

Statement of Need Libraries serving rural communities are working against trends of decline: people, human service agencies, government offices all have dwindling presence in rural centers ([Liberto, 2012](#); [Maron, 2017](#)). In these human service deserts, librarians face many of the same challenges faced by agencies that have already closed, including decreases in tax base, philanthropic interest, and intellectual capital ([Lindsay, 2017](#)). As public librarians, we seek ways to improve mutualism between libraries and communities - to not abandon them as other institutions have. We note restricted access to peer-reviewed literature, low volume of library case studies in rural communities, lack of information on the relationship between cost, community type, and library type, and depressed ability due to resource limitations to independently develop changes in practice from published research-based recommendations ([Real, et al, 2014](#)). Therefore, we ask, how do public libraries sustain or improve service in resource poor geographies?

The Southern Tier Library System (STLS), in partnership with the Chautauqua Cattaraugus Library System (CCLS), Pioneer Library System (PLS), and Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) seeks \$247,920 in funding to: conduct literature analysis, gather data, and do field research, the findings of which will inform the development of practical, accessible tool-kits for rural library workers and boards. These findings and tool-kits will be widely shared throughout the rural library community.

Project Design Work like the recent report “[Strengthening Networks, Sparking Change](#)” from the IMLS does the first step of making connections between communities and libraries. While the work indicates how the research might be implemented in libraries & museums in “III. Understanding Assets and Challenges, and Evaluating Impact” (p.29) there are no clear connection to rural conditions. To overcome the specific challenges posed by conditions of resource poverty rural librarians face, these conditions must be fully understood such that this past work can be built upon and all research findings can be translated for practical impactful action.

How do public libraries sustain or improve services in resource poor geographies?				
Question	Data	Analysis	Product	Timeframe
What research has been published in the area of rural librarianship, as well as rural community well-being and service?	Review of extant peer reviewed literature within librarianship from 2003 - 2018	Content analysis of current research to assess relevance and gaps, using similar methods as the “Freshman 15” study (Brown, 2008).	Literature review drawing thread lines between research relevant to rural library service published both within and outside the library field.	October 2018 - March 2019
What do datasets which exist within and outside the library field, describe as current conditions and trends in rural libraries and the communities they serve?	Available data review eg: USDA Data for Rural Analysis , Census Bureau Data , IMLS Public Libraries Survey , and Pew Charitable Trusts .	Qualitative data analysis for correlations in income, cost, growth, service measures, etc. Find best questions.	-Data review -Identify unanswered questions and missing data. -Identify best survey questions for a targeted survey of rural librarians.	October 2018 - March 2019
What case studies exist in rural community	Environmental scan and study review from	Content analysis of studies for	-Identification of missing study.	October 2018 - March 2019

development and service from within and outside librarianship? For example, the DOT/USDA partnership study: Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities .	across the spectrum of fields serving rural communities, including librarianship, public health, and economic development cases.	commonalities, success, and failures, and relevance to conditions of rural libraries.	-Description of common factors in service expansion across rural community cases.	
What are the barriers rural librarians face in accessing and implementing tools for change?	-Nationwide survey conducted through ARSL and state library contacts -Focus groups in targeted low density states -ARSL forum	Quantitative & qualitative study of common barriers and locality specific qualities that diverge from those common features.	Recommendations for the development of usable tool kits and accessible training experiences and information sharing	April 2019 - September 2019
Dissemination of findings in the most accessible and practical way possible given the findings, including, conference and targeted presentations in low-resource rural regions throughout US.				March 2020 - April 2021

As public library practitioners, the team has very little interaction with formal research and has a low experience level in conducting research studies. To develop the methodology in a sound and inclusive way, [Rick Bonney](#) of Cornell University and [Miriam Jorgensen](#), Director, University of Arizona’s Native Nations Institute, will work with us. They are passionate about libraries, and have a wealth of complimentary methodologist experiences.

Diversity Plan The team will include: Margo Gustina, STLS Deputy Director and rural libraries consultant, Eli Guinnee, CCLS Executive Director, and Hope Decker, PLS Member Service Liaison. We public librarians on the team serve some of New York’s most resource impoverished communities and struggle to answer the questions in this research project. We seek these answers so that we might save the last civic institutions in our communities in need.

Because we live and serve in Rust Belt communities, we will need assistance from an advisory panel to ensure that the specific social conditions of rurality and library service in diverse localities are respectfully captured, and the products of the research are of practical use within these diverse community libraries. Meredith Wickham, an ARSL board member, will assist in developing the advisory board and lead comment and feedback cycles. Our research and products will include rural communities of all types, including American Indian communities, the rural Black Belt in the southern US, and the Borderlands.

Broad Impact At the conclusion of the Rural Library Service - Conditions, Resources, Regeneration study, the tools developed for librarians and library trustees will allow them to make decisions based on information and data, rather than assumptions about practice and service in rural regions in the United States.

Budget Narrative The cost estimate of \$247,920 is based on estimates for the cost of access to published research (\$3,000), researcher salaries (\$144,920), stipends for research advisors (\$75,000), travel for research and presentation (\$25,000) . As public librarians, we have no access to most peer-reviewed publications, our regions of study are in isolated and diverse geographies to which travel is costly, and in an effort to include librarians who serve patrons across the full spectrum of rural communities, we need advisors in addition to the core work team.

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE - Short Organizational	
* 1. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Institute of Museum and Library Services	
2. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 45.313 CFDA TITLE: Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program	
* 3. DATE RECEIVED: 01/30/2018	SYSTEM USE ONLY
* 4. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: LB21-FY18-2 * TITLE: Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program	
5. APPLICANT INFORMATION	
* a. Legal Name: Southern Tier Library System, Inc	
b. Address:	
* Street1: 9424 Scott Rd	Street2:
* City: Painted Post	County/Parish: Steuben
* State: NY: New York	Province:
* Country: USA: UNITED STATES	* Zip/Postal Code: 14870-9598
c. Web Address: http:// http://www.stls.org	
* d. Type of Applicant: Select Applicant Type Code(s): M: Nonprofit with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Instit Type of Applicant: X: Other (specify) Type of Applicant: * Other (specify): Public Library System	* e. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): 16-0836935 * f. Organizational DUNS: 0807491380000 * g. Congressional District of Applicant: 23
6. PROJECT INFORMATION	
* a. Project Title: Rural Library Service - Existing Conditions, Overcoming Challenges	
* b. Project Description: Libraries serving rural communities are working against trends of decline: people, human service agencies, government offices all have dwindling presences in rural centers. As public librarians, we seek ways to improve our libraries and our communities - to not abandon them as other institutions have. Therefore, we ask, how do public libraries sustain or improve service in resource poor geographies? The Southern Tier Library System, in partnership with the Chautauqua-Cattaraugus and Pioneer Library Systems, and Association for Rural and Small Libraries seeks \$247,920 in funding to: conduct literature analysis, gather data, and do field research, the findings and products of which will be shared throughout the rural library community nationwide. Products developed from the findings will be practical tool-kits for rural library workers and boards.	
c. Proposed Project: * Start Date: 10/01/2018 * End Date: 04/01/2021	

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE - Short Organizational

7. PROJECT DIRECTOR

Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Margo"/>	Middle Name: <input type="text"/>
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Gustina"/>	Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
* Title: <input type="text" value="Deputy Director"/>	* Email: <input type="text" value="gustinam@stls.org"/>	
* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="607-962-3141 x205"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>	
* Street1: <input type="text" value="9424 Scott Rd"/>	Street2: <input type="text"/>	
* City: <input type="text" value="Painted Post"/>	County/Parish: <input type="text" value="Steuben"/>	
* State: <input type="text" value="NY: New York"/>	Province: <input type="text"/>	
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>	* Zip/Postal Code: <input type="text" value="14870-9598"/>	

8. PRIMARY CONTACT/GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Project Director (skip to item 9):		
Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Margo"/>	Middle Name: <input type="text"/>
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Gustina"/>	Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
* Title: <input type="text" value="Deputy Director"/>	* Email: <input type="text" value="gustinam@stls.org"/>	
* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="607-962-3141 x205"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>	
* Street1: <input type="text" value="9424 Scott Rd"/>	Street2: <input type="text"/>	
* City: <input type="text" value="Painted Post"/>	County/Parish: <input type="text" value="Steuben"/>	
* State: <input type="text" value="NY: New York"/>	Province: <input type="text"/>	
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>	* Zip/Postal Code: <input type="text" value="14870-9598"/>	

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE - Short Organizational

9. * By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

** I Agree

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Brian"/>	Middle Name: <input type="text" value="M."/>
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Hildreth"/>	Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
* Title: <input type="text" value="Executive Director"/>	* Email: <input type="text" value="communitylibrarypartner@stls.org"/>	
* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="607-962-3141 x207"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>	
* Signature of Authorized Representative: <input type="text" value="Brian Hildreth"/>	* Date Signed: <input type="text" value="01/30/2018"/>	

IMLS PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

PLEASE NOTE: Information contained within this form may be made publicly available.

1. Applicant Information

a. Legal Name as it appears in SAM.gov (5a from SF424S):

b. Organizational D-U-N-S® Number (5f from SF-424S):

0	8	0	7	4	9	1	3	8
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c. Expiration date of your SAM.gov registration

d. Organizational Unit Name (if different from Legal Name):

e. Organizational Unit Address (if different from Legal Name address)

Street 1

Street 2

City County

State Zip+4/Postal Code

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f. Organizational Unit Type (check one):

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Academic Library
<input type="radio"/> Aquarium
<input type="radio"/> Arboretum/Botanical Garden
<input type="radio"/> Art Museum
<input type="radio"/> Children's/Youth Museum
<input type="radio"/> Community College
<input type="radio"/> Digital Library
<input type="radio"/> Four-year College
<input type="radio"/> General Museum*
<input type="radio"/> Graduate School of Library and Information Science
<input type="radio"/> Historic House/Site
<input type="radio"/> Historically Black College or University (HBCU)
<input type="radio"/> History Museum | <input type="radio"/> Library Association
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Library Consortium
<input type="radio"/> Museum Library
<input type="radio"/> Museum Services Organization/Association
<input type="radio"/> Native American Tribe/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Organization
<input type="radio"/> Natural History/Anthropology Museum
<input type="radio"/> Nature Center
<input type="radio"/> Planetarium
<input type="radio"/> Public Library
<input type="radio"/> Research Library/Archives | <input type="radio"/> School Library or School District applying on behalf of a School Library or Libraries
<input type="radio"/> Science/Technology Museum
<input type="radio"/> Special Library
<input type="radio"/> Specialized Museum**
<input type="radio"/> State Library
<input type="radio"/> State Museum Agency
<input type="radio"/> State Museum Library
<input type="radio"/> Zoo
<input type="radio"/> Institution of higher education other than listed above
<input type="radio"/> Other <input type="text" value="Cooperative Public Library System"/> |
|---|--|---|

* A museum with collections representing two or more disciplines equally (e.g., art and history)

** A museum with collections limited to one narrowly defined discipline (e.g., textiles, maritime, ethnic group)

IMLS PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

2. Organizational Financial Information

a. Please complete the following table for the Organizational Unit for the three most recently completed fiscal years.

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue*	Total Expenses**	Surplus or Deficit
2017	\$2,107,177	\$1,983,918	\$123,259
2016	\$2,679,721	\$2,461,583	\$218,138
2015	\$2,167,560	\$2,085,722	\$81,838

* For nonprofit tax filers, Total Revenue can be found on Line 12 of the IRS Form 990.

** For nonprofit tax filers, Total Expenses can be found on Line 18 of the IRS Form 990.

b. If you had a budget surplus or deficit greater than 10% of your annual operating budget for two or more of the three fiscal years listed above, please explain the circumstances of this surplus or deficit in the box below.

c. Were there any material weaknesses identified in your prior year's audit report?

Yes No Not applicable

A **material weakness** is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis.

If **yes**, please explain.

d. Has your organization had an A-133 audit in the past three years?

Yes No

IMLS PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

Refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for descriptions of these options and instructions for how to make selections.

3. Grant Program

a. Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program

1. Select one:

- Planning Grant
- National Forum Grant
- Project Grant
- Research Grant

2. Select one:

- Pre-professional
- Masters-level and Doctoral-level Programs
- Early Career Development
- Continuing Education

3. Select one

- Community Anchors
- National Digital Platform
- Curating Collections

b. National Leadership Grants for Libraries

1. Select one:

- Sparks Grant
- Planning Grant
- National Forum Grant
- Project Grant
- Research Grant

2. Select one:

- Community Anchors
- National Digital Platform
- Curating Collections

c. Native American/Native Hawaiian Library Services

1. Select one:

- Native American Basic Grant
- Native American Enhancement Grant
- Native Hawaiian Library Services

d. Museums for America

1. Select one:

- Learning Experiences
- Community Anchors
- Collections Stewardship

2. Select one:

- \$5,000–\$25,000 with no cost share permitted.
- \$25,001–\$250,000 with cost share required.

e. Museums Empowered (an MFA Special Initiative)

1. Select one:

- Digital Technology
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Evaluation
- Organizational Management

2. Select one:

- \$5,000–\$25,000 with no cost share permitted.
- \$25,001–\$250,000 with cost share required.

f. National Leadership Grants for Museums

1. Select one:

- Advancing Digital Assets and Capacity
- Collection Care and Access
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Professional Development

2. Select one:

- Non-research grant, \$50,000–\$1,000,000 with cost share required.
- Research grant, \$50,000–\$1,000,000 with no cost share required.
- Rapid prototyping grant, \$5,000–\$50,000 with no cost share required.

g. Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

1. Select one:

- \$5,000–\$25,000 with no cost share permitted.
- \$25,001–\$150,000 with cost share required.

h. Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services

4. Performance Goals

Select one of the following three IMLS agency-level goals: (a) Learning, (b) Community, or (c) Content and Collections. Then select at least one of the performance goals listed beneath it:

a. Learning

- Train and develop museum and library professionals
- Support communities of practice
- Develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities

b. Community

- Strengthen museums and libraries as essential partners in addressing the needs of their communities

c. Content and Collections

- Broaden access and expand use of the Nation's content and collections
- Improve management of the Nation's content and collections
- Improve preservation, conservation, and care of the Nation's content and collections

If you select a performance goal listed beneath Learning or Community for your project, please review in the NOFO the specific performance measure statement choices and the information you will be required to collect for each.

IMLS PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

5. Funding Request

a. IMLS funds requested: b. Cost share amount:

6. Population Served

Please select the target population(s) served by the proposed project:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Population | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum and/or Library Professionals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood/Preschool (0-5 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Americans/Alaska Natives/Native Hawaiians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Childhood/Primary School (6-12 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> People with Mental or Physical Challenges/Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adolescents/High School (13-19 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> People Who Are Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural Populations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aging, Elderly, Senior Citizens (65+ years) | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholars/Researchers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic or Racial Minority Populations other than Native Americans/Native Hawaiians | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families/Intergenerational | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Populations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrants/Refugees | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Military Families | |

If other, please specify:

7. Museum Profile (Museum Applicants Only)

- a. Is your institution organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes, and is it **either** a private not-for-profit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code **or** a unit of state or local government? Yes No
- b. Does your institution own or use tangible objects, either animate or inanimate? Yes No
- c. Does your institution care for these objects? Yes No
- d. Does your institution exhibit these objects to the general public at least 120 days a year through facilities your institution owns or operates? Yes No

e. Your institution's attendance for the 12-month period prior to the application

f. Year your institution was first open and exhibiting to the public:

g. Total number of days your institution was open to the public for the 12-month period prior to application:

h. Does your institution employ at least one professional staff member, or the full-time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, who is primarily engaged in the acquisition, care, or exhibition to the public of tangible objects owned or used by your institution? Yes No

i. Number of full-time paid institution staff:

j. Number of full-time unpaid institution staff:

k. Number of part-time paid institution staff:

l. Number of part-time unpaid institution staff:

IMLS PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

8. Project Elements (Museums for America Only)

Your response to this question will help us match your application to reviewers with appropriate experience. Make your choice under the project category that you selected in Question 3 (Grant Program).

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

If you are applying in the Learning Experiences Project Category, select the **primary** element that is core to your proposed project from the list below (**check only one**):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Adult Programs | <input type="radio"/> Interpretation |
| <input type="radio"/> Digital Media | <input type="radio"/> K-12 Programs, With Schools |
| <input type="radio"/> Early Learning | <input type="radio"/> K-12 Programs, Out of School |
| <input type="radio"/> Exhibitions | <input type="radio"/> Professional Development/Training |
| <input type="radio"/> Family Programs | <input type="radio"/> Public Programs |

COMMUNITY ANCHORS

If you are applying in the Community Anchors Project Category, select the **primary** element that is core to your proposed project from the list below (**check only one**):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Audience Research and Evaluation | <input type="radio"/> Community Outreach/Audience Development |
| <input type="radio"/> Civic Engagement | <input type="radio"/> Digital Media |
| <input type="radio"/> Community-Driven Exhibitions and Programs | <input type="radio"/> Professional Development/Training |
| <input type="radio"/> Community-Focused Planning Activities | |

COLLECTIONS STEWARDSHIP

If you are applying in the Collections Stewardship Project Category, select the **primary** element that is core to your proposed project from the list below (**check only one**):

- | Access and Use | Collections Management | Conservation |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Database Management | <input type="radio"/> Cataloguing, Inventorying, Registration | <input type="radio"/> Conservation Environmental Improvement/Rehousing |
| <input type="radio"/> Digitization | <input type="radio"/> Collections Information Management | <input type="radio"/> Conservation Survey |
| <input type="radio"/> Software Applications | | <input type="radio"/> Conservation Treatment |
| <input type="radio"/> Website Development | <input type="radio"/> Collections Planning | <input type="radio"/> Professional Development/Training |

Please identify the material type(s) that will be affected by your project:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animals, living | <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animals, preserved | <input type="checkbox"/> Plants, living |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Plants, preserved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books and Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Textiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Wooden Artifacts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paintings | |