also take the form of generational healing as noted in a shared journey of Norman DeWolf and Sharon Leslie Morgan (2012). Their shared journey towards healing activities around “researching and understanding history, making connections with others, individual and collective healing, and taking on going action” (p.191). This acknowledgement shows the power of pursuit in reconciling across racial lines. Another attribute of reconciliation is the call for reparations where the effects of the ravages of slavery on the social, political, and economic aspects of African American lives in is need of renumeration. The coming to the table framework (CTTT), elicits healing for the descendants of those enslaved for introspection and justice in four interrelated areas (Ford & Strauss, 2019,):

1. Facing History - researching, acknowledging, and sharing personal, family and community histories of race with openness and honesty.
2. Making Connections - connecting to others within and across racial lines in order to develop and deepen relationships.
3. Healing Wounds - exploring how we can heal together through dialogue, reunion, ritual, ceremony, the arts, apology and other methods.
4. Taking Action - actively seeking to heal the wounds of racial inequality and injustice and to support racial reconciliation between individuals, within families, and in communities. (p. 4)

The activity of genealogy and researching history represents a seat at the table for African American genealogists. It represents the road towards healing. This project will utilize the lenses of reconciliation and information community in observation, narrative interviews, and the exploration of collections and artifacts.

The familial becomes the center thereby replacing white dominate narratives with more honest and intimate history taking into account of what was lost. It is an act of reclamation to the fullness of the myriad of

stories created with a collective conscious of de-centering white canonistic thought that permeates society and locates in various geographies the journey to full liberation. This act of uncovering Black lives and the communities that surround it provides a unique opportunity to investigate and reveal the cultural dimension of unearthing the micro-histories that have indeed shaped society and answers questions around identity, liberation, resistance and struggle. This unifier places the Black experience in the United States as a road paved with emotional redemption.

The research builds on previous work by the PI using genealogy as a catalyst to examine familial collections and their location in communities to uncover historic contributions made to society (Gray, 2019). In the previous study, the value of illuminating hidden figures through exploring the activism of an ancestor provides the foundation for understanding the information practices of the African American genealogical community, the stories of the lives they uncover, and the dissemination and use of their collections. The previous study developed a Black Feminist Information Community model. The model reflects the nuances of the collective pursuits of social justice and community action in an historical setting. It found that the women in the community possessed certain characteristics within an activist community environment. The elements of the include place and space, voice, information, belief system, and mobilization (Gray, 2019). The select case was bounded by place and time, but nevertheless demonstrated an empowered community. Bring the idea forward in a contemporary space, the project expands this view of an African American community of working in concert in the pursuit of a different kind of justice. The justice is represented by resistance to grand narratives about the history of the United States and serves as an equalizer for contributions. The recent development of the *1619 Project* (The New York Times, 2019) illuminates the hidden and unknown to reveal evidence of the contributions and impact of race and racism in the United States. With this project, the placement of the collective pursuits of information community is investigated.

This project is situated in the tradition of exploring marginal communities' information behavior and practices. Elfreda Chatman (1985, 1990, 1999) explored the information behaviors of women participants in a work training program, information context of janitors, and experiences of women inmates. In her work she laid the foundation of creating theory around how information operates in marginal spaces. Although, this work places the minoritized groups in a deficit posture, it shows the unique dynamics of information in the lives of people of color and those with socioeconomic challenges. communities of color and information behavior and practices.

I imagine this pursuit as a connecting activity. Beginning with a glimpse into a sacred, vast, and multidimensional communal practice engaged in the practice of freedom. The emancipation proclamation reflected an initial freedom from legalized bondage and subsequent bondage in the de jure racist policies persisted in the furtherance of discriminations that enforce inequities through the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The summer of 2020 and the global cry of Black Lives in America and throughout the diaspora released the ancestral cry of the recognition of full humanity to participants and recipients of the benefits of White privilege. Now is the time to examine the work begun by ancestors who told stories, those that documented them, and the records available through municipal interactions. The ancestral pursuit and the collections created by documentary records provides a space for "finding a place called home" (Woodtor, 1999) when life in the wilderness of America constrains the fullness of the contributions of all peoples.

The project goals:

1. Identify and distinguish relationships (networks) community structures of support for African American genealogists.
2. Capture narratives of African American genealogical community members in professional practice, associations, and online environments
3. Explore and analyze the collection and artifacts of African American genealogists.
4. Uncover familial histories towards the development of a dissemination tool for use in libraries and archives that service African American genealogists.
5. Utilize multiple qualitative approaches for data collection to develop protocols for investigating an information community of color defined by the activity of family historical research

## Project Design:

Black Lives Project will address the following research questions:

1. How do the information communities of African American genealogists support familial research?
2. What processes and mechanisms do the communities use in familial collection building?
3. What dissemination activities are employed to contribute to uncovering and reconciling the histories of African Americans?

The project will utilize qualitative research design. Qualitative research methods are described as naturalistic, interpretive, and non-numerical observation of phenomena. Quality “refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of things” (Berg, 2009). The descriptions produce data, which are collected and interpreted by researchers, the primary instrument of analysis. Experiences under study are examined and meaning is extracted making visible what is ordinary. To accomplish this the approach to the research field requires interactivity with the African American genealogical communities at the sites where they convene. This involves an iterative critical qualitative case study approach to observe shared research practices and the development of collections that reveal hidden histories and contributions of African Americans. Case study is defined as “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015 p. 37). The bounded system in this project is the activity of genealogical research amongst multiple community sites. This approach allows for the flexibility to collect data through what Yin (2003) refers to as observations, interviews, documents, archival records, and media materials. The researcher will collect fieldnotes using unobtrusive observations of both online and physical meeting environments, document analysis of source collections and familial (personal) collections and encourage storytelling through the use of in-depth narrative interviews.

The unit of analysis for the project is the community of practice. Community is determined by geographical space(s) of ancestral study, meeting space (informal virtual/formal association membership/professional), and identification as an African America. The study will conduct 20-30 in-depth qualitative narrative interviews with members of communities across ranks including leaders, and researchers with various levels of expertise. The target community will be those individuals involved with the African American Historical Genealogical Society. Other online communities will be to gain insight in a variety of community practices. The project director will select based on differing geographies, level of activity, and through advisory board and mentor recommendations three local or regional sites to recruit individuals to interview. Connections will be made and developed in the early stages of the project with the help of the outreach and liaison mentor. The research instruments will be developed through pilot interviews of individuals identified in early contacts with a local association. The pilot will help establish protocols for observational practice, interviews, and dissemination of family histories. The pilot interviews will address community involvement, engagement levels, collaboration, information needs, cultural and social connectedness, and family histories and collections. Pilot observation will involve online communities and attending one meeting of an identified chapter.

The quality of the case study is determined by trustworthiness, which includes credibility (representative of experiences), dependability (credible findings), confirmability (demonstrates through credibility activities), and transferability (similar meaning to others) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). These determinants of rigor and quality demonstrate information discovery and the representation of experiences of study participants. The interactive nature of the case requires building blocks, exploration in the vastness of the African American genealogical community landscape; the development of observational and interview protocols; analyzing the data to determine the conceptual structure of the African American Genealogical community and utilizing those data to construct a sharing module that can be used by local libraries and institutions to better service content created by the masses and uncover histories.

*Data Collection & Analysis(See Summary)s:* The case study will produce different kinds of data. It will include inventoried community database, observational fieldnotes, interview transcripts, and documents. I will develop a networked relational mapping of an inventory(database) of the multiple community sites, including contacts of leadership or significant community members. I understand that identifying key personals may not be available for all community sites, but an effort to collect those that are available will inform the scope of the sites that will be used for the study. Each will be characterized by type, location, specialty, affiliation

(corporate, institutional, independent), and function. This involves descriptive relational community information network developed from the inventoried database. This analysis will create visualization and provide a road map for sties to investigate further by highlighting the complexity of possible identified connections amongst communities of practice (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013).

Data will represent organizations, online organizational affiliate communities, social media collectives, and professional associations (Scott & Carrington, 2011). The network will establish the universe of African American genealogical communities and serve as roadmap for recruiting participants for interviews. I will analyze the interview data using thematic narrative analysis (Reissman, 2008) to account for the research path taken by the genealogists interviewed. I will analyze the narratives utilizing the six phases of thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The six phases are: 1. Familiarizing yourself with the data, 2. Generating initial codes 3. Searching for themes, 4. Reviewing Themes, 5. Defining and naming themes, 6. Producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). Extensive memos will be kept by the PI as a reflexive tool and to document processes. To analyze the documents the project will use evidence inquiry analysis approach. Evidence inquiry is the process by which description and analysis is used to examine archival materials to examine the historical lives (Gray, 2019). The evidence inquiry framework begins with the descriptive, develops through coding, and analysis. Each document is interrogated answering questions (Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why). Then coding for historical context and familial relevance is constructed. Lastly narrative themes will be applied.

Table 2: Summary of data Collection & Analysis

Summary of Data Collection & Analysis		
Research Questions	Data Collection	Data Analysis
How do the information communities of African American genealogists support familial research?	Community Inventory Observational Notes (Pilot) Interviews (Pilot)/Member Checking Memos	Relational network
What processes and mechanisms do the communities use in familial collection building?	Interviews/Member Checking Observations Memos	Narrative Thematic Analysis Notes
What dissemination activities are employed to contribute to uncovering and reconciling the histories of African Americans?	Interviews Observation Sample Familial Document	Narrative Thematic Analysis Notes Evidence Inquiry Analysis

*Administrative Activities:* At funding notice, I will submit an application for Institutional Review Board approval. In the first year include hiring and training a graduate research assistant and recruiting an outreach and liaison mentor, who will serve as a community connector. With the help of the student, I will set up a website that can communicate progress and serve as a management tool for the administration of the project. Mentorship with occur with the recruited filed expert who will connect me to activities and happenings of the African American genealogical community and establish relationships and connection for disseminating the pilot Uncovering Black Lives tool for libraries. I will consult with the research mentor each quarter to discuss research guidance and project management. The advisory board will meet virtually twice a year in the first and third quarter, where I will present report of progress, solicit guidance, assessment, and feedback on both a tool for libraries and sharing module.

Contingency plans involve making adjustments in proposed travel to sites for observational and interview purposes if it is prohibitive for the researcher. Association meetings may be virtual for the first year of the project. All communications, and observations will take place virtually when neccary. This may have impact on identified reginal sites for observation and interviews. The Project director will make adjustments make adjustments to accodate virtual research in the first year of the project. The timeline assists in this by

making the first year of the project website and community analysis, establishing relationships, and conducting a pilot to interview a few participants.

*Project deliverables:* The project will have a website to communicate activities and manage project goals and milestones. Each product resulting from research including papers (Pre-print), conference presentations, and posters will be made available. The project director will log activities and communicate in a bi-monthly blog the research process. Additionally, research interments including protocols for observation and interviews will be shared. The next deliverable will result from initial inventory that network will assist in understanding the African American genealogical community landscape and community networks. Other deliverables include the aforementioned research write-ups in the form of conference papers and presentations. The results of the research will develop the Uncovering Black Lives tool. The tool will have two aspects. The first will be an informative (best practices) for libraries in servicing African American genealogy activities and the next will be a sharing module that will feature the uncovered histories and familial collections that reveal African American contributions and histories through past lives. The development of the module will be an effort combining investigation of such tools available already, insights from interview and observation data, and feedback from the advisory board and mentors. This shared effort will result in something that has collective input and will meet the needs of the community understudy and be usable by users at various institutions. Any collaborations identified in the process of developing the module will occur during the research process.

*Dissemination:* Findings will be presented initially at Year 2 to receive feedback from the research community, and in Year 3 at both research and practitioner conferences. Three peer review articles on reflecting findings will be written and submitted. Additional dissemination will occur by establishing a piloted online communal space module through partnerships identified by the population understudy that can be best used to both share and uncover family stories, share documents, and develop protocols to create a sharing space of unknown histories of black lives in the United States.

Overview of Yearly Targets		
Year 1: Laying the Ground/Pilot	Year 2: Case Implementation	Year 3: Analysis and Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain Institutional Review Board clearance for research with human subjects.</li> <li>• Recruit and train full-time PhD level Graduate Research Assistant.</li> <li>• Identify and take inventory of genealogical associations, communities on social media, websites, and blogs</li> <li>• Conduct observations in multiple African American genealogical community environments (Online Groups, Local Associations, and Institutional Practitioners)</li> <li>• Conduct pilot interviews and document analysis to establish protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations at meetings and gatherings.</li> <li>• Conduct 20-30 in-depth qualitative narrative interviews with members across ranks including leaders, and researchers with various levels of expertise (signified by years of engagement) at community sites</li> <li>• Transcribe and analyze interviews.</li> <li>• Present initial findings at ASIS&amp;T.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create online pilot module for sharing African American familial histories and collection sources using online platform</li> <li>• Draft and create best practices</li> <li>• Write and Submit 3 peer review articles (Libraries: Culture, History, and Society; Libri: The International Journal of Libraries and Information Studies; Library Quarterly).</li> <li>• Present findings at ALISE, ALA.</li> </ul>

**Broad Impact:** The research will identify processes to surface and develop engagement mechanisms to help uncover the hidden histories of African Americans through familial collections. The observations, interviews and document evidence analysis aspects will assist in identifying cultural information practices and communal information behaviors. The research makes the case for a collective view of information seekers that come together around identity, to search for unknown lives and histories. The research will introduce a collectivist perspective to understanding communities of practice, familial collections, and their relationship to libraries and archival institutions. The research makes the case for local, national, and interconnected public histories of African Americans and demonstrate how this community seek and partner with others to solve information dilemmas and share stories.

The findings will clarify the role of communal research support and familial collections practices. The findings will also work towards identification and conceptualized cultural information practices and communal information behaviors of African American independent researchers. The findings create the pathways of establishing a model of service, mechanisms for outreach and engagement, and capturing unknown histories. The audience for such findings will be scholars that study the information behaviors and communities, librarians and archivists that service African American genealogists, those with interests in local African American contributions to histories, and users. The tool of service created by knowing the community of service will especially help practitioners and creating a module can help in the further development of utilizing the findings will identify cultural information practices and communal information behaviors of African American independent researchers.

**Diversity Plan:** Because the research focuses on the African American genealogical community, it provides pathways for greater sharing of hidden and unknown histories. The findings support diversity and inclusion of familial collections from a community of color. The community-based research approach identifies how a minoritized information community supports reconciling a past that lacks inclusion of all voices. Once practices and protocols are identified they can be used for inclusion in all library collections to help them better serve their patrons more successfully and link libraries to organizations of color.

***Project Personnel***

***Principal Investigator:*** LaVerne Gray, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the School of Information studies at Syracuse University, where she teaches in the Library and Information Science program. Her courses include Collection Management and Access, Reference and Information Literacy Services, and Information Justice and Community Engagement. Her research examines the intersection of information justice, Black feminist epistemology and memory work. Her dissertation, “In a Collective Voice: Uncovering the Black Feminist Information Community of Activist-Mothers in Chicago Public Housing, 1955-1970,” (2019) was inspired by genealogical research on her grandmother and a community of women working for betterment in Chicago Public Housing. She was awarded the University of Tennessee College of Communication and Information Dissertation award and placed second in the Association for Library and Information Science Educators (ALISE) Jean Tague-Sutcliffe Doctoral Poster Competition. This dissertation research was funded by the Black Metropolis Research Consortium (BMRC) summer research fellowship. She is extending themes of her dissertation research, writing on African American community information environments and exploring information historicism in communities of color. Examples of projects in process include relational networking of African American elites using the society pages as an information world; application of her Black Feminist Information Community (BFIC) model; and exploring voice and community in the Black Experience.

***Mentors:*** The project will have both an outreach/field liaison and methods mentor. I will Recruit Outreach/Liaison mentor will serve as a connector to genealogy community, institutions, and activities. University will assist in outreach to institutional, organizational, and community-based African American genealogy networks. Her expertise in her capacity as a librarian and archivist at a Historically Black Institution provides a much-needed lens the collections and information need of African Americans in search of ancestors and history. Dr. Bharat Mehra (University of Alabama) will serve as a methodological and grant management mentor. Dr. Mehra has extensive qualitative community-based action research and has managed IMLS grant projects that explore marginalized communities.

***Advisory Board:*** The separate advisory board includes experts at the intersection of genealogy, archives, collections, and the Black experience. Taneya Koonce (President, Nashville Chapter of the African American Genealogical and History Society-AAGHS); Miranda Mims (Co-Founder of the Nomadic Archivist Project); Makiba Foster (Regional Manager of the Broward County African American Research Library & Cultural Center); Allison Sutton (Program Manager, Black Metropolis Research Consortium); and Rebecca Hankins (Texas A&M University).

The purpose of the advisory board is to provide guidance and feedback and access on African American genealogy communities, institutional efforts, feedback on researcher immersion, data collection instruments, project findings, and the Uncovering Black Lives Tool Kit for Libraries.

***Graduate Assistant:*** The project will recruit and mentor one PhD Graduate Assistant interests in qualitative research, website development, and studying marginalized populations. The student will work on managing project activities throughout the duration of the project.







## DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

### INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to digital products that are created using federal funds. This includes (1) digitized and born-digital content, resources, or assets; (2) software; and (3) research data (see below for more specific examples). Excluded are preliminary analyses, drafts of papers, plans for future research, peer-review assessments, and communications with colleagues.

The digital products you create with IMLS funding require effective stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and reuse by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

### INSTRUCTIONS

If you propose to create digital products in the course of your IMLS-funded project, you must first provide answers to the questions in **SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS**. Then consider which of the following types of digital products you will create in your project, and complete each section of the form that is applicable.

#### **SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS**

Complete this section if your project will create digital content, resources, or assets. These include both digitized and born-digital products created by individuals, project teams, or through community gatherings during your project. Examples include, but are not limited to, still images, audio files, moving images, microfilm, object inventories, object catalogs, artworks, books, posters, curricula, field books, maps, notebooks, scientific labels, metadata schema, charts, tables, drawings, workflows, and teacher toolkits. Your project may involve making these materials available through public or access-controlled websites, kiosks, or live or recorded programs.

#### **SECTION III: SOFTWARE**

Complete this section if your project will create software, including any source code, algorithms, applications, and digital tools plus the accompanying documentation created by you during your project.

## **SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA**

Complete this section if your project will create research data, including recorded factual information and supporting documentation, commonly accepted as relevant to validating research findings and to supporting scholarly publications.

## **SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS**

**A.1** We expect applicants seeking federal funds for developing or creating digital products to release these files under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, or assets; software; research data) you intend to create? What ownership rights will your organization assert over the files you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on their access and use? Who will hold the copyright(s)? Explain and justify your licensing selections. Identify and explain the license under which you will release the files (e.g., a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, Creative Commons licenses; RightsStatements.org statements). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

The research products are the project website, research protocols, best-practices, and publications and presentations. All aspects of the project will be open access through the website which will serve as a project manage tool. The website will be hosted at Syracuse University iSchool website and be published with a Creative Commons License which will provide access for researchers, libraries, members of the African American genealogical community, archivist, and all those with interest in the project. Attribution will be given to the PI, IMLS, mentors, and advisory board.

The *data products* include observational notes, interview transcripts, community inventory, relational networks. Participants will provide consent to share or non-disclosure of data. In that instance they will be masked.

**A.2** What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

Syracuse University will have ownership of the project website, research protocols, and best-practices, and sharing module (if developed at the site). Access will be determined by Syracuse University IRB office to protect confidentiality. All pre-prints of papers, posters, and proceedings will be made available by link and with publisher's permission as noted in journal guidelines.

**A.3** If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

Each participant will decide how data will be made available. Pseudonyms will be used and identifying information will be masked. During the member-checking participants will have input on which information will be masked. The PI will share protocols, and aggregated results from data.

## SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

**A.1** Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.

Asset	Description	Quantity	Format
Project Website		1 website	html
African American Genealogist Interviews	Recordings, transcripts, memo, Member-checking, thematic code	30 Recordings, Transcripts, member-checking documents 1-set of aggregated thematic codes	MPG4, PDF, NVivo
Observations	Observational notes	20-30 Notes taken by PI and Research Assistant	PDF, NVivo database
Publication and Presentations	Publications and conference presentations	Multiple	PDF, html

**A.2** List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the digital content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

Microsoft Office-Excel, Word, One Note (Organize research processes and data)  
NVivo (Store, Code, Analyze Observational Notes and Interview Transcripts)  
Apple quick time to create MP4 recordings.

**A.3** List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG, OBJ, DOC, PDF) you plan to use. If digitizing content, describe the quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, pixel dimensions) you will use for the files you will create.

If digitizing content is needed PDF, JPGs will be used.

### Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

**B.1** Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

The PI will manage project workflows using Microsoft One Note and share with Graduate Research Assistant. Mentors and advisory board members will have access to work plans and can comment and share documents as needed. Notes and transcription will be available to the PI and RA using an Nvivo.

**B.2** Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period. Your plan should address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

Syracuse University iSchool will permanently host the project website on a durable URL. Research products including publications, presentations, data products, and the Uncovering Black Lives best practices and sharing tool will be deposited in SURFACE, Syracuse University Institutional Repository.

## **Metadata**

**C.1** Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata or linked data. Specify which standards or data models you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., RDF, BIBFRAME, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

Syracuse University SURFACE Institutional repository will manage metadata.

**C.2** Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

SURFACE Institutional repository will support preserving and maintaining metadata.

**C.3** Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

## **Access and Use**

**D.1** Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content, delivery enabled by IIIF specifications).

Access will be available via the project website, which is accessible using web browsers, and deposited in the SURFACE depository.

**D.2.** Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Universal Resource Locator), DOI (Digital Object Identifier), or other persistent identifier for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

SURFACE, Syracuse University Institutional Repository  
URL: <https://surface.syr.edu/>

## **SECTION III: SOFTWARE**

### **General Information**

**A.1** Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

N/A

**A.2** List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same or similar functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

N/A

### **Technical Information**

**B.1** List the programming languages, platforms, frameworks, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

N/A

**B.2** Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

N/A

**B.3** Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

N/A

**B.4** Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

N/A

**B.5** Provide the name(s), URL(s), and/or code repository locations for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

N/A

### Access and Use

**C.1** Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

N/A

**C.2** Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

N/A

## SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

As part of the federal government's commitment to increase access to federally funded research data, Section IV represents the Data Management Plan (DMP) for research proposals and should reflect data management, dissemination, and preservation best practices in the applicant's area of research appropriate to the data that the project will generate.

**A.1** Identify the type(s) of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use(s) to which you expect them to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use, the proposed scope and scale, and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate data.

Summary of Data Collection & Analysis		
Project year	Data Collection	Data Analysis
Year 1	Community Inventory Observational Notes (Pilot) Interviews (Pilot)/Member Checking Memos	Relational network
Year 2	Interviews/Member Checking Observations Memos	Narrative Thematic Analysis Notes
Year 3	Interviews Observation Sample Familial Document	Narrative Thematic Analysis Notes Evidence Inquiry Analysis

**A.2** Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

An approval application will be submitted to Syracuse University Institutional Review Board in the first three months of the project.

**A.3** Will you collect any sensitive information? This may include personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information. If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect the information while you prepare it for public release (e.g., anonymizing individual identifiers, data aggregation). If the data will not be released publicly, explain why the data cannot be shared due to the protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements.

All participants will be anonymized. As stated, participants will indicate whether they want to share data related to interviews. All of the data collected will be secure and password protected, only project staff will have access.

**A.4** What technical (hardware and/or software) requirements or dependencies would be necessary for understanding retrieving, displaying, processing, or otherwise reusing the data?

The consent agreements will be digitally signed and presented to participants. They will be stored, and password protected. Storage of the consent and accompanying agreements will be coded with associated document(data) type and filed together.

**A.5** What documentation (e.g., consent agreements, data documentation, codebooks, metadata, and analytical and procedural information) will you capture or create along with the data?

Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the data it describes to enable future reuse?

Interview data will be recorded using Quicktime Application. Audio files will be downloaded to secure machine and transcribed by a third-party service into .docx and .pdf files.

Memos and information notes will be taken by hand or digitally and converted to PDF format.

Data will be analyzed in NVivo, which stores raw data and allows for inductive narrative thematic coding. All raw data will only be visible to the PI, RA, and research mentors.

**A.6** What is your plan for managing, disseminating, and preserving data after the completion of the award-funded project?

Syracuse University SURFACE digital repository will be managing the life of the data post completion.



**A.7** Identify where you will deposit the data:

Name of repository:

SURFACE, Syracuse University Institutional Repository

URL: <https://surface.syr.edu/>

**A.8** When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?

The data management plan will be evaluated monthly by the PI and RA, quarterly with the research mentor, and twice a year with the advisory board. Data will be managed according to Office of Research standards at Syracuse University.