

IMLS – Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program
WGBH Educational Foundation: Public Broadcasting Preservation Fellowship

WGBH Educational Foundation (“WGBH”) is requesting \$248,061 to launch a Public Broadcasting Preservation Fellowship (“the Fellowship”) for Library and Information Science (“LIS”) graduate student programs to provide training in sound and audiovisual preservation, as well as support the stewardship of at-risk public media collections.

The sound and audiovisual records of the 20th and 21st centuries, the historical record of our cultural heritage, are increasingly at risk. A recent study from AVPreserve estimates there are more than 254 million unique and valuable sound items in organizations across the United States that have not yet been digitized, not including video.¹ However, the level of available education in sound and audiovisual preservation has not kept pace with the increasing need for skilled practitioners to manage this content. Currently, only three programs in the US offer specialized audiovisual preservation programs: NYU’s Moving Image Archiving and Preservation program, the Selznick School of Film Preservation at University of Rochester (film only), and the MLIS with specialization in Media Archival Studies offered at the UCLA.² Very few other programs provide graduate students with training and resources to gain in-depth experience with sound and audiovisual materials.

WGBH seeks to address this problem by creating a semester-long, funded graduate fellowship for students at ALA-accredited LIS programs to focus on the digital preservation of public media materials. WGBH is in a unique position to support these preservation initiatives due to our role as co-steward of the American Archive of Public Broadcasting (“AAPB”), a collaboration between WGBH and the Library of Congress to coordinate a national effort to preserve and make accessible significant historical content created by public media. WGBH is currently running an IMLS-funded National Digital Stewardship Residency program (“AAPB NDSR”) that has placed post-graduate early career professionals at public media organizations to complete 10-month-long digital stewardship projects. Our goal with this Fellowship is to build upon the NDSR model to create opportunities for current graduate students, as well as support LIS programs in developing curricula and building capacity to support students learning to manage audiovisual materials beyond the end of the program.

To develop the Fellowship, WGBH will collaborate with LIS and Archival Science programs at five universities: UNC Chapel Hill, University of Missouri, University of Oklahoma, San Jose State University, and Clayton State University. These programs have been selected due to their interest in developing resources for students to gain expertise in handling audiovisual materials and their proximity to public media organizations with historically significant content from populations under-represented in the AAPB (African-American stations, Spanish-language stations, and stations in the South and Midwest regions of the country.) Each school (“the Graduate Program”) will be paired with a public media station (“the Host”), identified by WGBH, that will serve as a host site for two consecutive 13-week Fellowships, the first from January-April of 2018 and the second from September-December of 2018. There will be five host sites, supporting ten total Fellowships.

Beginning in the fall of 2017, Graduate Program collaborators will promote the Fellowship to their currently enrolled students. Fellows will be selected from the student applicant pool by a panel consisting of

¹ <http://www.avpreserve.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/QuantifyingTheNeed.pdf>

² <https://amiaeducomm.wordpress.com/education/masters-programs/>

representatives from the Graduate Program, the Host, and WGBH. Prospective Fellows will be judged on academic achievements, demonstrated interest in management of AV materials, and demonstrated interest in and/or understanding of the population perspectives represented by the Host (for example, if the Host is an African-American public media station, preference may be given to applicants with a knowledge of African-American history and culture.) During this period, WGBH will assist those Graduate Programs with onsite programs (UNC Chapel Hill, University of Missouri, and University of Oklahoma) in the installation of new digitization equipment for the use of the Fellows and the support of further curriculum development beyond the end of the Fellowship. WGBH will also work with those Graduate Programs that primarily support distance learning (Clayton State and San Jose State Universities) on integrating AV preservation into their curricula.

Each Fellowship will begin with an Immersion Week, with a curriculum loosely based on the IMLS-funded AAPB NDSR, during which the Fellows will gain a primer in the handling and digitization of sound and audiovisual material, metadata schemas, and appraisal of public broadcasting materials. Using the successful AAPB NDSR cohort model, Fellows will keep in touch with each other throughout their Fellowships virtually through online collaboration tools, allowing for continual collaborative learning.

The first cohort of Fellows will: a) research historic programs and original materials created by their host organization; b) select a collection of significant material for contribution to the AAPB; c) prepare descriptive and technical metadata; d) digitize selected material, using either the equipment onsite at their Graduate Program or at the station; e) collaborate with AAPB staff to evaluate and implement AAPB's workflow for long-term digital preservation of the materials through the AAPB; and f) document their audiovisual preservation work through reports and video tutorials for the benefit of future students. Both cohorts of Fellows will attend the Society of American Archivists Conference in the summer of 2018, where the first cohort will present and share their experiences with the second cohort. Subsequently, the second cohort will research, select, describe, digitize, and preserve a second collection of material from the station, while also using their experiences to assess and improve the documentation and resources created by the first cohort. Fellows will also be required to host at least one workshop or training event in order to continue building knowledge and interest in the preservation of sound and audiovisual materials among their fellow students. Materials developed over the course of the Fellowships will also be broadcast as webinars and shared on the project site.

In addition to providing a valuable experience for the ten selected Fellows, the Fellowship program will build connections between the Graduate Programs and Hosts, paving the road for further learning opportunities and collaborations around preserving significant archival material. It will also allow the Fellows to build a community of practice among current and future sound and audiovisual archivists, and will build capacity for sound and audiovisual archival training at graduate programs.

The total funding for this project is budgeted at \$248,061, including Federal Negotiated Indirect Expenses (20.43%). The proposed IMLS funding will primarily go towards Student Support costs of \$99,332 for the 10 Fellows including: 1). Stipends of \$4,784, or \$23/hr for 13 weeks (\$47,840) for each Fellow; 2). Stipends of \$1,000 for each mentor (\$5,000); and 3). Immersion Week Workshop travel and educational instruction and Conference to SAA (\$46,492) 5). Equipment - 3 training stations for hands on digitization and learning (\$30,000). Expenses in addition to those of Student Support include: Staff (\$51,026), Fringe Benefits (\$11,185), Administration (\$7,591), and Staff Travel (\$6,846).