

## Targeting Autism: A Comprehensive Training and Education Program for Librarians

### Abstract

The Illinois State Library (ISL) is partnering with Dominican University (DU) and Syracuse University (SU) to propose a two-year, IMLS Laura Bush 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian (LB21) Learning in Libraries initiative to develop and deliver an innovative, multi-faceted, replicable autism spectrum disorder (ASD) training program, *Targeting Autism*, designed to improve library service and programs for the large ASD community in Illinois and throughout the county. ISL is requesting \$522,871 in LB21 grant funds to provide support for in-person workshops, consultation with librarians, development of online modules and in-person forums. Among the topics covered are the challenges that characterize ASD (e.g., difficulty understanding social cues, sensory issues, need for predictability, meltdowns). Librarians will learn how to design physical spaces, provide necessary accommodations, and create library services and programs that support the resource and recreational needs throughout the lifespan of individuals with ASD.

Although awareness of the high incidence of ASD (1 in 68) is pervasive, training is needed for a deeper understanding of ASD as a hidden disability, characterized by a wide spectrum of individualized behavioral manifestations. Only with training do librarians have the skills to adequately accommodate and improve library services for their user population with ASD. Essentially, the *Targeting Autism* training program was conceived as a program that lays the foundation for inclusive librarianship. As a blended learning model, the training consists of a variety of face-to-face and online components that complement each other, reinforce learning and stimulate community engagement. These components are comprised of:

- Face-to-face, train-the-trainer (TTT) workshops, which will include 1-2 representatives from 50 libraries, covering all Illinois regions. These workshops will be held at Dominican University, in River Forest, IL, and led by Sujin Huggins, Ph.D. and co-PI. Attendees will be expected to train public service staff members at their home libraries.
- In-library visits and follow-up consultations, led by autism services provider, Russ Bonanno;
- A cluster of customized online ASD learning modules developed for the Project ENABLE website by the project team at SU, led by Ruth Small, Ph.D. and co-PI;
- Annual ASD, in-person, stakeholder forums held in Springfield, IL; and
- A series of in-depth, assistive technology webinars.

The program is designed to be replicated and will be widely promoted through a variety of communication channels and conference presentations. All online and printed resources developed as part of *Targeting Autism* will be available at no cost, both within Illinois and throughout the nation.

The immediate impact of *Targeting Autism* will be on Illinois librarians who receive the training, enabling them to (a) plan and develop effective library and information programs, services and resources for patrons with ASD; (b) implement and evaluate those plans in their libraries; and (c) share results with the profession. The primary beneficiaries of this project are the librarians who feel more prepared to serve persons with ASD and their families who benefit from the services, resources, spaces and programs made available through the libraries. Specific outcomes for librarians receiving the training program will be the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed to enhance library programming for and services to the ASD communities, reaching diverse ethnicities and urban, suburban and rural populations. *Targeting Autism* will also serve to foster ongoing communications and collaborations among librarians and stakeholders, to increase the value and use of libraries in the ASD community.

Importantly, librarians will evidence their skills and knowledge of ASD by providing appropriate accommodations that comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Libraries will be able to promote their facilities as being “autism friendly.” New library services and programming will be added to address the changing interests, resource needs and challenges faced during the course of a lifetime. Ultimately, in support of inclusive librarianship, *Targeting Autism* offers an intensive and replicable training model that can be applied to improve library services to individuals with all types of disabilities.

## **Targeting Autism: A Comprehensive Training and Education Program for Librarians**

As a two-year, IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian (LB21) Learning in Libraries initiative, the Illinois State Library (ISL) is requesting \$522,871 to fund a replicable comprehensive training program, designed to train librarians to accommodate and increase library usage among the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) population. This program (partnering the Illinois State Library (ISL) with Dominican and Syracuse Universities) will develop and deliver an innovative, multi-faceted ASD education and training program that will address the three IMLS agency goals for “Learning,” and have an immediate impact on fostering inclusive library initiatives that more fully engage libraries with the ASD community in Illinois and throughout the country. Training will cover the challenges that characterize ASD (e.g., difficulty understanding social cues, sensory issues, need for predictability and meltdowns), ADA compliance, and the need for library programs that support the resource and recreational needs throughout the lifespan of individuals with ASD. Grant funding will provide support for the program components: in-person workshops, consultation with librarians, development of online modules and in-person forums.

### **Statement of Need**

The prevalence of ASD is evident and well documented. The CDC-funded “Community Report on Autism,” (2014) from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, found that 1 in 68 children is identified with ASD, based on tracking across multiple areas of the United States. Despite these numbers, stigma, social isolation and a lack of connection to existing support services is pervasive. Many people with ASD never develop the skills needed to live independently and succeed in the workforce. Unfortunately, the heightened awareness about ASD has not led to the implementation of systemic measures to accommodate, support and help improve the quality of lives for people affected by ASD, according to University of Pennsylvania health services researcher David Mandell.

Responding to the needs of the ASD population requires holistic strategies including collaborations among diverse ASD stakeholders who are committed to creating a better, more inclusive society. Libraries are well positioned to facilitate collaboration because they strive to be a central hub, serving as a conduit for connections and an anchor for their communities. The ALA initiative *Libraries Transforming Communities* partners ALA with the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation as part of a Gates Foundation grant to “...help libraries become more reflective of and connected to their communities and achieve a domino effect of positive results, including stronger relationships with local civic agencies, non-profits, funders and corporations, and greater community investment in civility, collaboration, education, health and well-being...”

This LB21 grant proposal, *Targeting Autism: A Comprehensive Training and Education Program for Librarians* (called *Targeting Autism* hereinafter), builds on the success and knowledge gained from the IMLS funded National Leadership Forum Grant 2014-2016 project awarded to the ISL, *Targeting Autism: A National Forum on Serving Library Patrons on the Spectrum* (called *Forum Grant* hereinafter). *Targeting Autism* also builds on the ISL’s IMLS funded LB21 leadership program *ILEAD* (Innovative Librarians Explore, Apply and Discover) where teams of library staff collaborate on addressing community needs with the help of technology solutions. In 2015, the ILEAD team “Spectra” began development on a project demonstrating the use of assistive technology targeted to children with ASD.

Comments from a 2015 Illinois statewide survey of librarians and ASD stakeholders/advocates, conducted as part of the *Forum Grant*, reveal that a majority of respondents share the vision that libraries are well positioned to be a key information resource and community partner for ASD residents (Supportingdoc1). In addition, a compelling finding from the forum was that a large number of applicants (nearly 75%) have been personally touched by ASD in their families or among their close friends. Many forum attendees shared negative stories about libraries that were unwelcoming to individuals with ASD. They addressed the issues of lack of staff knowledge about ASD, inclusive library services, accommodations and programming geared to ASD residents. For all participants, the forum underscored the necessity of ASD training and community outreach to empower librarians to achieve a greater understanding about ASD and, therefore, to better serve their ASD patrons (Supportingdoc2).

Another compelling example of the need for libraries to develop and enhance services for the ASD population came out of the small group discussions held at the March 2015 forum. In response to the needs expressed by participating librarians, Barbara Klipper, ASD author, librarian, and advocate, created and funded

a library grant program to support new ASD library initiatives. As evidence of the need for assistance to meet the demand for ASD library programming, 57 libraries nationwide submitted applications to the *Autism Welcome Here* program (Supportingdoc3). However, Klipper's grant funds were adequate to support only one or two of these proposed projects.

Over the last decade, many excellent library programs, services and training modules on the topic of ASD have emerged from libraries and universities throughout the country. *Targeting Autism* has benefitted greatly from collaborations with the directors of several IMLS funded disability and/or ASD related programs including: (1) *Project ENABLE* (Expanding Non-Discriminatory Access By Librarians Everywhere), providing foundational online training for librarians nationwide on topics related to library and information services to patrons with a range of disabilities including ASD. Project ENABLE, recipient of three IMLS grants since 2010, provides free, foundational, self-directed, web based training for librarians to learn (or refresh their learning of) the concepts and skills required to provide effective library and information services, programs, and resources for people with disabilities; (2) *Project PALS*, a program to improve Florida's rural library ASD information services; (3) *Libraries and Autism: We're Connected*, which began in New Jersey in 2008 as a campaign to make patrons with ASDs more comfortable and successful in their interactions with libraries.

Within Illinois, the *Forum Grant* has developed strong collaborations among all types of libraries and *The Autism Program of Illinois (TAP)*. TAP, an autism services provider, established ASD partner agencies and ASD resource centers in Illinois libraries. In addition, the forums created a platform for giving greater exposure to the success of various already existing ASD Illinois library programs and services. The best example of a highly successful consortium is a network of public libraries in the Chicago area known as *Special Needs and Inclusive Library Services (SNAILS)*, which supports specialized library services and programs for residents with disabilities. Notwithstanding, the value of these excellent collaborations and IMLS funded library projects has been limited by regional fragmentation, underutilization and uneven distribution of resources and training. The result is that vast portions of the ASD population are unserved by Illinois libraries. With this new project proposal, Illinois will be able to promote more far-reaching access to these resources and exploit the synergy between the *Forum Grant*, ILEAD and all IMLS funded ASD related initiatives.

## Impact

*Targeting Autism* fulfills the IMLS Agency-level goal “**Learning: IMLS places the learner at the center and supports engaging experiences in libraries...that prepare people to be full participants in their local communities and our global society**” through the following three supporting goals:

**IMLS performance goal 1: Train and develop...library professionals.**

**IMLS performance goal 2: Support communities of practice.**

**IMLS performance goal 3: Develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities.**

*Targeting Autism* will demonstrate impact across the library profession through the design and implementation of a replicable ASD training program that combines face-to-face training, in-library visits, consultation and ongoing project oversight, stakeholder engagement, and a variety of online learning opportunities. This blended approach will expand the geographic reach of the program to achieve the goal of increasing the value of libraries nationally for the ASD population across their lifespan.

Implemented in Illinois, the immediate impact of *Targeting Autism* will be on the Illinois librarians who receive the training, enabling them to (a) plan and develop effective library and information programs, services and resources for patrons with ASD; (b) implement and evaluate those plans in their libraries; and (c) share results with the profession. **The program will be comprised of five replicable components** (workshops, in-library visits and consultations, online modules, forums and webinars). Content developed as part of *Targeting Autism* will be free of charge and easily accessible. The primary beneficiaries of this project are the librarians who will be prepared to serve persons with ASD in their libraries, as well as the individuals with ASD and their families who benefit from the services, resources, spaces and programs made available through the libraries.

The long-term and sustainable impact will be the adoption of this training model nationwide. Furthermore, the program will serve as a transformative model for developing inclusive libraries with accommodations appropriate to all disabilities, and that library schools will use *Targeting Autism* training as a template for folding strategies for inclusive librarianship into their curriculum.

## Project Design

The *Targeting Autism* project design is multi-faceted and includes a wide variety of training and networking opportunities, including (1) in-person train-the-trainer (TTT) workshops, (2) on-site, in-library visits to reinforce training and provide in-depth consultation, (3) development and widespread use of customized Project ENABLE online learning modules, (4) yearly ongoing multi-stakeholder forums and (5) assistive technology webinars. Project activities will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project, culminating in a comprehensive program evaluation compiled by ISL staff. *Targeting Autism* builds on the *Forum Grant* which featured two national forums. The second forum will be convened after this application is submitted; its results will be used to refine and strengthen the proposed project. Findings from the first forum have informed this application in terms of need and community engagement. A whitepaper is forthcoming as the final report.

### **The project establishes three objectives in service of the three IMLS agency goals for “Learning:”**

1. Increased knowledge about ASD and the support role of libraries, resulting from intensive project training and an in-library visits and consultation program. Training will address the challenges that characterize ASD (e.g., difficulty understanding social cues, sensory issues, need for predictability and meltdowns). Topics will also address ASD as a hidden disability and how a library can ensure ADA compliance. Librarians will learn how to design physical spaces, provide necessary accommodations, and create library services and programs that support the resource and recreational needs throughout the lifespan of individuals with ASD.
2. Creation of sustainable statewide collaborations among libraries and community ASD stakeholders.
3. Increased role of libraries as community hubs for connecting patrons to local ASD support services.

**Grant funds will be used to support the development, implementation and distribution of curricula and all training materials, as well as meals and accommodations at the TTT workshops and forums.** The approach described is cost effective because it employs a variety of training delivery techniques and content reinforcement based on each library’s ability to participate. The TTT model enables replication of project content; online modules and the in-library visits provide no-cost, no-travel access to content; forums provide community centered engagement among libraries and diverse ASD stakeholders; and webinars supplement learning with in-depth demonstrations of various assistive technology applications. The experienced grant team includes grant managers who possess a high level of fiscal and programmatic knowledge and responsibility.

An advance, signed “Governing Authority Letter of Support” will be required for each participant from his/her administrative body asserting the library’s commitment to implementing new skills and techniques. This signed letter will ensure that libraries participating in *Targeting Autism* are invested in incorporating the knowledge and skills gained into library programs and services. The letter elevates the visibility of the program and can be used as an administrative communication tool for library boards and committees.

**The work plan** blends five separate, major components into a single training program:

### **Component 1: TTT workshops (grant funding requested to support)**

All in-person TTT workshops will be held at Dominican University (DU), in River Forest, IL. Workshops will be offered to 1-2 librarians from a total of 50 libraries throughout Illinois, representing public, academic, and school libraries, those in urban, suburban and rural areas, and those with service communities that reflect diversity in culture, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Training will also inform library school classes that are currently being developed and added to the existing MLIS curriculum at DU.

Using the TTT model, each participant will receive comprehensive introductory training in ASD awareness, ADA compliance, the range of programs and services for different age groups, spatial awareness and design, resources and support services available. Each participant will be introduced to and required to complete the online learning modules as part of their training. An ASD practitioner/expert in each region of Illinois will be invited to attend the workshops. Follow-up discussion groups (online and in-person) will be organized and offered to facilitate continued communication and support among all attendees and presenters. Each in-person workshop participant will receive the following:

- a. Materials related to understanding ASD and serving ASD patrons in libraries, which can be added to the professional development collection at their libraries.
- b. Training resources/informational packets that can be distributed to staff during in-house training.

c. Promotional/awareness templates will also be distributed to help librarians make patrons aware of various ASD-related resources, services and programs in the library and in their community.

**Component 2: In-library visits and consultations (grant funding requested to support)**

As another phase of the in-person training provided by the TTT workshops, ASD specialist and trainer Russ Bonanno will travel extensively to Illinois school and community libraries to provide in-library visits and consultation services that will help inform the development of library ASD service plans. Visits to libraries can be characterized in two categories, the first occurring before the TTT workshops. These on-demand training and consultation sessions will be available to libraries that cannot send representatives to the TTT workshops, allowing a greater number of librarians to receive training. The second category of visits will occur after the TTT workshops, serving to reinforce, adapt and apply the knowledge gained at the TTT workshops to library services and programs.

**Component 3: A cluster of online learning modules (grant funding requested to support)**

The Targeting Autism project partners will collaborate with Project ENABLE team members at Syracuse University (SU), in NY, in designing a customized cluster of rich, self-paced, accessible and inclusive ASD online learning modules that will allow librarians from Illinois who cannot attend in-person training, as well as librarians nationwide, to receive training in the critical area of library and information services to people with ASD. Project ENABLE currently introduces trainees to a variety of disabilities (including ASD) but does not go into depth on any of them. The proposed modules will provide in-depth information and instruction on ASD, covering a range of topics that focus on ways libraries/librarians can support people with ASD at all life stages (e.g., helping young adults prepare for job interviews and strategies for improving executive functions).

As with other modules within Project ENABLE, content will be customized by library workplace (public, academic or school) and location (state). These interactive, multimedia learning modules will provide in-depth information on ASD and ways to design library programs and services that better serve children and adults with ASD and will contain a variety of instructional materials (e.g., videos, quizzes, learning activities and materials used in TTT workshops). These ASD modules will be freely accessible through a variety of sources, including the Project ENABLE training site and the *Targeting Autism* project blog. The modules will also be shared with OCLC WebJunction and will be incorporated wholly or in part into the TTT workshops and other project components. The Project ENABLE team will collaborate and consult with other project partners during the design and development phases of the proposed learning modules to identify appropriate content and guarantee its quality and consistency, reduce unnecessary redundancy with other components and ensure that project goals are met.

**Component 4: In-person stakeholder forums (grant funding requested to support)**

ISL will invite nationally known keynote speakers, 60-70 multitype librarians, ASD practitioners and other advocates to Springfield to participate in annual forums, one in April 2017 and one in April 2018. These forums will serve to educate, strengthen collaboration and build on the national network of support for expanding ASD library services that began in March 2015 with the first of the two forums. Presentations will be archived and available on the *Targeting Autism* blog and YouTube channel. Grant funds will support the keynote speakers and their expenses, food and lodging for the attendees, materials and conference services.

**Component 5: A series of in-depth assistive technology webinars (grant funding NOT requested to support; in-kind cost sharing support provided)**

ISL staff members who comprised the 2015 ILEAD Team Spectra will provide, via Adobe Connect, a series of in-depth assistive technology webinars to demonstrate and promote the use of various equipment of software applications used to increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with ASD (e.g., Boardmaker, Picture This and PECS).

**Collectively, project components 1-5** serve to complement and reinforce learning within this blended program structure. As such, *Targeting Autism* is a comprehensive ASD training program that delivers content and instruction that supports community engagement through a variety of venues and formats. Content for the TTT workshops, the in-library training and consultation, and the cluster of Project ENABLE modules, will result from collaboration among all project partners (ISL, SU and DU). The *Targeting Autism* project is, at its

core, a community of state library staff, autism service providers and library educators collaborating to build an integrated suite of learning opportunities.

**The evaluation plan:** Greater awareness and competence on the part of librarians will be measured through: (1) pre and post program testing; (2) self-reporting/interviews with practitioners; (3) direct unobtrusive observation; and (4) general surveys. Multiple methods of analysis will be employed to assess data collection, including but not limited to statistical analysis, ethnographic content analysis and case study analysis.

Monitoring and evaluation will take place during each of the five components and at the end of the grant period. Results will be used to make programmatic adjustments and will be disseminated at various stages of the project through communication channels, professional conferences and meetings to invite feedback from a wider audience that will, in turn, shape the long-term structure of the program model. Significant findings will also be used to inform the development of library curricula at DU, and will be made available to colleagues at all library schools including the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois. ISL staff will be responsible for the compilation of each of the evaluation reports from the five components (TTT workshops, visits/consultations, learning modules, forums and webinars) into a single, comprehensive program evaluation.

*Targeting Autism* fulfills the **IMLS Agency-level goal “Learning: IMLS places the learner at the center and supports engaging experiences in libraries...that prepare people to be full participants in their local communities and our global society”** through the following three supporting goals:

**IMLS performance goal 1: Train and develop...library professionals.**

<b>Objective 1</b>	Increased knowledge about ASD and the support role of libraries, resulting from intensive project training and consultation program.
<b>Outcome/benefit</b>	Librarians will gain the knowledge and skills needed to enhance library programming and services for the ASD communities, reaching diverse ethnicities and urban, suburban and rural populations. Although 50 libraries throughout Illinois will receive the training, the TTT model could yield an estimate of 500-750 trained librarians.
<b>Performance indicators A-E</b> (measurable outcomes)	<p>A. <b>TTT in-person workshops at DU:</b> 1-2 librarians from 50 libraries throughout Illinois will receive intensive 2-day in-person workshops. These include 4 workshops, 2 in year one and 2 in year two. Participants are then expected to train their colleagues at their libraries or in their respective district or region.</p> <p>B. <b>In-library visits and consultations:</b> Following the TTT workshops, Russ Bonanno will visit each library that sent staff to the workshops to help prepare and implement ASD service plans. He will also provide on-demand in-library visits, consultations, and/or professional development for those librarians not attending the TTT workshops at DU. In year two, additional follow-up visits/scheduled observations will be arranged. This two-pronged approach—visits with librarians that could not attend TTT workshops and those that did attend TTT workshops—increases dramatically the number of libraries touched by the overall program and ultimately increases the project’s impact.</p> <p>C. <b>Project ENABLE online training modules:</b> Completing online training using a cluster of newly developed ASD modules will be required for all TTT workshop participants as well as librarians receiving in-library visits and consultation who could not attend the workshops. In addition, these modules will be made widely available throughout Illinois and nationwide.</p> <p>D. <b>Targeting Autism forums:</b> Annual multi-stakeholder forums will be held at ISL for the purpose of: (1) educating; (2) forming collaborations; (3) reinforcing the network of support that began in the <i>Forum Grant</i>; and (4) increasing inclusive library services for the ASD community throughout all regions of Illinois.</p> <p>E. <b>Assistive technology webinars:</b> ILEAD Team Spectra will present a one-hour webinar every three months to introduce and provide training to librarians (available nationwide) on various assistive technologies.</p>

<b>Performance measure statements</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments for all indicators A-E, participants will report their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My understanding of ASD has increased.</li> <li>2. My interest in better serving patrons with ASD has increased.</li> <li>3. My confidence in better serving ASD patrons has increased.</li> </ol>
<b>Information reported</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments, the number of participants trained, total responses, responses per answer and non responses will be reported.
<b>Data source for indicators</b>	A. Pre- and post-testing will be administered at each TTT workshop. B. ASD service plans will be submitted for each library receiving in-library visits and consultation services. C. Project ENABLE online modules will feature pre and post online quizzes. D. Forum attendance will be monitored and participant surveys will be conducted. E. Participant surveys will be administered for each assistive technology webinar.
<b>Collection date</b>	Data will be collected following each of the program components with ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
<b>Target</b>	At least 75% of all those participating in each component of this program will indicate agreement with each of the performance measure statements.

### **IMLS performance goal 2: Support communities of practice.**

<b>Objective 2</b>	Creation of communities of practice that draw upon the knowledge and expertise of ASD stakeholders to increase learning and service opportunities in libraries, for individuals with ASD.
<b>Outcome/benefit</b>	Librarians will transform library services for their ASD library users through fostering ongoing communications and collaborations with stakeholders to increase the value and use of libraries in the ASD community.
<b>Performance indicators A &amp; B</b> (measurable outcomes)	A. Librarians will participate in activities/programs and meetings to maintain awareness of current resources and programming opportunities for patrons with ASD. B. Librarians will foster local collaborations with ASD stakeholders and help design needed library programs and services.
<b>Performance measure statements</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments for all indicators A-E, participants will report their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My understanding of the value of collaboration has increased.</li> <li>2. My interest in collaborating has increased.</li> <li>3. My confidence in collaborating has increased.</li> </ol>
<b>Information reported</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments, the number of participants trained, total responses, responses per answer and non responses will be reported.
<b>Data source for indicators</b>	Surveys of library staff who have participated in any of the training components.
<b>Collection date</b>	Tracking registration and participation on online discussions is ongoing, beginning month 9. Tracking in-library visits and consultations is ongoing throughout the project.
<b>Target</b>	At least 75% of all those participating in each component of this program will indicate agreement with each of the performance measure statements.

**IMLS performance goal 3: Develop and provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities.**

<b>Objective 3</b>	Increased role of libraries as community hubs for connecting patrons to local ASD support services.
<b>Outcome/benefit</b>	Librarians will apply their skills and knowledge by providing appropriate accommodations that demonstrate compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) for people with ASD, whose disabilities are often referred to as “hidden.” Librarians that go through the program will promote their facilities as being “Autism Friendly.”* New library services and programming will be added for children, adolescents, and young and older adults, including those dealing with life transitions (e.g., from high school to seeking employment).
<b>Performance indicators</b> (measurable outcome)	Inclusive library services and ASD programming for all ages will increase from participation in the wide range of in-person and online learning opportunities provided by <i>Targeting Autism</i> .
<b>Performance measure statements</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments for all indicators A-E, participants will report their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My understanding of what is necessary to make programs and services inclusive and accessible to ASD patrons has increased.</li> <li>2. My interest and confidence in developing and offering programs and services that are inclusive and accessible has increased.</li> </ol>
<b>Information reported</b>	In addition to more in-depth assessments, the number of participants trained, total responses, responses per answer, non responses will be reported.
<b>Data source for indicator</b>	Online patron and community surveys.
<b>Collection date</b>	Libraries will be monitored throughout the duration of the project. The final evaluation report will be compiled and submitted during the last quarter of the project.
<b>Target</b>	75% of libraries will demonstrate an increase in library usage by residents/patrons impacted by ASD.

\*The **Autism Friendly Acknowledgement** is a promotional activity to advertise that library staff members have completed the project training, including training other staff members as appropriate. Modeled on ASD or disability programs that have been implemented in other industries and professions, the ISL’s Autism Friendly Acknowledgement will provide a standard, visible, yet unobtrusive way for individuals with ASD, their families and caretakers to know that their library has invested in training staff to meet the unique needs of those with ASD, and that they are welcome to make use of the library’s resources and services. The acknowledgement is NOT a certification of any type. Rather, it is recognition that a minimum number (percentage TBD) of public service librarians have attended basic training on meeting the needs of individuals with ASD. Once the training has been successfully completed by enough staff, the library will receive a sign or sticker specifying the year that compliance was achieved that can be placed at library entries. Librarians will need to complete refresher training annually.

**Diversity Plan**

Because the mission of *Targeting Autism* is to create inclusive libraries, outreach efforts to diverse communities are an essential part of the program design. The content of the training will address a wide range of needs for all age groups, including a strong focus on support for adults 22 years and older, who have aged out of special education services in the K-12 school system.

IMLS support provides the leverage and framework to integrate existing programs and resources, thereby creating a greater likelihood of adoption and sustainability. Illinois includes almost 4,000 libraries of all types, spanning all demographics. To ensure diverse participation in *Targeting Autism*, selection criteria for all in-person components will include: (1) geographic coverage of all Illinois regions, including urban, suburban and rural communities; (2) regions that have a high density of ethnic minorities; and (3) school communities with a high percentage of free and reduced fee lunches. ISL, as an authorized provider, will offer Continuing

Professional Development Units (CPDUs) through the Illinois State Board of Education for school librarians to count toward their annual certification. CPDUs will be offered for the TTT workshops and the forums.

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

The total project cost is \$947,945. The total cost excluding student support is \$837,995 (\$413,921 in grant funds and \$424,074 in cost share). ISL staff members are experienced with managing IMLS grant programs, both LB21 and NLG awards, as well as the Grants to States Program. With the exception of Bonanno, all ISL staff members' salaries/benefits will be contributed as cost share.

All ISL staff listed below were involved in the IMLS funded NLG *Forum Grant*. Their experience was critical to conceiving this project and has cultivated deep investment of each staff member.

- **Suzanne Schriar**, Associate Director, ISL: Project Director/Principal PI for the *Forum Grant* and, if awarded, *Targeting Autism*, responsible for administrative oversight of project, maintenance of project social sites and coordination of annual forums. Schriar has a college-aged son with ASD.
- **Anne Craig**, Director, ISL: ensuring communication with the ISL's advisory committee and within the office of the Illinois Secretary of State. Craig has experience administering many successful competitive IMLS grant projects beginning in 1999.
- **Joe Natale**, Assistant to the Director, ISL: administrative functions for the grant such as reporting and budget monitoring. Natale has experience with many competitive IMLS grant projects.
- **Marcus Birch, Matthew Henninger and Jamie Mott**, ISL: ILEAD Team Spectra members, responsible for assistive technology webinars. Their 2015 ILEAD team was tremendously enthusiastic and eager to remain involved in services for ASD library users. Team Spectra participating in the 2015 forum and will participate in future forums.
- **Russ Bonanno**, M.Ed, former director, *The Autism Program of Illinois (TAP)*. Bonanno's professional experience includes clinician, director of a community mental health center, caseworker and child welfare manager. Project responsibilities include in-library training, consultation and supervision of participating libraries' ASD service plans. Bonanno would be an ISL temporary employee paid with IMLS grant funds.

**Project Partners/Co-PIs** Sujin Huggins (DU) and Ruth Small (SU) are included in the project because of their deep experience with services for diverse populations in their role as library school educators and leadership in program development. Both co-PIs will employ student assistants to support work on the TTT workshops and the Project ENABLE modules.

- **Sujin Huggins**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Library and Information Science, DU. Lead developer and presenter for TTT workshops at DU. Grant funds will support Huggins' time (PartnerCommitment1).
- **Ruth V. Small**, Ph.D., SU (co-PI), Laura J. and L. Douglas Meredith Professor of Information Studies at SU, founding director of SU's Center for Digital Literacy, and director of Project ENABLE. Development director for the cluster of ASD learning modules. Grant funds will support Small's time and a technical consultant coordinating all technical aspects of Project ENABLE module development. Small has had extensive experience as a grant PI (PartnerCommitment2).

**Evaluation responsibilities:** Project components 1-5 will each be evaluated by the component lead: TTT workshops=Huggins; in-library visits and consultations=Bonanno; Project ENABLE modules=Small; forums=Schriar; and webinars=Team Spectra. Monitoring and evaluation activities will be ongoing throughout the duration of the project, from development to implementation. ISL staff will be responsible for the compilation of project components 1-5 into a single, comprehensive program evaluation summary.

**Project management:** The overall project timeline will begin in July 2016 and will conclude in 24 months in June 2018. ISL Fiscal Officer Gregory McCormick will administer the project budget and direct contracts and payments associated with project activities. ISL's Joe Natale will manage day-to-day project finances and monitor match requirements. Both ISL staff members are well qualified and experienced in handling grant fiscal administration. Project staff at the ISL have made a strong commitment to serving diverse populations as well as participating in grant projects as evidenced by the 15 ISL staff members who, to date, have graduated from the five ILEAD cohorts. The project design has been developed and approved by the ISL administration as well as the project partners; time allotted to the project as reflected in the budget documents will be devoted to this

initiative. The ISL asserts that the development of services for special populations is one of the most important roles a state library can hold.

The facilities, equipment and supplies necessary to support the project are calculated in this proposal based on recent grant projects, including the *Forum Grant* and ILEAD. The University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) will provide conference support services for the forums. Their excellent conference staff have managed as many as four continuing education programs for the ISL in a single year. SU and DU have extensively researched their project costs as reflected in the budget document and confirm the appropriateness of the allocations.

No revenue will be derived from the project. Contributions to and benefits from the project for both the applicant and partner organizations include a deeper connection to Illinois libraries and their provision of library services for Illinois residents with ASD. Outside Illinois, benefits include the opportunity for widespread nationwide use of all project resources. Project partners are committed to ensuring libraries are inclusive of their diverse populations and grow as resource hubs within their communities.

**The Targeting Autism Advisory Board** is organized as a subcommittee of the ISL Advisory Committee, the statutorily constituted body directed to advise ISL. Ex-Officio Board Members are Anne Craig, Suzanne Schriar, Russ Bonanno, Sujin Huggins and Ruth Small. Board members include: **Nancy Everhart**, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Florida State University and co-director of a two year IMLS funded program, Panhandle Autism Library Services (PALS) (Supportingdoc4); **Renee Grassi**, Youth Department Director, Glen Ellyn Public Library. Renee is a nationally recognized leader in library services for children with disabilities, and was named a 2012 Library Journal Mover & Shaker for her work in this area. Renee is also one of the founding members of *Special Needs and Inclusive Library Services Networking Group (SNAILS)* (Supportingdoc5); **Barbara Klipper**, Consultant, ASD author and former librarian, Ferguson Library, Stamford, CT (Supportingdoc6); **Dan Weiss**, Director of Fanwood Public Library, Fanwood, NJ, and co-developer of *Libraries and Autism: We're Connected* (Supportingdoc7); and **Adria Nassim**, consultant, speaker, ASD self-advocate and founder of Adria's Village, dedicated to "changing the way we look at disabilities" (Supportingdoc8). Others invited to join the Advisory Board are **Patrice Foerster**, Doctoral Candidate, Disability and Equity in Education program, National Louis University, former librarian, special education teacher, researcher and grant-writer, Chicago Public Schools; and **Debra Vines**, Founder and Executive Director of The Answer, Inc., Autism Awareness & Support Agency, Forest Park, IL; member of the ISL Advisory Committee and liaison to the subcommittee. Vines also has an adult son with ASD.

## Communications Plan

For continuity of effort and to build momentum, the use of social media developed for the *Forum Grant* will continue to be used for the *Targeting Autism* grant. In addition, information will be disseminated on a variety of web sites, newsletters and project partner sites. All project information—including the project evaluation and its components, which will include lessons learned, successes and challenges—will be widely disseminated using the following communication conduits:

1. **Targeting Autism page** on the ISL website was developed as part of the *Forum Grant*. All information and documentation pertaining to *Targeting Autism* will be added to the site, as well as links to the blog and Facebook pages. Stakeholders will be encouraged to communicate through these media.
2. **ISL Enews** is a weekly publication of ISL news and other items of interest relating to Illinois libraries. The newsletter is read by over 6,000 subscribers. All project activities will be included in the newsletter.
3. The **Targeting Autism blog** began in October 2014 as a way to communicate project related activities and personal stories of forum participants. The blog also contains videos of the *Forum Grant* presentations, available from the **Targeting Autism YouTube channel**. To date, the blog has had over 5,600 hits and has reached well beyond the forum to engage interest nationwide and globally. With *Targeting Autism*, the blog will continue to be updated and used as one of many vehicles to disseminate news on project activities.
4. **Targeting Autism: Helping Libraries Serve Communities Touched by Autism** is a community Facebook page intended for librarians nationwide to share tips, tools, innovative ideas and opportunities to help foster library engagement with ASD residents. With *Targeting Autism*, the Facebook page will be updated and enhanced and will reach/support a greater number of followers as more libraries throughout the country strive to be inclusive.

5. **Targeting Autism YouTube channel** contains videos of all the forum presentations. Upcoming presentations at the March 2016 forum will be added. Also, *Targeting Autism* will include a forum during each year of the project. These live presentations will continue to be added to the YouTube channel.
6. **Conference presentations:** Activities and impact of *Targeting Autism* will be presented at conferences, wherever possible. Program proposals will be submitted about *Targeting Autism* at the following association annual conferences: American Association of School Librarians, Illinois Library Association, Illinois School Library Media Association, American Library Association, Illinois Library Association, Association for Library and Information Science Education, and various autism conferences in Illinois.
7. **Project partners' and participants' communication outlets:** Multiple media outlets (social media, mass media) may be employed by project partners (DU, SU) to promote and report project milestones, and links to the *Targeting Autism* blog and YouTube channel will be created on partner sites.
8. **Press releases and media alerts:** ISL will issue releases/alerts for all project activities. The release published in February 2015 resulted in a great deal of coverage by news media (Supportingdoc9).
9. **COSLA:** The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies organization will be contacted to disseminate information and publicity about the programs in *Targeting Autism*. Other state libraries are well positioned to propagate the content of the program and to foster inclusive librarianship throughout the nation.
10. **WYSL training calendar:** Project content will be shared in the Wyoming State Library Training Calendar, a nationally used single source of CE events in state libraries which is contributed to and publicized by many State Library Agencies.
11. **WebJunction:** The online learning modules will be shared with OCLC's *WebJunction*.

## Sustainability

The essence of *Targeting Autism* is to help libraries achieve their mission of inclusiveness through information, training and community partnerships. Although focusing on ASD, the project fosters a deeper understanding of all disabilities that are not obvious. Inclusivity is not a trend, but rather a core value of libraries and a responsibility embedded in their mission as community hubs. As such, sustainability measures are inseparable from the success of the project. All project products will be available free of charge/restriction.

The formation of a sustainable network began with the *Forum Grant* project (Supportingdoc10). The advisory board that was set up for the *Forum Grant* will continue through the duration of *Targeting Autism* and beyond. The board will meet quarterly, via conference calls, and will actively monitor project activities. Board members will be available to consult individually with staff from participating libraries. The PI/ISL will determine the ways in which this expertise may be best utilized, and will seek counsel from advisors based on their expertise as they align with the needs of the project.

In addition, the ISL, SU and DU are committed to demonstrating their ongoing support to libraries and the ASD community as evidenced by the following:

1. The work of the ILEAD Team Spectra will continue to develop as a permanent function of the ISL.
2. The *Targeting Autism* web page on the ISL website will continue to be updated regularly, beyond the duration of the project. Articles highlighting ASD programming in Illinois libraries will be included in the weekly Enews.
3. The Targeting Autism forums and ASD assistive technology webinars will continue to be held on a regular basis, after the duration of the project. ISL annually subscribes to Adobe Connect for all webinar delivery. This subscription will continue indefinitely.
4. The Targeting Autism blog and Facebook page will provide an ongoing vehicle to share information and build network engagement during and after the duration of the project.
5. The Project ENABLE site, including the ASD modules, will be updated after the duration of the project.
6. DU will continue to include ASD education as part of their library school curriculum.



## 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):

	<b>Every proposal creating a digital product should complete ...</b>	<b>Part I</b>
	<b>If your project will create or collect ...</b>	<b>Then you should complete ...</b>
<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

## Targeting Autism: A Comprehensive Training and Education Program for Librarians

### Project Description and Work Plan

More than 3.5 million Americans have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (Ostrow, 2014). The impact of ASD extends far wider to include family members and the large population with ASD and no medical diagnosis. Many individuals with ASD are stigmatized and experience social isolation and many are disconnected from support services that assist with independent life skills and future success. Unlike physical disabilities, ASD is regarded as an invisible disability and, therefore, more easily overlooked and neglected. Although awareness of the incidence rate of ASD is widespread, there remains a substantial knowledge gap about the diverse and individualized manifestations of ASD, necessary accommodations, trustworthy information resources and access to support services.

Several recent studies have identified the lack of appropriately designed library services for people with disabilities and the need for training in this area (e.g., Brodsky & Wells, 2011; Muliken & Atkins, 2009, Small, Snyder & Parker, 2009). In addition, the results of a 2015 statewide survey of librarians and ASD stakeholders/advocates, conducted as part of the IMLS-funded NLG project *Targeting Autism: A National Forum for Serving Library Patrons on the Spectrum* revealed that a strong majority of respondents perceive libraries as needing to become better informed and skilled in serving the ASD community (WayMark Systems, Illinois Libraries and Autism Spectrum Disorders Stakeholders Alignment Map, March 2015). Although in recent years some excellent training programs have sprung up, designed to raise awareness of the library and information needs of people with autism (e.g., Florida State's *Project PALS, Libraries and Autism: We're Connected*, ALSC blog *Autism in Your Library*), most of them offer a single, small-scale approach for addressing these needs. The proposed project team, led by *Suzanne Schriar, Illinois State Library (ISL)* in partnership with *Dr. Sujin Huggins, Dominican University's Graduate School of Library & Information Science, Dr. Ruth Small, Syracuse University's Center for Digital Literacy* and *Russ Bonanno, former director, The Autism Program of Illinois (TAP)* will take a collaborative, multi-pronged approach to creating a free, comprehensive educational program for library professionals and para-professionals to (a) plan and develop effective library and information programs, services and resources for patrons with ASD, (b) implement and evaluate those plans in their libraries, and (c) share results with the profession. *Kendra Morgan, OCLC WebJunction*, will provide the online platform to enable nationwide access to all education and training components.

Building on the success of the *Targeting Autism* forum project, this [Laura Bush, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian Program \(LB21\)](#) grant proposal, entitled ***Targeting Autism: A Comprehensive Training and Education Program for Libraries***, is a two-year, Learning in Libraries, Continuing Education initiative to deliver a comprehensive ASD education and training program to Illinois' librarians, thereby having an immediate impact on improving library services and programming for the ASD community. The following program components *will be designed, pilot tested/ revised, fully implemented, and evaluated* during the grant period:

**(1) In-service training programs** will be developed and offered to all librarians/library associates/managers in Illinois (**Lead: Dominican University**). This will include in-person training workshops and the development and dissemination of tools/resources/supports that assist librarians in the execution of service to ASD populations (e.g., discussion groups; collection development support; guest speakers; etc.). These programs will serve to extend and inform the pre-service offerings that are currently being developed and added to the existing MLIS curriculum at Dominican.

**(2) Consulting and collaborative community facilitation**, consisting of 50 site visits as well as individual support via phone, email, Skype and AdobeConnect will ensure coherence between training and measurable service outcomes for the ASD community (**Lead: Illinois State Library**). The ISL will act as liaison between libraries and regional ASD services providers, facilitating community meetings and fostering sustainable partnerships among libraries and regional stakeholders throughout the state.

**(3) An innovative, customized cluster of rich, self-directed, self-paced ASD learning modules** will allow Illinois librarians who cannot attend in-person training, as well as librarians nationwide, to receive training in this critical area (**Lead: Syracuse University**). These interactive, multimedia learning modules

will provide in-depth, relevant information on ASD, contain a variety of instructional materials (e.g., videos, quizzes, and learning games and activities) and will be freely accessible through the highly successful, IMLS-funded, *Project ENABLE* (Expanding Non-Discriminatory Access By Librarians Everywhere) training site, as well as through the project blog and *WebJunction*.

(4) **Annual symposia and webinars** will be created and offered to provide additional opportunities for interaction and sharing of ideas (**Lead: Illinois State Library**). Symposia will build on the successful, large, in-person forums conducted by the initial IMLS-funded National Forum grant. These provide a supportive meeting place for participants to dialogue and, ultimately, build a strong network among library service providers and ASD community stakeholders. Webinars will provide opportunities to focus on specific topics of interest, identified through a survey for librarians throughout the state and presented by experts, in a smaller, more intimate setting. Symposia sessions and webinars will be recorded and available online through project channels for those unable to attend.

Each lead institution will collaborate and consult with other project partners on the design and creation of their project component in order to guarantee quality and consistency of content, reduce unnecessary redundancy, and ensure that project goals are met. The online content of the project will reside in a section of *WebJunction*, branded with the “*Targeting Autism*” name. Project materials, online training tools, activities and outcomes will be freely shared nationwide as a model for potential replication.

### **Goals & Outcomes**

Assessments throughout the project will document the effectiveness of the project in meeting its goals.

**Goal 1:** Increased knowledge following project training about ASD among pre-service librarians, in-service librarians and library public service staff. **Outcome:** Librarians will create or expand ASD programming and services in libraries that address the needs of all age groups.

**Goal 2:** Creation of sustainable statewide collaborations among libraries and community ASD stakeholders.

**Outcome:** Librarians will participate in activities/programs and meetings to maintain awareness of current resources and programming opportunities for patrons with ASD.

**Goal 3:** Increased role of libraries as community hubs for connecting patrons to local ASD support services.

**Outcome:** Librarians will increase the number of autism resource within their libraries.

**Goal 4:** Increased ability of librarians to make their facilities more accommodating to the ASD community.

**Outcome:** Librarians will create action plans to develop/completed development of library spaces conducive to the needs of ASD patrons with sensory issues.

### **Impact**

Piloted in Illinois, this project will impact the library profession by providing a national model for collaboration among libraries, universities and community organizations to achieve the overarching goal of helping libraries fulfill their mission as community-centered institutions that are actively inclusive of all diverse segments of the population. The immediate impact will be on Illinois’ librarians, enabling and empowering them to (a) plan and develop effective library and information programs, services and resources for patrons with ASD, (b) implement and evaluate those plans in their libraries, and (c) share results with the profession.

### **Sustainability**

To ensure this project’s efforts and accomplishments continue beyond the grant period: (1) the project’s various online learning platforms (e.g., *WebJunction*) and social technologies (e.g., *Targeting Autism* blog) will be updated and sustained after the funded period ends; (2) autism-related webinars, sponsored by ISL, will continue after project funding ends and all webinars will be archived and accessible from links added to all project-related sites; (3) all pre-service curricula and materials will be available online and shared with LIS schools nationwide; and (4) *Project ENABLE* will continue to update and maintain the online learning modules.

**Estimated Budget:** The projected budget for the initiative is for Salaries (Grant fund \$32,000; Cost share \$169,182); Fringe Benefits (Grant fund \$8,100; Cost share \$88,262); Consulting (Grant fund \$159,160; Cost share \$20,760); Travel (Grant fund \$32,000); Supplies and Materials (Grant fund \$15,000); Services (Grant fund \$6,000); Student Support (Grant fund \$ 188,108; Cost share \$84,152); In-Direct Costs (Grant funds \$39,400; Cost share \$31,000). Total: **Grant fund \$ 479,768**; Cost share \$ 393,356, Total Costs \$ 873,124.