

University of Washington, The Information School
Project LOCAL Abstract

Project LOCAL, Library Outreach as a Community Anchor in Learning, is a proposed IMLS National Leadership Planning Grant initiative that will take place from May 2017 to April 2018. The purpose of this planning grant is to describe libraries' practices and perceptions of programs and services that are taking place outside of library walls and intended to reach families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library. The University of Washington (UW) Information School is the lead applicant. The following libraries have committed to participating: Arapahoe Library District [CO], Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh [PA], Carroll County Library [MD], Charlotte Mecklenburg Library [NC], Columbus Metropolitan Library [OH], King County Library System [WA], Pierce County Library System [WA], San Francisco Public Library [CA], Sno-Isle Libraries [WA], Spokane County Library District [WA], and Yakima Valley Libraries [WA], and we will be recruiting others. Furthermore, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina state libraries have indicated their willingness to connect us with a diverse range of libraries of different sizes and from various geographical locations that are reaching outside of their walls to serve their communities. Community- and library-based stakeholders will provide guidance as part of a 5-person Strategic Advisory Board (SAB).

The public library has long offered programs and services intended to promote lifelong learning and information access to the community. However, these programs and services are often offered primarily in-house, putting those who do not come into the library at a disadvantage in terms of access to learning opportunities. Moreover, these programs and services may not be reaching the families in underserved communities who may need the support most of all. These families could benefit from library services offered out in the community that work to engage the whole family and meet their needs, including those around their child(ren)'s learning and development. Libraries could better reach and serve these families by responding to their needs and meeting them where they are, out in the community. In fact, previous focus groups with library staff and administrators found that libraries are looking for ways to get outside of their walls to reach and serve families who are not coming in and utilizing the library. Moving beyond the physical space of the library and reimagining it as a service that extends beyond the library walls widens the focus to the entire community and includes those who do not currently frequent the library. Focusing on the entire community may help the library to fulfill the role of community anchor, "knitting community members together" through the services and programs libraries can provide both in and out of the physical space.

Our overarching research question asks: *How, if at all, are public libraries currently reaching beyond their walls to serve families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?* Our more specific research questions are: **RQ1:** How, if at all, are libraries working to understand the needs of families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library? **RQ2:** What are libraries offering in terms of programs and services that take place outside of library walls to reach families from underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library? **RQ3:** What do libraries perceive as challenges or obstacles to developing and delivering programs/services outside of library walls for families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

Project LOCAL is deliberately library-focused, with the intention of providing the library field with clear examples and guidelines around how to develop and implement outreach-based programming for families from underserved communities while also providing a foundation that will allow us to plan for the future research grant. As such, the sampling frame will include participant groups made up of library staff and administrators, from both the eleven libraries identified above and other libraries that will be recruited from public libraries across the nation that are reaching out and serving families in underserved communities by going outside of the library walls. Our mixed-methods analysis incorporates focus groups, interviews, and a national survey to enable us to gather broad and deep data. Because this planning project is library-focused, the project goals center on bringing value to libraries and library research through a broader and deeper understanding of how libraries are reaching outside of their walls to meet families from underserved communities where they are and providing programs and services that address their needs. We will develop a roadmap from baseline findings for reaching and serving these families and share this information with the library community to inform the field. This planning grant will also inform the development of a larger research grant that will work to develop replicable models of how libraries can begin to serve as community anchors by creating programs and services, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders.

Project LOCAL: Library Outreach as a Community Anchor in Learning

Project LOCAL (Library Outreach as a Community Anchor in Learning) is a proposed IMLS National Leadership Planning Grant initiative that will take place from May 2017 to April 2018. The purpose of this planning grant is to describe and analyze libraries' practices and perceptions of programs and services that are taking place outside of library walls and intended to reach families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library, referred to in the NILPPA (National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment) Report as "library non-users" (ALA, 2014). Our overarching research question asks: *How, if at all, are public libraries currently reaching beyond their walls to serve families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?* This overarching research question will be answered through both qualitative focus groups and interviews and a quantitative national survey. While this planning grant will generate crucial findings for the library field, it is intended to also inform the development of a future research grant that will work to develop replicable models of how libraries can begin to serve as community anchors by creating programs and services, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders, that are offered outside of library walls for families in underserved communities. The University of Washington (UW) Information School is the lead applicant. The following libraries have committed to participating in the data collection: Arapahoe Library District [CO], Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh [PA], Carroll County Library [MD], Charlotte Mecklenburg Library [NC], Columbus Metropolitan Library [OH], King County Library System [WA], Pierce County Library System [WA], San Francisco Public Library [CA], Sno-Isle Libraries [WA], Spokane County Library District [WA], and Yakima Valley Libraries [WA], and we will be recruiting others. Furthermore, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina state libraries have indicated their willingness to connect us with a diverse range of libraries of different sizes and from various geographical locations that are reaching outside of their walls to serve families in their communities.

1. STATEMENT OF NEED

Libraries and Community Engagement: "The public library is a democratic equalizer, open to all and providing access to information that helps people improve their individual, family, and community lives" (Scott, 2011a, p.191). In this way, the public library has become an important place in the community. Yet despite this, libraries are often not being regarded as relevant and present in today's digitally connected and information-rich society (Aspen Institute, 2014). Amidst this perception, many libraries are in fact engaging with their communities (Scott, 2011a; Scott 2011b). In particular, most public libraries are working to engage with the children and families in their communities who are coming into the library, offering a wide variety of programs and services centered on learning (Howard, 2013). However, these programs and services are often primarily offered in-house, putting those who do not come into the library at a disadvantage in terms of access to learning opportunities and support. Moreover, though libraries are well regarded in many communities as relevant to children's learning, most are not, however, a part of discussions in the larger community about how to close access gaps to necessary materials and information (2013). How can libraries continue to build on their current community engagement efforts to be more relevant and meet families where they are, out in the community, to support lifelong learning?

Libraries and Family Engagement: Libraries have long been engaging with children and families in their communities through various programs and services that support learning for children. Recent research on the two most prevalent public library programs for children--storytimes and summer reading/learning--has revealed that they do work to support learning. Storytimes can encourage an array of early literacy behaviors for young children (Campana et al, 2016; Becker, 2012; McKechnie, 2006). The research on summer reading has concluded that summer reading programs, which include a variety of literacy activities, should target children in high-need populations who could most benefit from the support provided by the programs (Dynea, Piasta, & Justice, 2015). In addition to these two programs, libraries offer a variety of other programs that have the goal of providing educational and enjoyable experiences for young children and school-aged children. Libraries have also recognized the importance of helping parents and caregivers to support learning for the children in their care. Libraries have accomplished this through a variety of initiatives and programs such as Every Child Ready

to Read @ your library - first edition (ECRR1) & second edition (ECRR2)--parent education initiatives that seek to help parents and caregivers understand how to support their children's early literacy development (Neuman & Celano, 2012; Meyers & Henderson, 2004). While libraries have long focused on learning for the child and learning for the parents and caregivers, they have only recently realized their potential in supporting intergenerational learning for the whole family.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) suggests that family engagement should occur as a continuous partnership between families and the child's learning environments. By placing an emphasis on engagement, organizations are starting from the understanding that all families are working to support their children's learning and development. The focus then becomes the methods by which informal learning organizations can partner with families to support the learning and development of their young children (Halgunseth, Peterson, Stark, & Moody, 2009). Museums have long focused on the importance of family learning. They recognize the family as a "learning institution within the larger learning infrastructure" (Ellenbogen, Luke, & Dierking, 2004). As a result, museums can be viewed as part of this larger learning infrastructure, with the goal of supporting learning for the whole family (2004). Libraries have also come to a similar realization: they are well positioned to support learning for the whole family through their programs and services (Celano & Neuman, 2015). Hence, the field has placed an emphasis on family engagement as a way for libraries to provide support to families through programs, education, and resources. *Libraries for the 21st Century: It's a Family Thing*, a partnership between PLA and Harvard Family Research Project, has worked to understand how libraries are engaging families. In addition to uncovering how public libraries are engaging with families, the project introduced The 5Rs Framework, which identifies Reach out, Raise up, Reinforce, Relate, and Reimagine as "five important processes that build successful family engagement pathways" (Caspe, Jeske, & Graham, 2016).

Because of their free programs and services and these family engagement practices, the public library has been recognized as an integral resource for supporting families in underserved communities (Neuman & Celano, 2012). The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) encourages libraries and museums to reach out to underserved communities to bolster educational achievement and build strong connections with families (Howard 2013). Libraries are intended to serve as safe spaces for all children from all walks of life, crossing socio-economic strata and bridging developmental divides (2013). While libraries are working to engage families in their communities, through a variety of programs and services, some researchers and practitioners have realized that these programs and services may not be reaching the families who may need the support most of all (Neuman & Celano, 2012; Prendergast, 2011; Stooke, 2006). In fact, the 2009 Public Library Survey found that, of 100 metro areas, the lowest attendance rates of children's services at the public library were located in nine metro areas that had the highest levels of child poverty and the highest numbers of children of immigrants (Swan & Manjarrez, 2011). Furthermore, a recent exploration by IMLS discovered that though library attendance is high among children with high socioeconomic status, it is rather disappointingly low among those with the lowest socioeconomic status—66% and 36% respectively among respondents (Howard 2013). When families cannot or do not come into the library to take advantage of the available, in-house programs and services, they miss out on important, free resources. They could benefit from library services that are offered out in the community, and that work to engage them as a whole family by providing an understanding of how to support their children's learning and development. By responding to the needs of these families and going out into the community to offer programs and services based on their needs, libraries could be more effective in helping these families to support their child(ren)'s learning and development even though they are not coming into the library. So how can libraries evolve their traditional programs and services to extend beyond their walls and reach and support lifelong learning for these families who would possibly benefit most from the services libraries can offer?

Reaching Families in Underserved Communities: In 2015, Mills and Campana, researchers on this proposed planning grant, conducted focus groups with prominent librarians and library administrators in the children's

services field to uncover their essential research needs. Reaching families who do not come into the library was a prevalent topic that surfaced in several ways. A number of library staff expressed the importance of serving and supporting these families, but with an uncertainty of how to actually reach and engage with them. One participant shared,

We [the library] are trying to go out to all of these different places to reach these parents who do not come in. The parents that do come in are generally comfortable with being the educational leader for their child. They are interested in educating their child and so they bring their children into the library. In order to reach the parents that don't understand or are not comfortable being the educational leader, we have to go to them, where they are.

Other participants discussed their innovative efforts in this area. One participant mentioned trying to build relationships with early learning community organizations as a way to reach and understand the needs of underserved families. Another method mentioned by a participant was taking a book bike to parks to reach families as “*more nimble ways to get out to families that are not coming into the library.*” Ultimately, these library staff and their libraries are actively searching for and testing various practices that can be used to reach and serve families who do not come into the library.

In addition to the focus group findings, several other libraries are making strides in this area. Columbus Metropolitan Library in Ohio offers a unique outreach program for families in underserved communities.

At Columbus Metropolitan Library, reaching underserved families is a priority, particularly families with young children at risk of starting kindergarten unprepared. Through our Ready to Read Corps we work to find these families, meet monthly to help the parents and caregivers understand how to be their child's first teacher and connect them to the resources at one of CML's 23 locations (Shahbodaghi, K., personal communication, December 18, 2016).

Yet another one of these programs reaches teen parents outside of the library walls by offering programs at their high school where the library gives them free children's books and information on supporting their child's early literacy skills (Barack, 2016). An Early Years Community Program in Vancouver, Canada, with an emphasis on serving vulnerable families, offers a robust example of a library serving families with young children out in the community by offering multiple programs at a variety of community locations to support the families' needs, including those around the learning and development of their child(ren) (Prendergast, 2011).

Community Anchors: Despite serving as a trusted community resource with continued initiatives around learning and information access, libraries are not being recognized as fulfilling the crucial role of community anchor (Hildreth, 2013). A community anchor can be described as: 1) an organization focused on “strengthening civic life, understanding and responding to community needs, and knitting community members together through common experiences and shared interests” (2013, p. 44); 2) providing “civic and cultural engagement, facilitat[ing] lifelong learning, promot[ing] digital inclusion, and support[ing] economic vitality through programming and services (IMLS, 2016). And yet, the Aspen Institute describes the public library as “a hub of civic engagement, fostering new relationships and strengthening the human capital of the community. Librarians are actively engaged in the community. They connect individuals to a vast array of local and national resources and serve as neutral conveners to foster civic health. They facilitate learning and creation for children and adults alike” (Aspen Institute, 2014, p. x).

Given this description of the public library, research is needed to understand why libraries are not being recognized as community anchors. It is possible this lack of recognition is due to a historic focus on the physical space, which limits the scope of the service to those who take part in programs and services inside the library. Reimagining the library as a service that extends beyond the library walls widens the focus to the entire community and includes those who do not currently frequent the library. Focusing on the entire community may help the library to fulfill the role of community anchor, “knitting community members together” (Hildreth, 2013) and proactively responding to community needs and facilitating lifelong learning through the programs and services offered both in and out of the physical space.

Therefore, it is possible that these libraries that are offering proactive programs outside of library walls for families in underserved communities that work to support their needs, including those around their child(ren)'s learning and development, are beginning to fulfill the role of community anchor. But what do these programs have in common in terms of successes and challenges, and how might other libraries learn from these efforts and outcomes? How might these same programs and services be applied elsewhere? This planning grant will give us the opportunity to address these questions by exploring specific aspects around the libraries' practices and perceptions of program development, implementation, partnerships, and challenges that will provide additional insight into this important work, with the goal of establishing a foundation and plan for a future research grant that will work to develop replicable models of how libraries can begin to serve as community anchors by creating programs and services, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders, that are offered outside of library walls for families in underserved communities.

Purpose and Context of Research: As discussed above, some libraries have identified the needs of, and are working to reach and serve, families in different underserved communities outside of the library walls, but these programs and services differ substantially from library to library. Furthermore, there is a lack of research that reveals the extent to which libraries “reach out to and engage members of vulnerable populations” (Moxley & Abbas, 2016, p. 316). The NILPPA study has worked to provide a holistic understanding of library programs inside the library, more broadly by including all ages and types of libraries (ALA, 2014), but NILPPA Advisory Groups recognize the need for additional research, “confirm[ing] how programming has become a core library service, and further defin[ing] the need for more specific research about the aspects of programming that are making a difference in individual lives” (ALA, 2014, p. 10). Therefore there is a need for a broader and deeper understanding, outside of the current anecdotal information, of these programs and services provided by libraries across the nation, outside of library walls, to reach families in underserved communities. Aspects of these specific programs and services could offer great potential for helping libraries across the nation who seek to reach underserved groups in their communities.

To begin to meet this need, this planning grant will describe and analyze libraries' practices and perceptions of programs and services that are taking place outside of library walls and intended to reach families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library. By gaining an understanding of libraries' practices around these programs and services, this project will work towards planning for a future research grant by 1) solidifying partnerships with libraries offering these types of programs; 2) exploring the feasibility of conducting research with the community stakeholders and families who take part in these programs; and 3) developing a preliminary work plan for the future research grant. In addition, this planning grant will develop a community anchor roadmap of libraries' current practices for reaching and serving families in underserved communities, which will be shared widely with the library field. Sharing these practices within the library field is important because librarians seek opportunities to learn from and adopt each other's effective practices (Mills et al., 2015a; Campana et al., 2014), as demonstrated by Project VIEWS2¹ (Valuable Initiatives in Early Learning that Work Successfully). Replication of these programs and services that reach outside of the library walls to serve families in underserved communities could help a greater number of libraries to reach and serve the families in their underserved communities, even those that do not come into the library.

We anticipate that the findings from this planning grant will: 1) establish a baseline understanding of current practice in libraries' current family outreach efforts to underserved communities; 2) help the broader library community to potentially increase their reach and service, through replication of programs, to families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library, and 3) provide a foundation for a future

¹ VIEWS2, an IMLS-funded, four-year National Leadership Research Grant, sought to measure early literacy outcomes in public library storytimes, in terms of the program offered by the librarian and the observable early literacy indicators in the children who attended (Campana et al 2016). See Supportingdoc3 for more information about this study and how it connects with Project LOCAL.

research grant which will work to develop replicable models of how libraries can begin to serve as community anchors by creating programs and services, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders, that are offered outside of library walls for families in underserved communities.

Need Expressed in Letters of Support: (See Supportingdoc2 for the letters). Following are representative comments: According to the **North Carolina State Library**, “Libraries often lack the resources and knowledge to reach members of these communities in an active and intentional way. [This] plan to do further research to explore models of how libraries can be more effective community anchors for underserved families with children ages 0-12 is an area that is sorely in need in North Carolina, as well as communities all over the country.” According to the **Colorado State Library**, “[This study’s] findings will go far to help library staff in Colorado and across the country to better serve families that don’t use the library—often the very people that need library services the most.” According to the **Washington State Library**, “Our libraries know that families are our children’s best teachers and we work to support our libraries in the work we do. But we know that we do not reach all families. Project LOCAL will help us to do this by providing us with an understanding of how we can better reach families with children, in underserved communities, who do not currently utilize the library.” According to the **UW iSchool**, “The timely and crucial focus of this grant and the expertise of the personnel involved guarantee its impact and success. Project LOCAL will provide a new dimension to research that is important to libraries and yield results that will inform community engagement in libraries through a collaborative partnership.”

Intended Audiences: The study population for this planning grant is deliberately comprised of library staff and administrators, with the intention of providing the library community with clear examples and guidelines around how to develop and implement outreach-based programming for families in underserved communities. This intention grows out of information gathered in previously conducted focus groups in which library staff and administrators articulated a desire for information and guidelines around outreach-based and community-focused programming, especially for families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library. Thus the intended audiences for the grant are primarily library staff and administrators seeking examples and guidelines of how to reach out to these families and expand their outreach efforts outside of the library walls.

2. IMPACT

Projected Performance Goals and Outcomes: The project has two main goals that will guide the research design and activities to answer the research questions and address the overall purpose of the grant. Because this initial planning grant focuses on the first step of understanding the libraries’ practices and perceptions, our goals are centered around bringing value to libraries and library research.

Goal 1/Value to Libraries: To develop a broader and deeper understanding of how libraries are going outside of their walls to reach and serve families from underserved communities.

Outcome: Develop a community anchor roadmap of current outreach practices to families in underserved communities that facilitates replication of these innovative programs. Share study findings and roadmap with leaders in the field to facilitate knowledge building among institutions.

Goal 2/Value to Library Research: To obtain robust baseline data that will set the stage for a larger research grant to explore the experiences of the families and community partners that take part in the programs we uncover.

Outcome: Understand the feasibility of conducting future research with the community stakeholders and families who participate in and help facilitate the programs we learn about through our data collection; Solidify partnerships with our participant libraries that we can utilize in the future research; Develop a preliminary work plan for the future research grant that builds on the feasibility and partnership knowledge.

Relevance to Libraries as Community Anchors: This project aligns with the Community Anchor project category in three ways. By *exploring current replicable and responsive programming models*, this planning grant will provide the library profession with a broad, multi-faceted understanding of current practices they can employ to reach families who are not utilizing the library. By *investigating how libraries are addressing widespread community challenges*, this project will advance the role of the library as a community anchor for families in underserved communities. By sharing our findings with the broader library field throughout the lifecycle of the grant, we are *improving the development of programs and services contextualized to community issues*.

3. PROJECT DESIGN (For Details of Timeline see Project Management section & Schedule of Completion; for Details of Personnel see Personnel section and Budget Justification attachment.)

Research Questions: The research is guided by the overarching research question of ‘*How, if at all, are public libraries currently reaching beyond their walls to serve families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?*’ This general question is informed by the following specific questions, all of which relate to the project’s goals of providing value to libraries.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): How, if at all, are libraries working to understand the needs of families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are libraries offering in terms of programs and services that take place outside of library walls to reach families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library? How, if at all, are libraries incorporating their understanding of these families’ needs to develop these programs and services?

Research Question 3 (RQ3): What do libraries perceive as challenges or obstacles to developing and delivering programs/services outside of library walls for families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

Participants

To answer these research questions, Project LOCAL has recruited eleven libraries as participants and will continue to recruit additional participants from library staff and administrators at various large and small, urban and rural, public libraries, who are reaching out to underserved communities by going outside of the library walls and developing innovative, community-focused programming. The recruitment efforts will be facilitated and supported by the extensive and strong relationships we developed, during Project VIEWS2, with leaders in the field, a variety of state libraries across the nation, and the Cleary library network of six library systems in Washington State.

Methods

We plan to perform a mixed-methods analysis that incorporates focus groups, phone-based interviews, and a national survey. The study includes three stages:

Stage	Data Collection Method	Participants	Analysis	Anticipated Findings
1: Collaborative information gathering	Focus groups	Library staff and administrators	Inductive thematic analysis ² and content analysis ³ of transcripts	Variety and purpose of current practices, challenges, and future plans.

² Inductive Thematic Analysis is a method of analyzing the data through a continuous re-examination of the data to develop a set of common themes across the data set.

³ Content Analysis is a method that involves developing a set of codes based on textual data and then systematically applying those codes to the data.

2: Individual information gathering	Semi-structured, phone-based interviews	Library staff and administrators	Inductive thematic analysis and content analysis of transcripts	Variety and purpose of current practices, challenges, and future plans.
3: Broad exploration of current practices	Survey	Library staff and administrators	Descriptive and inferential statistics	How libraries nationwide are developing and implementing community- and outreach-based programming; commonalities and differences between geographical regions; comparison of localized and nationwide data.

To provide more context about the data collection methods and data analysis implemented in each stage of the study, we describe our process in greater detail below. (See Supplementaldoc5 for the study’s preliminary protocols.)

Stage 1/Collaborative information gathering (Focus groups):

Recruitment: Researchers will schedule and conduct 2 to 4 in-person focus groups at the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in Chicago, IL in June 2017, with an anticipated attendance in each group of 4 to 6 people. We plan to keep the focus groups manageable in size to provide the opportunity for in-depth discussions. We will model these focus groups on the ones we conducted at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco in June 2015. Recruitment and scheduling will take place prior to the conference to guarantee participation.

Content: The intent of these focus groups is to gather group-level information on the libraries’ current practices, challenges, needs, and future plans in developing outreach-based programming for families in underserved communities who are not using the library. We will be asking for libraries’ perceptions and their understanding of the families’ experiences in and takeaways from the outreach programs they offer. We will also be asking about the libraries’ perceptions of their community partnerships and the successes and challenges around those relationships. The collaborative nature of the focus groups will enable researchers to draw on participants’ distributed expertise and enable participants to share valuable information with one another. We will commence and moderate discussion with a refined, pilot-tested set of questions, but we will also encourage participants to direct the conversation toward other relevant topics.

Analysis and Preparation for Stage 2: To facilitate later analysis, focus groups will be audio- and video-recorded whenever possible, with participants’ consent. The transcripts from these focus groups will then be analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis that will surface themes and vocabulary relevant to RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3, thereby providing insight into the overall research question. This analysis will also set the stage for informing the survey protocol in Stage 3. At this point, we will share our initial findings with our focus group participants to facilitate collaborative learning. We will follow up if needed with focus group participants to obtain relevant documentation for further analysis. We will also meet with our Strategic Advisory Board during each stage to seek their guidance, input, and perspective.

Stage 2/Individualized information gathering (Interviews):

Recruitment: Following the focus groups, we will conduct at least 10 to 15 in-depth, open-ended phone interviews in the late summer and fall with library staff and administrators at various large and small, urban and rural public library systems around the country to gain a deeper understanding of current practices and strategies for uncovering the needs of families in underserved communities. Since not everyone attends the ALA Annual Conference, this method will enable us to both follow up with focus group participants and reach out to additional participants. The interviewees may include some focus group participants whose information warrants further discussion; additional participants will be recruited through existing relationships.

Content: The individualized nature of these interviews will enable researchers to 1) more deeply explore particular experiences and perceptions around outreach-based programming; and 2) investigate each library’s formal and anecdotal understanding of the outcomes for and experiences of the families that attend these

programs. In addition, we will request any documentation on the outcomes, such as program evaluations, surveys, or informal feedback. We will also be asking about the libraries' perceptions of their community partnerships and the successes and challenges around those partnerships as well as future plans. The semi-structured protocol for the interviews will be informed by the findings from the focus groups. This study design will enable us to build on existing questions or follow a particular line of inquiry that proves promising, while adhering to a general protocol. Each interview will be roughly 30 minutes, using refined and pilot-tested protocol.

Analysis and Preparation for Stage 3: To facilitate later analysis, interviews will be audio-recorded, with participants' consent. The transcripts from the interviews will then be analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis methods that will reveal themes and vocabulary relevant to RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3, thereby providing insight into the overall research question. They will also set the stage for informing the survey protocol in Stage 3. We will share our initial findings with our interview participants to facilitate collaborative learning. We will also meet with our Strategic Advisory Board during each stage to seek their guidance, input, and perspective.

Stage 3/Broad exploration of current practices/(Survey):

Recruitment: We plan to disseminate the survey through existing channels and national listservs, aiming to cast as wide a net as we can. We hope to have a data set of at least 100 responses, but we will not place a cap on the number of responses to allow for as wide a variety of responses as possible. A previous survey designed by one of the researchers in collaboration with ALSC yielded more than 400 responses (Mills, Romeijn-Stout, Campbell, & Koester, 2015b). We will keep the survey open for one month to allow for maximum participation.

Content: The survey is intended to give us a broad, national understanding of current practices, challenges, and needs regarding the development of programs and services to reach families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library. The survey will be developed using data from the focus groups and interviews, as well as from our own research questions. We will design quantitative and qualitative questions based on what we want to know as well as what we find in the data from Stages 1 & 2. This study design will enable us to build on existing questions while adhering to a general, pilot-tested protocol. The shared knowledge and individualized experiences gathered in the focus groups and interviews will enable researchers to develop a robust and rigorous survey protocol that not only addresses the questions for this planning grant but also sets the stage for a future research grant. The wide distribution of the survey should yield a high response rate, thereby providing a robust data set for analysis.

Analysis of survey data and comparison with previous data sets: We will analyze the data from the survey using descriptive and inferential statistics. We will look for patterns and frequency of answers to better understand on a large scale the types and occurrences of family engagement as reported nationwide. Survey data will be compared to the data from the interview and focus group data to assess whether there are any similarities between local and nationwide themes and practices and to surface themes and vocabulary relevant to RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3, thereby providing insight into the overall research question on a broad scale. The complete data set will then be summarized and developed into a community anchor roadmap that we will share with practitioners to help them understand effective practices for developing and delivering programs and services outside of library walls intended for families from underserved communities.

Planning for Future Grant: The planning grant focuses on the libraries' practices and perception. Upon the completion of the planning grant, we will use this baseline data to design a more in-depth research grant to develop replicable models of how libraries can begin to serve as community anchors by creating programs and services, in collaboration with families and community stakeholders, that are offered outside of library walls for families in underserved communities. Deeper analyses of the qualitative and quantitative data sets from the planning grant will set the stage for this larger-scale research design. The future research grant will emphasize conversations with community organizations that partner with libraries as well as with families to learn their points of view and their own assessments of the relevance and importance of these outreach programs to their needs. This will enable us to triangulate our findings and develop a more holistic view of effective community engagement strategies for libraries, which would greatly enhance the current research in the field and enable libraries to better understand how to become more effective community anchors.

Evaluation: Project LOCAL will be evaluated in alignment with the goals and outcomes identified in the **IMPACT** section:

Goal	Outcome	Evaluation Method
Develop broader and deeper understanding of current practices	-Community anchor roadmap -Information sharing	- Completion of community anchor roadmap; - Participant review of roadmap for relevance, cultural sensitivity, and validity
Obtain robust baseline data for future research grant	- Understand feasibility of conducting research with community partners and families participating in the programs; -Solidify partnerships with participant libraries for future research; -Develop preliminary work plan for the subsequent research grant.	- Validation of data through triangulation of methods, multiple participant groups, and member checks - Strategic Advisory Board review of all documents generated by the grant for relevance, cultural sensitivity, and validity

4. DIVERSITY PLAN

An important piece in this project is its commitment to helping libraries understand how they can adapt and innovate to meet families where they are and develop programs for families from underserved communities who do not currently come into and utilize the library. Following are several ways in which we plan to address and incorporate diversity into each aspect of our planning grant:

- Recruit library participants from a wide variety of libraries, including large, medium, and small and urban and rural, to ensure that we include libraries from across the nation that represent diverse communities in all three stages of the research;
- Cross-check participant-provided demographic data with census data to gain a deeper understanding of local demographics and their diverse representation;
- Reach out to multiple state libraries to help with recruitment and distribute the survey through multiple avenues to ensure that we include libraries that represent diverse communities in all three stages of the research;
- Seek out and identify library programs and services that particularly support underserved communities in our data collection efforts;
- Ask participants about underserved communities without defining or limiting the term--we will allow our participants, in all three stages of the research, to identify and define the underserved populations that they serve through these programs and services in their communities, which should help the research be inclusive of the wide variety of underserved communities across the nation;
- Anonymize data sets to protect identities and any sensitive information we may gather;
- Use qualitative methods for data collection and analysis so that we can account for cultural influences in the data;
- Present at both large national conferences and smaller, regional conferences to reach both large and small, urban and rural libraries serving families from underserved communities.

5. PROJECT RESOURCES: PERSONNEL, BUDGET, AND MANAGEMENT

Personnel: The Project LOCAL team includes specific talents: 1) **Michelle H. Martin, Project PI**, holds the Endowed Beverly Cleary Professorship of Children and Youth Services at the University of Washington (UW) Information School (iSchool). Dr. Martin is the creator of an outreach, literacy-based program called Read-a-Rama® (Copeland & Martin, 2016) that uses children’s books as the springboard for all programming. The

hands-on, interactive activities that Read-a-Rama(r) offers build literacy skills and a love of learning in children (See Supportingdoc4 for more information about this program). Her recent research on the impact of this program with families positions her to take a unique view on the data that surfaces through this study; 2)

Kathleen Campana, Researcher, Doctoral Candidate at the UW iSchool, brings considerable mixed-methods research experience to this study. Her dissertation utilizes mixed-methods to explore storytime as an information environment for young children and the learning that occurs for children when interacting in the information environment. In addition, Campana assisted with the design and management of Project VIEWS2. As part of Project VIEWS2, Campana also designed and managed a sub-portion of the research, the Early Literacy Skills Assessment, where she worked to track the individual early literacy skills of children who attended storytimes. Campana also served as a researcher on the Emergent Readers Literacy Training and Assessment Study conducted with Pierce County Library System (Campana & Dresang, 2011); 3) **J. Elizabeth Mills, Researcher**, Doctoral Candidate at the UW iSchool, also brings considerable research experience from both Project VIEWS2 and the Digital Youth Seattle Think Tank, during which she conducted more than 30 interviews (Fisher et al, 2016). Mills also helped design, disseminate, and analyze the Young Children, New Media, and Libraries survey, administered by ALSC, to obtain a nationwide picture of how libraries are using new media in their young children's programming. This survey yielded more than 400 responses, resulting in a robust data set for analysis (Mills, Romeijn-Stout, Campbell, & Koester, 2015b).

The **Strategic Advisory Board** for this study (see Supportingdoc6 for members) includes a variety of individuals representing library and community organizations. Their role will be to provide feedback and guidance on research design and protocols and review all documents generated by the grant for relevance, cultural sensitivity, and validity.

Budget: For the proposed project, our estimated budget is \$50,000, divided as follows: \$3,000 for transcription services; \$8,700 for travel for data collection and research dissemination; \$15,600 for researcher salaries and benefits; \$5,000 to support incentives for library participation; \$17,700 for indirect costs.

Management: Certain tasks are ongoing: Resource and information sharing on project website; communicating with intended audiences; meeting with Strategic Advisory Board; dissemination; evaluation. Other work will occur as follows: **Stage 1: May 1, 2017 - November 30, 2017:** Schedule focus groups with librarian and administrator participants; design, refine, and pilot test the focus group protocol; conduct and record focus groups; analyze focus group audio and video data. **Stage 2: July 1, 2017 - November 30, 2017:** Schedule interviews with participants; design, refine, and pilot test interview protocol; conduct interviews; transcribe interviews; analyze transcripts; share transcripts with participants; **Stage 3: December 1, 2017-April 30, 2018:** design, refine, and pilot survey protocol based on previous data analysis; administer survey; collect and analyze results; prepare final report with research results, effective practices, and recommendations.

6. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

We will use the data we gather to develop a community anchor roadmap for libraries to help them reach and serve these families through a focus on out-of-the-library program development and implementation, based on community needs. The research team will then create a project website to house information about the study, the roadmap, and any updates. We will ask participants to share the roadmap within their own communities of practice. We will create a Facebook page to share information through social media and build an information base. Project supporters and state librarians will publicize news of the project as well as links to the project's website and Facebook page. We will also share our findings back with the library community to impact the field in a timely way through publications in a variety of journals and presentations at both practitioner- and academic-focused conferences. Practitioner-focused dissemination will help ensure targeted program and service design in libraries, supporting critical information sharing and solidifying the role of the library as an anchor in communities of families with young children. A final report will be posted online.

Project LOCAL: Library Outreach as a Community Anchor in Learning
Schedule of Completion

Major Activity	Start	Finish
Manage all grant activities and personnel; meet with staff; share docs & schedules on secure website	Ongoing	Ongoing
Communicate with intended audiences using various means	Ongoing	Ongoing
Establish contact with librarian focus group members; schedule focus group	May 2017	May 2017
Design, refine, pilot test focus group protocol	May 2017	June 2017
Conduct on-site focus groups	June 2017	June 2017
Recruit interview participants	June 2017	July 2017
Design, refine, pilot test interview protocol	July 2017	July 2017
Conduct follow-up phone interviews	August 2017	September 2017
Initial analysis of focus groups and interviews	October 2017	November 2017
Design, refine, pilot survey protocol	December 2017	January 2018
Administer survey	February 2018	February 2018
Collect and analyze results from all data collection	February 2018	April 2018
Disseminate grant results through conferences and publications	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to communicate with intended audiences using various means	Ongoing	Ongoing
Prepare final report with research results, best practices, and recommendations	April 2018	May 2018

DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, assets, software, and datasets). The products 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 can be challenging. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, 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

You must provide answers to the questions in Part I. In addition, you must also complete at least one of the subsequent sections. If you intend to create or collect digital content, resources, or assets, complete Part II. If you intend to develop software, complete Part III. If you intend to create a dataset, complete Part IV.

PART I: Intellectual Property Rights and Permissions

A.1 What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (content, resources, assets, software, or datasets) you intend to create? Who will hold the copyright(s)? How will you explain property rights and permissions to potential users (for example, by assigning a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, or Creative Commons to the product)? Explain and justify your licensing selections.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

A.3 If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

Part II: Projects Creating or Collecting Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A. Creating or Collecting New Digital Content, Resources, or Assets

A.1 Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create 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, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

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

B. 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. Your plan may address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and 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 C.F.R. § 200.461).

C. Metadata

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

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created 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 the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

D. Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets 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(s) and URL(s) (Uniform Resource Locator) for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

Part III. Projects Developing Software

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) it will serve.

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

B. Technical Information

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

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

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

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

B.5 Provide the name(s) and URL(s) for examples of any previous software 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 open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What ownership rights will your organization assert over the software you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on its access and use? 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 and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

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 deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

Part IV: Projects Creating Datasets

A.1 Identify the type of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use to which you expect it to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate it.

A.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?

A.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).

A.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.

A.5 What methods 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).

A.6 What documentation (e.g., data documentation, codebooks) 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?

A.7 What is your plan for archiving, managing, and disseminating data after the completion of the award-funded project?

A.8 Identify where you will deposit the dataset(s):

Name of repository:

URL:

A.9 When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?