

Abstract: Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL): The Second Wave

Through the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL): The Second Wave, the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC), along with formal collaborator the Colorado State Library (CSL), seeks \$248,979 to extend the work begun at RIPL 2015. At this national, inaugural event, 102 library professionals gained skills in public library evaluation topics including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, and data use for planning, management, and demonstrating impact. The first RIPL was developed in response to a shifting funding landscape, transitions in services and new technologies, and the need for data-driven decision making in public librarianship. Public library directors and other library leaders need to track both the use of libraries in the 21st century as well as the outcomes of this use in order to strategically consider ways to allocate limited resources and justify future budget requests with funding stakeholders. After a successful inaugural event in which participants reported significant gains in confidence, skills, and knowledge of evaluation subjects, CLiC and CSL seek Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds in order to achieve these outcomes on a broader scale in May 2016-April 2019.

In grant year one, CLiC and CSL will hire a Project Coordinator, develop a modular curriculum for RIPL Regionals and single-day workshops, take RIPL on the road by offering one RIPL Regional (California) and a preconference at the ARSL 2016 annual conference, and establish community of practice methods for online resource sharing and learning. During the second year of the grant, the RIPL team will launch the online community of practice, offer two RIPL Regionals (Maine, Texas), provide training in conjunction with the Public Library Association, and refine the modular curriculum and community of practice. In the final year, CLiC and CSL will offer the full, national institute in Atlanta, Georgia and offer one RIPL Regional (New York). In addition, after each of the regional events, the RIPL team will provide guidance to partners on how they may continue to expand the RIPL training and resources throughout their service area.

RIPL: The Second Wave will train and support 380 library professionals in need of skills in public library data collection, program evaluation, and community needs assessment for strategic planning. With a rigorous evaluation plan, RIPL: The Second Wave will realize the following outcomes: at least 25% of participants will represent small and/or rural public libraries; at least 80% of participants will attain practical skills and tools for evaluation, express more confidence in and commitment to building research into their activities, develop competence in analyzing data for decision-making and evaluation, and build local capacity to implement evaluation; and at least 80% of partner SLAA/consortia staff will indicate increased ability to leverage the RIPL training for future professional development in their states/regions.

These objectives are central to IMLS's learning in libraries priority. As libraries implement a wide variety of innovative learning experiences that include and extend well beyond literacy development, it is critical that these services are evaluated to determine individual user and community outcomes and assess which efforts are most impactful. Such work will enable libraries to make data-driven decisions about where to allocate limited resources. RIPL: The Second Wave will extend the RIPL curriculum more rapidly and broadly to librarians working in all sizes of public libraries nationwide, build the capacity of SLAA/consortia to share this content, and maximize the potential for long-term impact by establishing an online community of practice.

Research Institute for Public Libraries: The Second Wave

The inaugural Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL) was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado in July 2015. During this intensive, three-day participatory learning experience, 102 library professionals representing 36 states, American Samoa, and one Canadian province gained skills in a variety of public library evaluation topics including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, and data use for planning, management, and demonstrating impact. The Institute for Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) generous support of the institute via a cooperative agreement enabled the hosting agencies, the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) and the Colorado State Library (CSL), to develop the curriculum and test the institute model at a discounted rate for participants. Both before and after the 2015 institute, state library administrative agency (SLAA) leaders throughout the country requested that CLiC and CSL offer the institute in their regions. Now, CLiC and CSL seek Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds in order to:

- a) scale up more rapidly to meet the nationwide demand for this type of training,
- b) increase accessibility to the institute through scholarship offerings for library professionals working in small and/or rural libraries and by hosting RIPL events throughout the country,
- c) extend RIPL's reach through the broad dissemination of the curriculum across a variety of channels (full institute, regional events, preconference offerings, etc.),
- d) establish an online community of practice to extend and support participants' learning on an ongoing basis, maximizing the potential for long-term impact as participants implement what they learn in their organizations, and
- e) build the capacity of SLAA/consortia to provide training on the RIPL curriculum within their states/regions.

These objectives are central to IMLS's learning in libraries priority. As described in the *Learning in Libraries IMLS Focus Report*, a shift in the types of learning experiences that libraries offer has occurred in recent years. As libraries implement a wide variety of innovative learning experiences that include and extend well beyond literacy development, it is critical that library staff evaluate the outcomes that individual users and communities are experiencing and which efforts are most impactful. Such work will enable library staff to make data-driven decisions about where to allocate limited resources. RIPL equips staff with the research skills and tools to accomplish these tasks.

Statement of Need:

Public library directors and staff have seen a shifting funding landscape in recent years (Hoffman, Bertot, & Davis, 2012; see Supporting Document 1 for references). The Great Recession, as well as pressure from taxpayers to reduce taxes, has strained many library budgets (American Library Association, 2010; Swan et al., 2014a; Swan et al., 2014b). Library services are also in transition as new technologies emerge (Zickuhr, Rainie, & Purcell, 2013). In this tremulous time, public library directors and other leaders need to track both the use of libraries in the 21st century as well as the outcomes of this use in order to strategically consider ways to allocate limited resources and justify future budget requests with funding stakeholders. In this "perfect storm" several agencies that support libraries have stepped forward to encourage (Public Library Association (PLA), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) or require (IMLS) public library staff to evaluate programs and services using outcome-based evaluation techniques.

Academic libraries have made strides in recent years to develop methods and metrics for measuring outcomes (e.g., Stowe, 2013), use data to drive planning (e.g., Huff-Eibl, Miller-Wells, & Begay, 2014; Pan, Wiersma, Williams, & Fong, 2013), and analyze use to demonstrate library service value (e.g., Davidson, Havron Rollins, & Cherry, 2013). In addition, in 2013 IMLS awarded a three-year grant to Loyola Marymount University, San Jose State University, and the Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium to develop and implement the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship (IRDL), an intensive program for academic librarians to develop research skills. Yet few resources are available for public library administrators to learn how to assess and evaluate their libraries' services, measure outcomes, collect new metrics, or analyze data to make strategic decisions and provide accountability to funding bodies. Further, those public library data

resources that do exist tend to be tools (e.g., Impact Survey, Edge Assessment, PLA Project Outcome) rather than training opportunities. RIPL seeks to fill that gap.

In early 2014, after recognizing the increasing demand in Colorado for research training and support, the Library Research Service (LRS), a unit of CSL, began exploring the possibility of developing a public library research institute. To be diligent and determine if the need extended outside Colorado, LRS staff conducted targeted interviews with key national library leaders of Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), Urban Libraries Council (ULC), Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL), the American Library Association's Office for Research and Statistics, PLA, and Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). These discussions, which transpired in March 2014, confirmed there was a strong need for public library professionals throughout the country to gain the skills LRS was suggesting through the institute model.

To clarify training needs, LRS conducted a national survey of SLAAs in May 2014 with participation from 31 states and 53 respondents (chief officers, state data coordinators, Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) coordinators, and library development directors). The vast majority of survey respondents indicated high or moderate need for public librarians in their states to learn about all topic areas asked about in the survey (e.g., needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, data use for strategic planning, etc.) (See Supporting Document 2 for detailed results.) In addition, the findings indicated that state library staff also sought this training in order to support public libraries and the new IMLS Measuring Success initiative.

To address these needs, CSL offered the inaugural RIPL in July 2015. It sold out 12 minutes after registration opened, demonstrating the urgent demand for this type of training. This strong response was due in large part to promotion from the RIPL advisory board, comprised of representatives from COSLA, ARSL, PLA, ULC, OCLC, the Aspen Institute, University of Washington, and University of Denver. During registration, 65 participants responded to a needs assessment survey so the RIPL team could further pinpoint the skills they hoped to acquire. The results indicated that respondents were interested in learning about a range of research topics at RIPL—from data analysis to outcome-based evaluation to running a focus group—with more than half of respondents rating all 11 research topics as important or very important to learn about during the institute. (See Supporting Document 3 for detailed results.)

The 2015 event was an intensive, three-day participatory learning experience, in which 102 librarians gained skills in public library evaluation topics, including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, and data use for planning, management, and demonstrating impact. One hallmark of RIPL was the carefully selected team of instructors who work in the field of public library research, including those involved in Project Outcome, the Impact Survey, and other public library research initiatives. This involvement ensured that RIPL content aligned with other national initiatives. These instructors developed hands-on activities and also served as coaches in one-to-one "office hours" for participants wanting assistance with specific research projects. Because of the immersive learning with individualized instruction, participants indicated on surveys that they gained both competence and confidence in applying research and evaluation to their work.

With the success of the inaugural RIPL event, the RIPL team decided to replicate the model with a second, self-funded RIPL in 2016 in Denver, Colorado. This event will meet the training needs of another 100 participants, and the RIPL team will use RIPL 2016 evaluation data to further develop and refine the curriculum. However, strong demand remains for this type of training. SLAA colleagues across the country are requesting additional training for their own staff as well as for library professionals in their regions. Therefore, the RIPL Leadership Team seeks Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds in order to: extend the RIPL curriculum more rapidly and broadly by holding events in other regions of the country and providing scholarships to library professionals working in small and/or rural libraries, build the capacity of SLAA/consortia to share this content, and maximize the potential for long-term impact by establishing an online community of practice.

Impact:

From the outset, RIPL was designed to create a culture shift in public libraries in which library leaders become purposeful in gathering, analyzing, and using data for decision making, strategic planning, and demonstrating impact. Our aim is to educate change agents who return to their libraries with the tools, competencies, and commitment to lead evidence-based practice. To achieve these outcomes, the RIPL events proposed in this application are immersive learning experiences, limited to between 50-100 participants depending on the type of event, so that instructors can work with participants on hands-on activities, engage them in small group discussions to apply concepts to their library setting, and provide individual coaching on specific projects. Additional information about the instructional design can be found in the “Project Design” section.

RIPL 2015 evaluation results indicated that the institute achieved its stated outcomes. From pre- to post-institute, participants became significantly more knowledgeable about a range of data and evaluation topics, including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, survey design, data analysis, benchmarking, and visual presentation of data, and significantly more confident about promoting the importance of evaluation in their library and using data for strategic planning, management, and communication with stakeholders. (See Supporting Document 4 for detailed results.) In addition, participant feedback included a request for ongoing, online support. Participant comments included the following:

- “The process of evaluation is thoroughly discussed from all aspects and many perspective[s]. Gathering professionals in the library field was genius to give participants a network to rely on when they return.”
- “I feel I am taking away concepts, tool[s] & networks to be able to support ways to use data in the library & tell our story to the community.”

Based on the outcomes achieved at RIPL 2015, the RIPL team seeks to extend this learning more broadly throughout the United States. With Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds, the RIPL team anticipates these impacts:

- 380 librarians will receive RIPL training during the grant period:
 - 100 at RIPL 2018 (Georgia)
 - 200 at the RIPL Regionals in 2017-18 (California, Maine, New York, Texas)
 - 30 at a one-day RIPL preconference during the ARSL 2016 Annual Conference (North Dakota)
 - 50 at the PLA Project Outcome event in 2017 (Illinois)
- At least 25% of participants across all training events will represent small and/or rural public libraries.
- At least 80% of participants across all training events will:
 - attain practical skills and tools for evaluation
 - express more confidence in and commitment to building research into their activities
 - indicate they have more competence in analyzing data for decision-making and evaluation as assessed by pre- and post-institute surveys
- At least 80% of participants in community of practice activities will indicate RIPL training and resources build their local capacity to implement assessment and evaluation.
- At least 80% of partner SLAA/consortia staff working on RIPL events in other states will indicate increased ability to leverage the RIPL training resources for professional development on research and evaluation in their states/regions.

Project Design:

To increase RIPL’s reach to librarians throughout the United States, the RIPL Leadership Team has designed three models to disseminate broadly the curriculum with the support of Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds:

The first model, termed the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL), will be similar to the 2015 and 2016 events with a three-day event that will reach a national audience of 100 public librarians and SLAA staff. The faculty will consist of approximately 11 instructors, including public library researchers and practitioners who will provide one-on-one coaching as well as experiential and interactive instruction. (See Supporting Document 5 for a list of the 2015 instructors and their qualifications.) In addition, participants will be assigned to small groups of six to seven members, with each group guided in discussions and hands-on learning activities throughout the institute by a facilitator.

The RIPL team will realize this goal by offering RIPL in 2018 in Atlanta, Georgia, both to make RIPL more accessible to participants from outside Colorado/the Mountain West and to test the institute model on the road. The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant will fund the cost of travel and consultant costs for instructors, as well as instructional materials. The grant will, in essence, subsidize all participants' registration fees so that the institute costs only include lodging, facilities, travel, and meals. In addition, the grant will fund 20 scholarships (covering institute fees, travel, food, and lodging) for library professionals working in small and/or rural libraries.

The second model, termed the RIPL Regional, will be a two-day event, intended for a local/regional audience of 50 public library professionals. Three instructors will provide training, one-on-one coaching, and, in conjunction with the RIPL Regional partners, help facilitate small group activities and discussion.

The RIPL team will realize the second model by coordinating four two-day RIPL Regionals in the northeast (Maine and New York), south central (Texas), and western (California) regions of the United States. As with the full institute, the grant will fund the instructors' costs and training materials. The SLAA/consortia partners will coordinate local arrangements, including identifying additional funding streams through registration, sponsorship, or other sources to pay for the facility and meals.

The third model will be a single-day event suitable for preconferences or as a one-day component of a multi-day event. To implement this model, the RIPL team will offer two single-day events, including a preconference at the ARSL 2016 Annual Conference and an event in conjunction with PLA Project Outcome. Partnering organizations will set participant fees to cover costs other than the instructors and materials, which are covered by this grant.

At all RIPL events, instruction will emphasize active learning techniques and be highly participatory. The full institute curriculum consists of the following topics (see Supporting Document 6 for RIPL 2015 session descriptions):

- designing outcome-based evaluation of programs and services,
- assessing the needs of the library's community,
- techniques for analyzing public library data and using these data for planning, management, and showing value to the library's community,
- using data to tell stories that demonstrate the library's impact,
- best practices for the visual presentation of data,
- practical methods for measuring organizational outcomes, and
- aligning research efforts with national initiatives such as Edge Benchmarks, the Impact Survey, and Project Outcome.

A subset of these topics will be selected for the second and third models in collaboration with grant partners.

Following each of the RIPL Regionals, two RIPL leaders will meet with the partners at each location to evaluate the event and provide guidance on how local SLAA/consortia may continue to expand the RIPL training and resources throughout their service area. In addition, two RIPL leaders will meet with PLA staff after that training event to develop a strategic direction for Project Outcome and RIPL in 2018 and beyond.

In addition to funding instructors and materials for the in-person training events described above, the grant will fund the development and maintenance of an online community of practice, which will be launched in year two and will extend beyond RIPL events to support participants as they implement what they learned. The community of practice will contain four components:

1. bi-monthly online meetings via Adobe Connect for participant subgroups to share how they are implementing research and evaluation in their organizations,
2. a quarterly Adobe Connect webinar series to provide training on topics extending beyond the RIPL core curriculum,
3. an online clearinghouse for sharing resources (questionnaires, infographics, presentations, etc.), and
4. train-the-trainer curriculum modules and resources to support SLAA/consortia efforts to provide training within states/regions.

The second, third, and fourth components of the community of practice will be available to the general public (see the Digital Stewardship Supplemental Information Form for additional accessibility details).

In addition, Facebook groups will be created for RIPL 2018 participants as well as each of the RIPL Regional cohorts so that participants will have a place to connect prior to and after the events. The RIPL 2015 Facebook group has 115 members (both participants and instructors) and has been used to share resources, discuss evaluation topics, and—prior to the 2015 event—coordinate logistics.

To accomplish the RIPL outreach geographically and online, CLiC will hire a .5 FTE project coordinator for 30 months to work with state partners to coordinate the RIPL Regionals, PLA event, and RIPL 2018; develop and maintain the online community of practice; fulfill reporting requirements; and manage other aspects of the grant (see the “Project Resources” section for more information about this position). Ultimately, the coordinator will build an infrastructure for the RIPL events and community of practice that LRS staff will sustain after the grant period ends.

Evaluation Plan

LRS will manage the evaluation of the RIPL: The Second Wave project, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the various institute models and community of practice:

- RIPL 2018 and RIPL Regional Evaluation:
 - Participants will complete a needs assessment survey during the registration process to identify their learning priorities.
 - Pre-institute surveys will be administered at the beginning of the events to establish a baseline for participants’ knowledge of RIPL concepts and confidence with building evaluation into their workflow. At the end of each RIPL event, post-institute surveys will be administered to determine the impacts of the learning experiences on participants’ knowledge and confidence levels.
 - Participants will complete brief surveys at the end of each day to evaluate the quality of the day’s sessions.
 - LRS staff will examine a sampling of work products created during the institute (for example, survey, interview, and focus group questions crafted by participants) to determine whether instructional concepts were applied correctly. The RIPL team will use the results of this analysis to refine the curriculum where needed.
 - Six months after each event, participants will complete an online survey to determine the longer-term effectiveness of the trainings.

Supporting Document 7 contains the RIPL 2015 evaluation surveys. For future RIPL events, these will be shortened where appropriate to prevent survey fatigue.

- RIPL Single-Day Event Evaluation:
 - Post-event surveys will be administered to assess participants' knowledge of evaluation concepts and confidence with building evaluation into their workflow.
 - LRS staff will examine a sampling of work products created during the events (for example, survey, interview, and focus group questions crafted by participants) to determine whether instructional concepts were applied correctly.
- Evaluation of Institute Models:
 - RIPL 2018 and RIPL Regional partners (SLAA, Califa, and PLA) will track and report inputs, outputs, and, where possible, outcomes for their respective events.
 - At the end of each RIPL Regional event and RIPL 2018, RIPL staff will conduct partner interviews to determine the efficacy of the institute models and the ability of SLAA/consortia to share training more widely within their states/regions.
- Online Community of Practice Evaluation:
 - Bi-monthly online meeting participants will complete periodic surveys in order to: a) determine the efficacy of these meetings for extending their learning, b) assess how they are implementing evaluation within their organizations, and c) gauge their use of the clearinghouse.
 - After each quarterly webinar, attendees will complete a survey assessing what they learned.
 - RIPL staff will conduct in-depth interviews with a subset of bi-monthly online meeting participants to further probe the efficacy of the community of practice.
 - RIPL staff will track the use of the online community of practice using Google Analytics.

Diversity Plan:

This project will reach public library professionals throughout the country and target library staff working in small and/or rural libraries. Small libraries are defined as those with Legal Service Area populations of less than 10,000 according to the Public Library Survey (PLS). Rural libraries are defined based on the Locale Codes assigned in the PLS. As described in the Statement of Need section above, public library staff face challenging budget circumstances and need additional support to obtain critical training in research. Staff in small and/or rural libraries experience even greater challenges in obtaining leave for training, having funding to attend, and implementing improvements upon their return. To reach those working in these libraries, we will partner with ARSL in the following areas:

- ARSL will promote and host a RIPL preconference at its 2016 conference in Fargo, North Dakota.
- ARSL board members will promote all RIPL regional and national events to their members.
- ARSL representatives will advise the RIPL team on strategies to reach staff working in small and/or rural libraries to promote the RIPL events and scholarship opportunities.

In addition, the RIPL team will use the following methods to reach staff in small and/or rural libraries:

- Participants: 20 full scholarships to RIPL 2018 will be offered to staff working in small and/or rural libraries. In addition, SLAAs will be encouraged to offer scholarships to staff working in small and/or rural libraries. In 2015, SLAAs provided scholarships for 36 RIPL participants.
- Instructors: The RIPL team will select instructors based on expertise, teaching abilities, and commitment to the RIPL mission and vision. Special consideration will be given to those with experience serving or training staff from small and/or rural libraries.
- Curriculum: Content will be highly practical and include methods and tools that can be implemented at no or low cost.

Project Resources: Personnel, Time, Budget**Personnel**

The personnel listed below were instrumental in RIPL 2015's success and in developing RIPL 2016 and will bring skills and knowledge gained and developed during the 2015 and 2016 institutes to subsequent RIPL activities. Qualifications are briefly described below (see also Resumes of Key Project Staff and List of Key Project Staff).

Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC)

Elizabeth Kelsen Huber, Assistant Director, will oversee grant fiscal processes, event planning, and onsite logistics in collaboration with Georgia Public Library Services for RIPL 2018. Kelsen Huber's qualifications include event planning and project management as Assistant Director of CLiC, as well as seven years in public libraries working on program planning/evaluation, public service, and management. She will dedicate 8% of her time on this grant.

One .5 FTE Project Coordinator will be hired with grant funds to work from October 2016–March 2019. The Coordinator will work with the RIPL partners on event planning and onsite logistics for the RIPL Regionals, PLA event, and RIPL 2018; manage the scholarship process for RIPL 2018; fulfill reporting requirements; and oversee other aspects of the grant. The Coordinator will create and maintain an online community of practice for RIPL participants by leveraging online technologies (RIPL website, online meeting software, file sharing platform, and other communication tools). This position will require project management, reporting, and grant management experience as well as a comfort with technology and emerging trends in online learning.

Colorado State Library (CSL)

Dr. Linda Hofschire, LRS Interim Director, will hire and supervise the Project Coordinator, develop the curriculum, recruit and train instructors, oversee the evaluation design and implementation, provide training at all RIPL events, and oversee the creation of the final report. Hofschire's qualifications include more than 15 years working in social science research and evaluation; extensive project management, training, and teaching experience; and doctoral-level coursework in research methods and statistics. The curriculum she develops during the grant period will become integral to future LRS priorities. She will work 25% of her time on this grant.

Dr. Sharon Morris, Library Development Director, will manage partnerships, consult on the curriculum and evaluation, and provide training at RIPL events. Morris' background includes 14 years at CSL launching statewide initiatives, establishing state and national partners, collaborating with other SLAAs throughout the country, and overseeing professional development for Colorado libraries. She also facilitates public library strategic planning, focus groups, usability testing, and needs assessment. She will work 15% of her time on this grant.

The LRS Research Analyst (position currently vacant) will consult on the curriculum, design and implement the evaluation, report on evaluation data, and provide training at RIPL events. Qualifications for this position will include quantitative and qualitative research method skills and experience conducting evaluation and delivering training. This position will work 20% of the time on this grant.

David Hodgins, LRS Data Coordinator and Web Developer, will manage the technical infrastructure for the RIPL website and online community of practice. Hodgins' qualifications include more than five years of technical expertise in developing user-friendly data tools, interactive websites, and a content-driven approach for LRS, as well as 15 years working in public and academic libraries. He will work 10% of his time on this grant.

Meghan Wanucha, LRS Research Assistant, will work with Hofschire and the Research Analyst on curriculum development and evaluation design and implementation; the Project Coordinator on the development and maintenance of the community of practice, event planning, and reporting; and will facilitate the RIPL Facebook groups (posting content, starting

discussions, etc.). Wanucha's qualifications include three years of experience writing evaluation reports, developing infographics, and facilitating social media for LRS, as well as event planning experience in university student affairs. She will work 10% of her time on this grant.

Partners

Partners from the 2015 RIPL event have expressed interest in bringing the training, coaching, and expertise to other areas of the country. The Califa Library Group (a California membership cooperative) and the SLAAs in Georgia, Maine, New York, and Texas have all sought out the opportunity to host RIPL events in their states and have committed to coordinating all local arrangements, such as venue, lodging, food, and registration. Partners will be encouraged to find sponsors to support public library attendance and reduce the cost of attendance by local libraries' staff. These partners will plan activities after their RIPL event to extend the training in their regions. To build partner capacity, one representative from each of the five state partner agencies will attend RIPL 2016 in Denver using grant funds.

ARSL will promote the regional and national RIPL events as well as advise the RIPL team on how to reach rural and small library professionals. They also requested a preconference at their national conference in 2016, which will be funded by this grant. PLA has been involved in RIPL since the planning phase and sees this grant as an opportunity to enhance their Project Outcome initiative with more in-depth training in survey development, results analysis, and demonstration of impact. PLA will promote the RIPL events throughout the country to their membership and partner on a workshop for public library leaders. COSLA will also promote the events to public library professionals throughout the country and promote scholarship offerings by individual SLAAs.

Because of the demand from many SLAAs and associations for RIPL training in their area, the RIPL team selected partners based on CLIC/CSL capacity to offer these trainings with grant support. In addition, the RIPL team selected those partners who had worked on/attended RIPL 2015 and promptly requested the training as well as demonstrated commitment in writing (see Partner Letters of Commitment). The RIPL team's goal of dispersing the training in various regions of the country was also a consideration when selecting hosting partners.

Time

Listed below are the major milestones during the grant period. For a more detailed timeline, please see the Schedule of Completion.

Year 1 (May 2016-April 2017): Hire Project Coordinator, develop a modular curriculum for RIPL Regionals and single-day workshops, establish partnership team, offer one RIPL Regional (California), offer preconference at the ARSL 2016 Annual Conference, and establish the community of practice methods.

Year 2 (May 2017-April 2018): Launch community of practice, offer two RIPL Regionals (Maine, Texas), offer PLA event, refine the modular curriculum and community of practice, continue evaluation, and submit interim report.

Year 3 (May 2018-April 2019): Offer RIPL in Atlanta, Georgia, offer one RIPL Regional (New York), compile evaluations from all events, establish a sustainability plan, and submit final report.

Budget

RIPL: The Second Wave requests Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funding for the cost of instruction (travel, some instructor/consultant fees, and materials) for two one-day events, four two-day regionals, and one three-day institute. These funds will significantly reduce the cost per participant to attend these professional development offerings. The grant also funds a .5 FTE coordinator for 30 months and scholarships for five SLAA/consortia partner representatives to attend the RIPL 2016 event in Denver (self-funded) and 20 rural/small library professionals to attend RIPL 2018 in Georgia. (See

IMLS Budget Form and Budget Justification for details.) With a total grant budget just under \$250,000 for 380 library professionals (an average of \$659 per RIPL participant) this grant is a cost-effective approach to building professional research capacity in public libraries and state and regional library agencies.

With regard to cost share, the partner agencies are dedicating personnel to undertake a substantial responsibility for the professional development component of this grant. For example, CSL personnel will develop the curriculum and send two of the three instructors to the RIPL Regional events and five CSL representatives to RIPL 2018. This commitment on the part of CSL demonstrates that this professional development area is a priority of CSL, not just for public library staff in Colorado, but throughout the country. The local partners hosting the events will acquire the funds for the venues and their staff will work on local arrangements and promotion. Local participants may also contribute to the funding of these events through registration fees, travel costs involved in attending the event, and local personnel coverage for the individuals attending the training. This cost share leverages existing state agency resources and infrastructure in a cooperative effort to create cost-effective and sustainable professional development.

Because of the substantial effort we are asking our partners to undertake to host these events, we chose to stay under the \$250,000 cost-sharing threshold so that they will not need to document matching funds and in-kind resources allocated for the grant. At the same time, we believe these shared costs and staff time are strengths of the grant and indicate a commitment to the project as well as to ongoing adoption of RIPL instruction and practices throughout these areas of the country.

Communications Plan:

The communication plan is multi-faceted: Promote RIPL events throughout the country to attract attendees, including rural and small library professionals, and develop a robust and engaged community of practice for ongoing peer learning and support. Partner agencies (COSLA, SLAA, the RIPL hosting agencies, ARSL, and PLA) have committed to promoting these events. As demonstrated in 2015 when the Colorado RIPL sold out in 12 minutes, this method of leveraging these specific partners is effective in promoting RIPL events. ARSL representatives, in particular, have agreed to serve as advisors on methods to reach rural and small library professionals. We will promote the community of practice through a variety of methods including asking our partners and previous RIPL participants to communicate about these resources, sharing information on the national public library electronic discussion list PUBLIB and with library schools, submitting press releases to *American Libraries*, *Public Libraries*, and *Library Journal*, and through social media. The community of practice documents, webinar archives, and public resources will be linked and available for free from <http://www.lrs.org>, a premier research resource for libraries with nearly 90,000 users and 1.3 million page views in 2015 and a plethora of other research tools already in place. All materials and communications will include the notation and logo crediting IMLS with funding and support.

The communication plan will also involve sharing the impact of RIPL with the library field, based on participant outcomes evaluation and evaluations of the events themselves. These results will be disseminated through blog posts and social media, as well through press releases and listservs as described above. Sharing these results will bolster the RIPL events and community of practice, and inform the wider understanding of best practices for training library staff in anticipation of future or continued growth in practical evaluation and research education.

Sustainability:

The RIPL team is committed to continuing to offer training and support for public library research after the grant period ends. The grant is designed to support these efforts through the following components:

- Grant funds will enable the RIPL team to test and refine the three institute models at a reduced cost for participants. After the grant period ends, these models can be used in various venues, including self-funded events.
- The hosting partners will gain experience with hosting a RIPL event; in addition, the coordinating staff will receive coaching and support in planning ways to extend RIPL training in their regions for future public library professional development.
- During the grant period, the Project Coordinator will build an online community of practice that LRS will sustain and grow through participation by RIPL alumni and partners. This community of practice will help maximize the potential for long-term impact, ongoing colleague resource support, and adoption of research-based practice in public libraries throughout the country.
- The train-the-trainer modules developed during the grant period will be shared in the online community of practice, enabling partners, alumni, and others to extend the curriculum more broadly.
- The community of practice's professional development, clearinghouse, and train-the-trainer module components will be available to and maintained for the general public during and after the grant period, extending RIPL's reach far beyond those who attended in-person events (see the Digital Stewardship Supplemental Information Form for additional accessibility details).
- The in-person events will offer participants an opportunity to establish regional peer networks for ongoing support and encouragement. The Project Coordinator will organize peer engagement activities to build momentum that can be sustained through informal networks.
- In addition to these methods, the grant funds will allow CLiC and other partners to identify sponsors and vendors that may aid in future funding of RIPL events, materials, and scholarships.

Finally, LRS plans to make RIPL and related professional development initiatives a central focus of its work on an ongoing basis. The grant funds will provide the capacity to develop an infrastructure that LRS will sustain after the grant period ends.

Year 1: May 2016 – April 2017

Year 2: May 2017 – April 2018

[illegible]

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
R IPL webinar series												
R IPL Regional in Maine												
PLA/R IPL Event												
R IPL Regional in Texas												
Select R IPL 2018 scholarship recipients												

Year 3: May 2018 – April 2019

[illegible]

DIGITAL STEWARDSHIP SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded research, data, software, and other digital products. The assets you create with IMLS funding require careful stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and re-use by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. However, applying these principles to the development and management of digital products is not always straightforward. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and best practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer a series of questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital assets. 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 any type of digital product as part of your project, complete this form. We define digital products very broadly. If you are developing anything through the use of information technology (e.g., digital collections, web resources, metadata, software, or data), you should complete this form.

Please indicate which of the following digital products you will create or collect during your project
(Check all that apply):

	Every proposal creating a digital product should complete ...	Part I
	If your project will create or collect ...	Then you should complete ...
<input type="checkbox"/>	Digital content	Part II
<input type="checkbox"/>	Software (systems, tools, apps, etc.)	Part III
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dataset	Part IV

PART I.

A. Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

We expect applicants to make federally funded work products widely available and usable through strategies such as publishing in open-access journals, depositing works in institutional or discipline-based repositories, and using non-restrictive licenses such as a Creative Commons license.

A.1 What will be the intellectual property status of the content, software, or datasets you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright? Will you assign a Creative Commons license (<http://us.creativecommons.org>) to the content? If so, which license will it be? If it is software, what open source license will you use (e.g., BSD, GNU, MIT)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital content, software, or datasets and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain any terms of access and conditions of use, why they are justifiable, and how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

A.3 Will you create any content or products which may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities? If so, please describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content

A. Creating New Digital Content

A.1 Describe the digital content you will create and/or collect, the quantities of each type, and format you will use.

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

A.3 List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG) you plan to create, along with the relevant information on the appropriate quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, or pixel dimensions).

B. Digital Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan (i.e., how you will monitor and evaluate your workflow and products).

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period of performance (e.g., storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, 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 CFR 200.461).

C. Metadata

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

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

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of digital content created during your project (e.g., an API (Application Programming Interface), contributions to the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) or other digital platform, or other support to allow batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

D. Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content 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).

D.2 Provide the name and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital collections or content your organization has created.

Part III. Projects Creating Software (systems, tools, apps, etc.)

A. 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) this software will serve.

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially perform the same functions, and explain how the tool or system you will create is different.

B. Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, software, or other applications you will use to create your software (systems, tools, apps, etc.) and explain why you chose them.

B.2 Describe how the intended software will extend or interoperate with other existing software.

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

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

B.5 Provide the name and URL(s) for examples of any previous software tools or systems your organization has created.

C. Access and Use

C.1 We expect applicants seeking federal funds for software to develop and release these products under an open-source license to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software created, and what conditions will you impose on the access and use of this product? Identify and explain the license under which you will release source code for the software you develop (e.g., BSD, GNU, or MIT software licenses). Explain any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, explain why these terms or conditions are justifiable, and explain how you will notify potential users of the software or system.

C.2 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

C.3 Identify where you will be publicly depositing source code for the software developed:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:
URL:

Part IV. Projects Creating a Dataset

1. Summarize the intended purpose of this data, the type of data to be collected or generated, the method for collection or generation, the approximate dates or frequency when the data will be generated or collected, and the intended use of the data collected.

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?

3. Will you collect any personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information? If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect such information while you prepare the data files for public release (e.g., data anonymization, data suppression PII, or synthetic data).
4. If you will collect additional documentation such as consent agreements along with the data, describe plans for preserving the documentation and ensuring that its relationship to the collected data is maintained.
5. What will you use to collect or generate the data? Provide details about any technical requirements or dependencies that would be necessary for understanding, retrieving, displaying, or processing the dataset(s).
6. What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks, etc.) will you capture or create along with the dataset(s)? Where will the documentation be stored, and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the dataset(s) it describes?
7. What is the plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?
8. Identify where you will be publicly depositing dataset(s):

Name of repository:
URL:
9. When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?

Original Preliminary Proposal

Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL): The Second Wave

Overview

The inaugural Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL) was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado in July 2015. During this intensive, three-day participatory learning experience, 102 librarians representing 36 states, American Samoa, and one Canadian province, gained skills in a variety of public library evaluation topics including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, and data use for planning, management, and demonstrating impact. IMLS's generous support of the institute via a cooperative agreement enabled the hosting agencies, Colorado State Library (CSL) and Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC), to develop the curriculum and test the institute model at a discounted rate for participants. Now, CSL and CLiC seek Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds in order to:

- a) scale up more rapidly to meet the nationwide demand for this type of training,
- b) increase accessibility to the institute through scholarship offerings for librarians working in small and/or rural areas or with underserved populations and by hosting the event in a U.S. location outside of Colorado,
- c) extend RIPL's reach through the broad dissemination of the curriculum across a variety of channels (full institute, preconference offerings, standalone events, etc.), and
- d) establish an online community of practice to extend and support participants' learning on an ongoing basis, maximizing the potential for long term impact as participants implement what they've learned in their organizations.

Need and Potential Impact

Public libraries have seen a shifting funding landscape in recent years. The Great Recession, as well as pressure from taxpayers to reduce taxes, has strained many library budgets. Library services are also in transition as new technologies emerge. In this tremulous time, public librarians need to track both the use of libraries in the 21st century as well as the outcomes of this use in order to strategically consider ways to allocate limited resources and justify future budget requests with funding stakeholders.

RIPL was developed to address these key needs and challenges, and the first institute sold out in 12 minutes, indicating an urgent demand for the curriculum. The institute is designed to create a culture shift in public libraries in which library leaders become purposeful in gathering, analyzing, and using data for decision making, strategic planning, and demonstrating impact. The institute aims to educate change agents who return to their libraries with the tools, competencies, and commitment to lead evidence-based practice.

RIPL 2015 evaluation results indicated that the institute was successful in realizing these outcomes. From pre- to post-institute, participants became significantly more knowledgeable about a range of data and evaluation topics, including community needs assessment, outcome-based evaluation, survey design, data analysis, benchmarking, and visual presentation of data, and significantly more confident about promoting the importance of evaluation in their library and using data for strategic planning, management, and communication with stakeholders. Participant feedback included a request for ongoing, online support.

With Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program funds, CSL and CLiC will have the capacity to extend RIPL more rapidly and broadly to librarians working in all sizes of public libraries nationwide, and to maximize the potential for long term impact by establishing an online community of practice.

To measure impact, we will continue to conduct pre-post institute evaluations as referenced above. We will also conduct six-month follow-up evaluations with institute participants, as well as periodic evaluations of the community of practice.

Relevance to the Learning in Libraries Priority

The Learning in Libraries IMLS Focus Report describes the shift that has taken place in recent years in terms of the types of learning experiences that libraries are offering in their communities. As libraries implement a wide

variety of innovative learning experiences that both include and extend well beyond literacy development, it is critical that these are evaluated to determine what outcomes individual users and communities are experiencing, and which efforts are most impactful. Such work will enable libraries to make data-based decisions about where to allocate limited resources. RIPL equips public librarians with the evaluation skills and tools to accomplish these tasks.

Projected Performance Goals and Outcomes

We have established the following performance goals in order to achieve the outcomes described above:

1. Offer three RIPL events over the three-year grant period. Two will occur in Colorado in 2016 and 2017, and the third, in 2018, will occur in a U.S. location outside of Colorado, both to make it more accessible to participants from another region of the country, as well as to test the institute model on the road.
2. Offer scholarships to librarians working in small and/or rural areas or with underserved populations where professional development budgets are limited so that they can participate in RIPL in 2017 and 2018.
3. Develop and refine a modular curriculum that will be presented on a smaller scale at preconferences (e.g., ALA, ARSL, PLA, state and regional library associations, etc.) and on a standalone basis.
4. Establish and maintain an online community of practice that extends beyond RIPL events and supports participants as they implement their learning.

Proposed Work Plan

Year 1 (May 2016-April 2017): Develop modular curriculum, offer one RIPL event in Colorado where curriculum will be tested, offer preconferences/standalone events, establish community of practice.

Year 2 (May 2017-April 2018): Offer one RIPL event in Colorado with scholarships for librarians working in small and/or rural areas or with underserved populations, offer preconferences/standalone events, refine modular curriculum and community of practice.

Year 3 (May 2018-April 2019): Offer one RIPL event in a U.S. location outside of Colorado with scholarships, offer preconferences/standalone events, refine modular curriculum and community of practice.

Project Director and Partners

Linda Hofschire, Ph.D., MLIS, Research Analyst at CSL's Library Research Service (LRS), will direct the project. Additional project staff will include Nicolle Steffen, MLIS, LRS Director, CSL; Sharon Morris, Ph.D., MLIS, Library Development Director, CSL; and Elizabeth Kelsen Huber, MLIS, Assistant Director, CLiC. These four individuals comprised RIPL 2015's leadership team.

Previous and future potential partners include: Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL), Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), Public Library Association (PLA), Urban Libraries Council (ULC), and, one or more state and/or regional library associations (e.g., California Library Association, Texas Library Association, New England Library Association, Southeastern Library Association, etc.).

Estimated Budget

The estimated budget for this three-year project is \$240,000, an average of \$80,000 per year. This budget will cover:

- 0.25 full-time equivalent staff (project coordinator);
- 0.1 full-time equivalent contractor (instructional design consultant);
- scholarships for librarians working in small and/or rural areas or with underserved populations to participate in RIPL;
- technical costs to establish an online platform for the community of practice; and
- operating costs, mostly associated with travel expenses for instructional staff.