



LAURA BUSH 21st CENTURY LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

Sample Application RE-259004-OLS-25
Project Category: National Implementation

Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech University Libraries)

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$247,362

Virginia Tech (VT), in partnership with Aqqaluk Trust (AT) in Alaska, will create and test a model for community archiving that addresses issues with long-term project sustainability that community archives often face. The workshop will integrate a dual-training program model that helps (1) existing library and archives professionals develop key relationship-building skills to ensure the community archive meets practical needs, while also providing community members with informal STEM skills learning. Participants in the pilot workshop will include Tribal village liaisons, community members in the Northwest Arctic Borough (NWAB) of Alaska, and libraries and archives professionals and beneficiaries will include library and archives professionals working with community archiving and the communities they serve.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- 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.

Applicant Name: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Project Title: Developing Community Archiving Capacities in Northwest Alaska

Introduction

Virginia Tech (VT) and Aqqaluk Trust (AT) are requesting \$247,362 from the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program from IMLS to pilot a workshop model which brings together Tribal village liaisons, community members in the Northwest Arctic Borough (NWAB) of Alaska, and libraries and archives professionals to create a sustainable, digital community archiving program. Successful community archiving initiatives often struggle with longer-term project sustainability as archival activities are “handed off” to community members (Jimenez, 2018; Jimenez et al., 2022; Sheffield, 2018; Thorpe et al., 2021; Zavala, 2017). Building from Sheffield’s assertion in their work on archival optimism that “community archives are sustainable insofar as they are meaningful to the people who support them” (2018) this project, *Developing Community Archiving Capacities in Northwest Alaska*, seeks to test a model of community archiving that addresses these challenges. Our methodology, REMA (Real Engagement with Materials in the Arctic), builds on the strengths of existing short-term, event-based “train the organizers” workshop models (Jimenez, 2018, p. 2) by integrating a dual-training program model: (1) existing library and archives professionals develop key relationship-building skills to ensure the community archives meets practical needs, and (2) community members benefit from informal STEM skills learning (Bell et al., 2016). The skills developed in training are transferable across employment opportunities and can contribute to building a future library and museum workforce. In order to test this model, we have designed an immersive workshop which will train a network of community archivists operating in the NWAB while simultaneously giving library and archives professionals insight into how archives could be deployed to help communities in challenging environments. REMA seeks to sustain community engagement with archiving by (1) ensuring that the archival work meets the self-determined needs of the community, (2) ensuring that post-workshop activities fit with seasonal and environmental cycles of work, and (3) building supportive relationships between community archivists and library and archives professionals.

Project Justification

The project team began tracking community-identified needs for digital access to community knowledge in the Northwest Arctic Borough region in 2022. Community interest in this work is significant, but the team has identified three challenges to the long-term sustainability of a community archive: the cycles of subsistence work necessary for survival in the Arctic, internet connectivity, and the need for iterative, dynamic, design-thinking methodologies.

Firstly, life within the Arctic Circle has a unique rhythm and is unlike life elsewhere in the United States. Residents must prioritize subsistence activities like hunting, fishing, gathering, and processing food in order to provide for themselves and their families, leaving scant resources for other activities. According to the U.S. Census (2023d), the average household income in the NWAB is approximately \$23,000. These calculations do not account for time spent doing subsistence work. Seasonal cycles of subsistence activities can make a standard 40-hour workweek impracticable for many. In areas where employment opportunities are available, the significant cost of goods and groceries in the region requires compensation much higher than comparable work below the Arctic Circle. Grocery stores are few and far between, and prices for basic necessities are often doubled or higher due to shipping costs; thus, for most residents of the NWAB, subsistence work is critical to survival. These social and environmental factors make it difficult to sustain interest in labor outside of subsistence activities, paid full- or part-time work, and family care. Funding and resource deployment is a pervasive issue for projects that involve persistent human labor and technological maintenance (Jimenez et al., 2022). Understanding the ebb and flow of survival work and family care in the Arctic is important to forming a sustainable community archiving model for the NWAB.

Secondly, the region's internet infrastructure poses a challenge to creating and using digital archives. According to the U.S. Census (2023f), approximately 94% of NWAB households own at least one smartphone, and 20% of them rely on smartphones as the sole computer device. While approximately 88% of NWAB households have some type of internet subscription (U.S. Census, 2023f), approximately 26% of them rely solely on cellular data plans—a stark difference from the approximately 11% of the lower 48 states' household reliance on cellular data plans alone (U.S. Census, 2023d). The NWAB has been subject to numerous prolonged Internet Service Provider outages, due to ocean cable cuts (Mattson & Simon, 2025; Naiden, 2023). Information and communication technology infrastructure in the NWAB, while somewhat robust in community centers like Kotzebue, is less reliable in the surrounding villages and non-existent while doing subsistence work on the ocean or tundra. These activities, however, form the backbone of the Arctic experience, and community archiving efforts must take them into account.

Thirdly, community archives work and instruction must be localized to meet the specific needs of its users to sustain engagement (Duff, 2012; Menzies & Birrell, 2012; Mihaylov, 2012; Petrakieva, 2012). Sheffield (2018) remarks that a “Western approach to archiving is inclined towards a stasis form of preservation” which is seen as increasing trustworthiness over time. This is in contrast to local views on preservation of history in which knowledge is continuously created and preserved (Throsby and Petetskya, 2016). A community archive that is actively used by its community and meets their needs must be able to change as community needs change, to represent both the history and the future of life in the Arctic. REMA incorporates experts in user experience and content design who will integrate design-thinking methodologies throughout the workshop to serve the community now and in the future. This will ensure that the workshop itself and the archival workflows we practice emphasize creativity and prioritize community needs. The workshop design directly expands on the project team's prior work on the Caleb Pungowiyi collection.

In January 2022, the Virginia Tech University Libraries awarded the project team a Collaborative Research Grant to pilot the digitization and description of a collection of archival materials from the region. In consultation with family members, project team leader Dr. Cana Uluak Itchuaqiyag loaned a selection of field notes, professional, and personal papers from her late father, Caleb Pungowiyi, for digitization. Pungowiyi was a tireless representative of and advocate for the perspectives, needs, and knowledges of community members in policy discussions regarding conservation, scientific research and its environmental impacts in the Arctic. In collaboration with the Virginia Tech University Libraries Digital Imaging Lab, a team of librarians, students, and Pungowiyi family members digitized and described 554 slides, 1,636 photographs, and 94 loose and bound documents, representing Pungowiyi's work on the Advisory Committee for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Marine Mammal Commission, and the Alaska Native Science Commission, among other contributions. Pungowiyi's family and community leaders from the Aqqaluk Trust provided critical knowledge of his history, identified individuals in photographs, and assisted in creating descriptive and culturally relevant metadata for photos and documents.

This pilot brought together team members from Virginia Tech, North Carolina State University, the Aqqaluk Trust in Kotzebue, Alaska, and the American College of the Mediterranean, who brought their experiences and expertise to an investigation of different methods of description for the Pungowiyi collection. Our goal was to create a shared understanding of metadata as a means of recording observations about each item to spark curiosity and interest in Pungowiyi's life and work. This approach was directly informed by thematic and material aspects of the materials - such as Pungowiyi's observations of wildlife and traditional subsistence activities. As a result of this partnership, Pungowiyi's family and community members contributed significantly to the REMA model, providing critical insight into the direction of the entire project and co-authoring multiple academic publications. Team members based outside of Northwest Arctic Borough were invited to visit Kotzebue in April 2023. This trip proved foundational to the team's understanding of the difficulty in creating and sustaining a community-led archival work in the Arctic, and resulted in the identification of the three

challenges listed above: the cycles of subsistence work necessary for survival in the Arctic, internet access and connectivity, and the need for an iterative, dynamic design strategy.

Based on our current understanding of the NWAB communities, short-term (1-2 months of full time work) and part-time (1-3 hours per week throughout the year) work is well suited to an Arctic environment where individuals need to devote significant time to subsistence and family care. We propose a three-week, paid archival Arctic training intensive in Kotzebue (supported by this National Implementation Grant) at a time of year between seasonal subsistence activities. Additionally, we are adapting workflows to make the best use of technologies easily available in the Arctic (such as smartphones, basic digital cameras, home use printer/scanners, etc) and low-cost or no-cost software, optimized for mobile devices, and that can be used offline and without a subscription. Metadata creation must prioritize community-generated description over standardized vocabularies in order to facilitate community searching and use. Storage and sharing of digitized materials must consider the role of social media use, as community members often use closed Facebook groups. The goal of REMA is not to set up a singular, professional archiving process in a small Arctic community; rather, it is to create a novel model of community archiving that meets any community where it is and builds from existing strengths and interests.

The REMA model draws from both the project team's experiences and partnership on the Pungowiyi collection as well as goals and practices established by the Community Archiving Workshop (CAW) (2023) and Indigitization (2020), two organizational efforts that have brought archival and digitization training into communities. We will build on the work of CAW by documenting and modeling how archival trainers can build new design capacities to archive in place, adapting techniques to reflect local needs. CAW and Indigitization have created and shared numerous skill-based workshop materials for projects like REMA. And, REMA extends this prior work by recognizing how any literacy and technological project, such as digital archiving, requires a strong network of relationships that are localized to the rhythms of the community's knowledges and everyday way of life (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Smith, 2000).

The future workforce that the LB21 grant envisions requires that museums, libraries and archives professionals adopt and apply new methodologies. Our dual-training approach aims to build capacity for community members by helping them integrate data literacies into their daily life in the Arctic. Additionally, our trainers will document and build their own capacities to employ design thinking methods of empathy, defining, and ideation (Tham, 2021; Tham et al., 2023) to better understand the local workflows of the community, so their new skills do indeed build capacity for their self-determination.

The success of the REMA model depends on building real, trusted relationships with Native nation scholars, librarians, and community-serving organizations. The 2023 Census recorded a population of 7,361 in the NWAB; however, NANA, the Alaska Native Corporation that serves the region, is owned by over 15,000 Iñupiaq shareholders, all of whom have ties to Kotzebue and the ten surrounding villages incorporated under NANA. While we estimate that the target group for this project is most immediately the residents of the NWAB, a community archive would allow for Iñupiat outside of the NWAB to maintain a connection to family, culture, and history. Local village municipalities will also benefit from this project as community archivists return to their homes to lead projects in their communities. Ultimate beneficiaries for this project, in addition to the target groups, will include library and archives professionals with an interest in sustainable community archiving, scientists seeking information and observational data from the region, and municipalities seeking to preserve local history to enhance belonging in their communities. We seek to support these communities in building capacity for preserving, engaging with, and accessing their own knowledge. Bringing archivists and librarians to the community provides archives professionals with valuable experience working directly with the creators and users of the archival materials.

This project will use National Implementation Grant funds to address goals that align with LB21's Program Goal 1 (Champion Lifelong Learning) and Objective 1.1 (Advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all) by building technical and economic capacity for community archiving within Kotzebue and the surrounding area without removing people and materials from their environments, leading to an expansion of workforce across these Northwest Arctic communities. Longer-term sustainable archiving capacity will upskill the local workforce and introduce relationships with professionals in the library and archives field. We envision future opportunities for young community archivists to connect with and learn from librarians, archivists, and scholars, which will contribute to the future of the profession.

Project Work Plan

Led by Aqqaluk Trust's established community connections, we will invite 20 individuals from Kotzebue and the 10 surrounding villages to participate as a cohort in the 3-week REMA workshop. The intensive will involve archiving and digital literacy content created specifically for Arctic communities, including practical sessions on digitizing and processing small, local collections. Aqqaluk Trust has identified an interested group of Tribal village liaisons, including representatives from each village who have interest in or access to suitable materials for digitization. Additionally, the team has identified ten librarians and scholars with experience in archiving techniques and interest in working with and in an Arctic community, to serve as instructors.

The workshop format, outlined below, maximizes hands-on learning opportunities where participants will work with objects from the Pungowiwi collection and their own materials. Short pre-workshop sessions will offer participants insight into what materials to bring to the workshop, and an intentional break in the middle of the workshop will allow participants to return to their home communities, possibly with instructors in tow, to evaluate and return with additional materials. Instructors will be encouraged to experience life in the Arctic and consider environmental and cultural factors that will affect continued community engagement.

Documenting subsistence practices and their history is important for residents in the Northwest Arctic Borough, and Aqqaluk Trust has devoted significant resources to teaching activities, such as fish netting, berry picking, snare building and other survival skills, to area youth through [Camp Sivunniigvik](#). We see this community archiving effort as working in tandem with practical, hands-on subsistence learning, and as a way for community Elders to pass on their knowledge and experience to future generations. Hands-on, practical learning is a hallmark of cultural transmission for the Native community. Our workshop theme will be subsistence; by focusing the workshop on materials related to this topic, we hope to both guide the participants in selection of materials, maintain engagement, and build off of the existing work of Aqqaluk Trust.

Digitized materials will be stored and accessible to the community by Aqqaluk Trust with guidance from Virginia Tech. Digital literacy skills will focus on familiar tools (e.g. Facebook and other social media applications) and tools with a significant mobile or offline component so that they can be used off-grid and in the field. Post-workshop activities will be grounded in building relationships between the Project Team and the Iñupiat communities in the NWAB. Establishing trust through this phase is foundational for tracking progress and engagement with participants throughout the project timeline.

The REMA workshop will apply the pedagogical model of Gradual Release of Responsibility (NSW Department of Education, 2024; Sweller et al., 2019), i.e., the "I do, we do, you do" differentiated learning method. The "I do" demonstration of archiving practice and "We do," working together to identify, prepare, and digitize collections will occur during the three week intensive. Momentum will be sustained through "You do," where the project team and instructors provide long-distance support while participants work to transfer these skills to their own communities.

The project team is co-led by **Lucy Aviññaq Boyd**, the Iñuunialiqput Director at [Aqqaluk Trust](#), an Inuit-led and Inuit-serving organization in Kotzebue, Alaska, and **Dr. Cana Uluak Itchuaqiyag**, an Iñupiaq scholar from

Kotzebue working at Virginia Tech. Dr. Itchuaqiyag is an emerging leader in Indigenous Data Sovereignty and serves as the founding Director of the Center for Sustainable Engagement in the Arctic (CSEA) at Virginia Tech. Boyd's department works towards revitalization of Iñupiat culture and language through support of Elder and Youth initiatives. As co-leads, Boyd and Dr. Itchuaqiyag provide the vision, knowledge, and community connections to ensure this project's success. This leadership team is supported by an Aqqaluk Trust Intern, **Paisaq Dylan Itchuaqiyag**, who provides administrative support and cultural knowledge. **Dr. Chris Lindgren**, Assistant Professor of Technical Communication at North Carolina State University, is a scholar and educator of technical literacies and provides expertise in design-thinking methodologies. **Kara Long**, Assistant Director of Metadata Technologies, and **Andrea Ogier**, Associate Dean of Data Services, at Virginia Tech University Libraries provide expertise in metadata, digital collections, and data management. Further support is provided by **Dr. Erin Yunes**, Professor at the American College of the Mediterranean, who brings a background in community-owned communications technology in Nunavut, an Inuit community in Canada. These seven team members are responsible for administering all aspects of the grant, and providing overall vision for the REMA workshop.

The team will be further supported by a group of librarians currently working in the University Libraries at Virginia Tech (VTUL) who will serve as workshop instructors alongside C.U. Itchuaqiyag, Lindgren, Long, Ogier, and Yunes. Julia Westblade, the Digital Imaging Coordinator in the VTUL Digitization Lab, who led digitization efforts for the original Pungowiyi collection, will lend her expertise in digitization and archival imaging standards. Corinne Guimont, the Associate Director of Publishing and Digital Scholarship at VTUL, and Hollis Wittman, Metadata Consultant for the Humanities, have extensive experience in scholarly digital publishing and digital humanities projects, and will advise on practical and technical issues around publication and dissemination of collections. James Tuttle, Associate Director of Library Data Strategies has years of experience with library systems, digital repositories, and data transfer. Tuttle will assist Aqqaluk Trust in setting up a secure digital repository environment for materials digitized from the workshop. This experience, combined with that of Long and Ogier will cover the selection, description, digitization, dissemination, and preservation portions of the workshop.

Aqqaluk Trust, through the leadership of Boyd and participation of P.D. Itchuaqiyag, has been a co-creator of this project from the beginning. They have been, and will continue to be, critical to the creation of the workshop, and will participate as full instructors in the workshop, shaping the content to fit the participants cultural context. They have been important liaisons for the project with the Aqqaluk Trust Board and the Regional Elders Council, both of whom are important stakeholders to the project. While the project is based in Kotzebue, we are leveraging VT's administrative resources to build momentum for this project within the Arctic community.

During the workshop, instructors will be attentive to methods of communication (email, text, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) and post-workshop engagement strategies will occur via established communication channels. For 6-12 months after the workshop, instructors will communicate regularly with participants in order to make suggestions, answer questions, and check in with participants to continue relationship building and assess program effectiveness.

After the workshop, the team will use qualitative and quantitative measures to assess the impact of the project. We will collect participant feedback throughout the workshop, and have included time at the end of each phase to debrief with participants. Workshop attendance and engagement metrics, such as the number of questions asked and resources accessed, will give us additional insights into participant involvement. The team will also conduct post-workshop interviews with participants and with the instructional team members to assess the long-term application of the workshop contents in their future work. The instructional team will reflect on the efficacy of workshop sessions via internal debriefings and journaling exercises, to capture the successes and challenges. By combining these sources of feedback, we will develop a detailed vision of both the immediate

successes of the program and what further action is needed to continue to support the participants and the community.

Workshop Outline

The project plan includes a pre-workshop session held prior to a three-week, three-phased workshop intensive on site. We will conduct 2 five-day workshops with a break in the middle for participants to gather materials from their villages and our team to re-calibrate the second workshop, based on the participants' feedback.

Pre-Workshop Online Session	
Overall Goal	Build community and a generative space to share and think by focusing on interactive activities that externalize their interests and goals around documenting subsistence activities. Determine group goals and priorities.
Activities	• Welcome and introductions, meet the planning team, and fellow participants. • Review expected outcomes, roles, and responsibilities. • Archival contexts for works on paper: Discuss the format(s) we will be working with during the on-site workshop sessions (documents, photographs, and works on paper). • Demo the Caleb Pungowiyi Collection online, as a reference for future sessions. • Share all instructional materials and welcome packets for all participants.
Leaders for the Session	Boyd, P.D. Itchuaqiyag, C.U. Itchuaqiyag, Lindgren, Long, Ogier, and Yunes.

Phase 1: Documenting Subsistence & Orientation to the Workshop

Goal: Establish foundational skills in community-led archiving while exploring storytelling's role in preserving subsistence and cultural knowledge. By the end of the week, participants will understand what to archive, why it matters, and descriptive and organizational needs.

Participants will work with the Pungowiyi Collection and personal materials, using photos and documents to tell the "story" of subsistence. Archiving will be framed as storytelling, preserving cultural knowledge for future generations.

Day 1: Sparking curiosity and envisioning the archive	
Overall Goal	Refine goals through interactive activities that externalize participants' interests, values, and priorities for documenting regional subsistence.
Activities	Some activities may include whiteboard discussions that ask participants to • map out ideas of a subsistence archive that would be useful • identify information you seek out often - how do you find this information? • Work together to evaluate what would be useful items to digitize for the community.
Day 2: Bring-your-own-device (BYOD) Identifying valuable information objects	

Overall Goal	Discover what kinds of information is already being collected on participant's own devices (computer, tablet, phone, etc.) or in print (notebooks, photos, letters, etc). Build participants' awareness of their own information seeking and storage behaviors.
Activities	Guide participants through activity to discover and record • Commonly used ways of seeking information • Understanding their device's storage and how they use it • Most commonly used or opened apps and documents • Most used media formats (digital and print)
Day 3: What do you want to keep? Inventory and Selection	
Overall Goal	Create an inventory of the information objects used most frequently. Discuss how and why to make selections about which items to digitize and preserve.
Activities	• Introduce Inventory tools and template • Recalling our Day 2 Activities - in order to use the items as participants intend to, what kind of information from the items must be captured? ○ For example: back and front of a photograph? Just the front? Multiple angles? • Is the order in which the material found important to understanding it?
Day 4: Inventory What is important about these things? Description	
Overall Goal	Introduce descriptive concepts and how to plan to digitize, preserve, or share the important information objects selected on Day 3 .
Activities	• Invite participants to reflect on the information objects selected from their inventory, and why these items (and their content) is important. • The "important" aspects of these materials will guide our discussion of <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> to describe these materials. • What activities can be supported through appropriate metadata?
Day 5: Review & Debrief Phase 1	
Overall Goal	Provide space and time for participant feedback and questions.
Activities	• Document "anticipated vs actual" process for future implementation. • Continue to work on Inventory, Selection, and Description activities. • Review any concepts, tools, or training participants may need.

Phase 2: Break Period

Goal: Provide a break (e.g., over a long weekend) from on-site workshop sessions for participants to spend time at home or in the community, share insights about archiving, reflect, and retrieve items that may be suitable for digitization in **Phase 3**.

- Schedule a mid-break check-in session with participants to address any questions or concerns
- Group or individual check-ins, as needed

Phase 3: Pathways to Digitization

Goal: Familiarize participants with low- and no-cost tools and methods of digitization using available resources and technologies. Guide participants through digitization, editing, description, and sharing of materials identified in **Phase 1** and/or gathered in **Phase 2**.

Participants will experiment with different imaging methods, set up workstations, and refine their skills using editing software. They will connect metadata and file naming to their existing information-seeking behaviors, ensuring accessibility and usability. Discussions on sharing, privacy, and long-term storage will help participants make informed decisions about preserving and distributing their digitized materials.

Day 1: Digitization, pt. 1	
Overall Goals	Introduction to digitization, scaled and modified to best meet participants' needs identified in Phase 1 .
Activities	• Demo and experiment with different imaging methods, based on the materials participants identified in Phase 1. • Participants work together in groups to begin setting up digital imaging stations for shared work
Day 2: Digitization, pt. 2	
Overall Goals	Continue digitization work from Day 1 . Introduce participants to image and document editing software options.
Activities	• Participants continue imaging work in groups. • Participants with both born-digital and physical items requiring digitization can focus on one or both formats, and work with instructional team to move between work groups.
Day 3: How do you want to use this in the future? Metadata and File Naming	
Overall Goals	Revisit concepts from Phase 1 , and build off of the Inventory activities to connect metadata and file naming to how the items we digitized can be used and accessed into the future.
Activities	• Revisit activities from Day 1, Phase 1, to talk about participants' information-seeking behaviors. How can we describe and identify the material we digitized, so that access aligns with how participants already use their devices? • Using participants' inventories, draft descriptive metadata for several items. • Introduce metadata and description tools and templates.
Day 4: How do you want others to use this in the future? Access, Sharing, and Privacy	
Overall Goals	Introduce participants to options and methods for sharing digitized materials with the community or on the open web.
Activities	• Work together to identify potential risks and rewards with sharing information with other community members or online. • Consider the role of metadata and description in how community members and those outside of the community might locate or search for these digitized items. • Work together to upload, copy, or store digitized materials to an external hard drive or shared cloud-based storage solution to

	share with the cohort.
Day 5: Review & Debrief Phase 3	
Overall Goals	Provide space and time for participant feedback and questions.
Activities	• Wrap up any remaining activities from previous days of the workshop. • Share experiences, challenges, joys, and frustrations with digitization, working with the tools and templates, or any other aspect of the workshop. • Introduce participants to communications channels and post-workshop opportunities to work together or with the instructional team.

Post-Workshop Follow Up and Activities

- Follow up with participants who left with items or collections that need additional support or processing.
- Set up methods for feedback and evaluation post-workshop at 6 and 12 month marks.
- Conduct post-workshop interviews with participants and instructors.

Project Results

The REMA workshop's intended outcomes are to provide participants with hands-on experience in community archiving to increase their skills and digital literacies, provide an ongoing processes for digitization, and create pathways for career development in libraries, museums, and archives by supporting participants in developing transferable skills in cultural stewardship and digital information management.

Participants will learn the following objectives:

1. Reflect on needs and identify challenges and opportunities in community archiving work. Identify shared goals and values.
2. Create an inventory with a template and demonstrate it to peers;
 - a. Understand selection criteria for digitization and preservation.
 - b. Learn how to evaluate materials for archiving.
3. Create descriptive metadata and demonstrate it to peers;
 - a. Identify key descriptive elements that enhance and access usability.
 - b. Understand how metadata supports organization and discovery.
 - c. Explore how to document contextual information for cultural materials.
4. Understand options for data sharing in local contexts (low broadband access, using mobile and low-cost tools)
 - a. Explore offline-first applications.
 - b. Use of low-bandwidth friendly platforms for sharing images and documents.
 - c. Identify community-driven storage and backup plans, ensuring materials remain accessible even as technologies change.
 - d. Develop documentation on how to retrieve, update, and manage archived data.
 - e. Establish training plans for future users to ensure ongoing archive usability and sustainability.

Participants will leave the workshop with the following materials:

1. Hard drive of all their digitized materials or access to materials on cloud storage;
2. Inventory and metadata templates, instructions, examples and other instructional material from the workshop;

3. Access to ongoing support from the instructional team and peer cohort.

The project team will have the following learning objectives:

- Practice cultural humility in archival work by adapting archival practices to align with community goals and priorities.
- Enhance relationship-building and community engagement skills through developing trust-based, long-term partnerships with community members.
- Experience supporting community-driven archival models that prioritize local knowledge, needs, and workflows.
- Enhance professional development by gaining proficiency in digital tools and data management systems that align with community needs and infrastructure restrictions.

REMA's intended outcomes are to create an initial cohort of community archivists in the Northwest Arctic Borough, to enable and encourage at least half of the cohort to continue contributing to the community archive for 1-2 years after the workshop, and to create relationships for community archivists in the Arctic with library and archives professionals.

To ensure that the proposal training model can be implemented nationally, the training materials will be developed with two versions in mind: one version localized to the needs of Northwest Arctic Borough; another version developed as a modular and flexible training materials to be localized to other community contexts. The training will emphasize low-cost, widely accessible tools to ensure accessibility in varying broadband environments. Additionally, resources will be co-created with community members, ensuring they remain relevant and adaptable to the cultural and institutional contexts.

We will publish the REMA model via more traditional scholarly works and conferences geared towards librarianship and communication design, such as RDAP, ACRL, and the CORE Forum. We will also directly share our findings and the resulting archive with Tribal nations and communities working to facilitate their own archival projects, such as the [Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums](#) and the [US Indigenous Data Sovereignty Network](#). We will also use our project's main website to share and distribute any pertinent training materials and documentation through listservs and social media. Ultimately our goal is to empower Tribal community members to enter the field of librarianship and archives while collecting, controlling, interpreting, and benefitting from data that originates from their own communities, contexts, and cultures. Our model encourages institutions to work equitably and collaboratively with them. REMA's integration of design-thinking methods supports co-constructing a plan of action with community members to sustain the next phase of our larger project.

Life above the Arctic circle is unlike life anywhere else on Earth, but the challenges in the Northwest Arctic Borough are shared by many communities where limited broadband access continues to deepen the digital divide. The REMA model confronts the notion that low network connectivity unqualifiedly prevents communities from participating in digital archiving initiatives. A sustainable community archiving approach allows archivists, librarians, and digital literacies instructors the opportunities to build adaptive techniques for bringing skills-based workshops to areas with unreliable or underdeveloped telecommunications infrastructure. It also offers core competencies needed for community archiving, selection of materials, imaging and digitization, description, and data management, which are highly transferable skills within any community and are essential for providing community access to local information for the formation of social identity, self-governance, and the development of strategies to address local needs. While the REMA model is experimental, its impact will transform the way that librarians and archivists gain experience in documenting and facilitating the preservation of community records in places that are especially vulnerable to loss.

Applicant Name: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Project Title: Developing Community Archiving Capacities in Northwest Alaska

Schedule of Completion

Activity	2025			2026												2027								
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Finalize Curriculum and Order Supplies	■	■	■																					
Invite participants and schedule travel		■	■	■	■	■																		
Prepare supplies and materials for travel				■	■	■																		
Begin pre-workshop online sessions						■	■																	
Travel to Kotzebue, offer workshop							■	■																
Project team and instructor debrief									■	■														
Post-workshop evaluation(s), interviews									■	■														
Monthly follow-up with participants to encourage progress										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Draft and publish REMA methodology												■	■	■	■	■								
Dissemination via presentations, papers, webinars															■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Final evaluation(s), interviews with participants and instructors																					■	■	■	■