

San Carlos Apache College

Narrative

San Carlos Public Library Enhancement Project

The San Carlos Apache Tribe, in partnership with San Carlos Apache College (SCAC), will increase the number of tribal members using the San Carlos Public Library (SCPL) and improve community perceptions of, and access to, the library by moving it to a better facility, expanding its hours of operation, and adding educational programming that meets community needs. This two-year project will position the Tribe's public library as a nexus of community education, cultural programming, and workforce development activities that promote lifelong learning and community wellness. IMLS supports projects that promote lifelong learning, in particular those that allow for continuous learning for families and individuals with diverse backgrounds and needs. This particular project aligns with the Educational Programming project category.

Eligibility: The San Carlos Apache Tribe is a federally recognized tribe organized pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984), as amended by the Act of June 15, 1935 (49 Stat. 378). The Tribe also applied for a Basic Native American Library Services grant with a projected start date of 8/1/2020, making it eligible to apply for this Enhancement grant. The San Carlos Tribal Council passed a resolution in support of this Enhancement grant project and the resolution is attached to this application (See SupportingDoc1).

1. Statement of Need

Who is your organization's audience? Include information about population profile, location, economy, educational levels, languages, culture, and other characteristics that you consider important. What specific need will be addressed through your project? Do other projects exist that help to answer their needs? How is what you are proposing different or building upon other work and best answering your audience's needs?

SCAC provides educational services, primarily higher education services and workforce development and training, to the tribal members and other professionals who live and work in the vicinity of San Carlos, Arizona. It seeks to partner in a meaningful way with the San Carlos Public Library which serves the San Carlos Apache Reservation in San Carlos, Arizona. The Tribe has approximately 16,878 enrolled members with around 12,000 members residing on the reservation and living in four districts (Seven Mile, Gilson Wash, Peridot, and Bylas). The San Carlos Indian Reservation (SCIR) is located in rural, southeastern Arizona. The SCIR boundaries span across portions of Gila, Graham and Pinal Counties, with ecosystems that range from alpine meadows to upper Sonoran Desert. Elevations across the SCIR range from nearly 8000 feet in the northeastern portion of the reservation to below 2000 feet along the Gila River at the western boundary. The SCIR is generally located 110 miles from Phoenix and 120 miles from Tucson. The SCIR encompasses approximately 1.8 million acres and was originally established by executive order on November 9, 1971.

The San Carlos Apache Tribe experiences high rates of unemployment, low per capita income, and extreme poverty, as well as high rates of alcoholism, diabetes, kidney disease and behavioral health problems. The unemployment rate hovers around 42.5% and nearly 43% of households are impoverished (American Fact Finder, 2017) although estimates for actual unemployment on the reservation are closer to 75%; this differs drastically from Gila County unemployment rates

of 12.8% and the Graham County rate of 14.1%. According to a community health assessment conducted by Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and Gila County (2015), San Carlos is measured as one of the highest regions of poverty and unemployment in the southwest. Poverty, hopelessness, and a lack of connection to traditional cultural identity leads to numerous social problems. The social problems are exacerbated by a failing education system at the K-12 level. SCAC's main feeder high school is San Carlos High School. In the San Carlos community, according to the most recent Arizona department of education statistics, only 8.3% of students met the state academic standards in mathematics and only 7.9% met the standards in language arts. This is significantly worse than the state averages which are 41% for both subject rates. Over 50% of the population lack high school diplomas or GEDs. Of the 50% that graduate, approximately 25% enroll in college but fewer than 3% of students earn four-year degrees. These statistics stem from historical trauma, social problems, lack of family support for and distrust of mainstream educational institutions, and an overall sense of hopelessness among many community members.

SCAC is an emerging tribal college, and is a site of Tohono O'odham Community College (TOCC), which opened doors in 2017, and it has seen growing enrollments as it has forged partnerships with tribal departments and enterprises to address some of the community's greatest needs, and this project is an effort to partner with the Public Library. In the Spring 2020 semester there were 185 registered students at SCAC with anticipated growth in the next year. 50 of these students were dual credit students taking college classes at the high school. College student struggle due to the lack of a library; students do have access to digital resources from TOCC, but due to the rural location where students live, there are incredibly slow home internet speeds, and the lack of places that are open on the weekends or evenings makes studying for classes difficult. The physical collection of books at TOCC is in Sells, AZ which is a four-hour drive from San Carlos. Space is needed where all students in the community (K-12, college students, and other adult learners) can study and use the internet for their coursework.

The specific community need to be met through this project is the need for a safe place to access books, journals, newspapers, and the internet to find factual information as well as the need for a community location where information about workforce development and educational programming opportunities are provided for adult learners at the times that are most convenient for them.

What is the current role of the organization in the community and what library services does it provide (e.g., mission, goals, hours and days of operation, staffing, size and content of collection, number of registered patrons, circulation statistics, computer technology, Internet connectivity and access, public programs offered, etc.)?

Currently, the SCPL provides minimal services to the community; up until now, the Apache College has provided no library services to its students, hence the need to partner. The modest public library collection consists of 1223 printed books and 140 audio books. 778 people have library cards. In 2019 there were 516 physical check-out transactions and 46 electronic transactions. Total library attendance was 2292 visits. The Library has no mission statement or articulated goals, but this project will result in a strategic plan and vision for the Library.

The SCPL current hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8am until 4pm with a break for lunch during which the library is closed because there is only one staff member: a Library Manager. This staff member is also the janitor who oversees all aspects of the library's

operations. Due to the limited staff and competing projects, educational programming is at a bare minimum. The only programs advertised on the library's webpage (<http://www.geldaz.org/sancarlospubliclibrary.asp>) is a Gila County grant-funded Story Time for children aged six months old to five years old on Tuesdays and Fridays at 1pm. The actual "events calendar" on the Gila County Library District webpage shows no scheduled events at the SCPL. Clearly, these hours are insufficient to meet the educational needs of the entire community. Tribal employees typically work Monday to Friday during the same hours that the library is open, so the library is effectively off limits to them unless they take leave from work. The same is true for school children and young adults who are in school when the library is open. College students, staff, and faculty of the college who have gone to the library in search of cultural materials or wanting to learn more about the Apache language have returned empty handed due to the lack of such materials at the library. The dilapidated building isn't very welcoming, despite the best efforts of the lone librarian, and the building lacks sign indicating that it is the Library. The roof leaks and the tiled floor is pitted and stained. Clearly, the library is in dire need of enhancement so that it can better serve the diverse educational needs of the community, especially a community with a new college that lacks a physical library.

What is the purpose of the proposed Native American Enhancement grant project as it relates to the specific need that you have identified? What specific audience(s) will the organization serve with this project (e.g., particular age groups, underserved community members, other types of target audience)?

By moving the library to a better and more strategically-positioned building and by making it a more inviting place for the community to visit, the community will have more opportunities to benefit from educational programming being offered at the Public Library in its new location. The extended hours of operation will open up the library to underserved community members including tribal employees, school age children and young adults, and to college students attending colleges throughout the region. SCAC has already developed and will continue to develop educational programming that can be offered at the library, and its close partners will gladly do the same. Education can brighten the outlook for the entire community, as patrons will be bringing home information, knowledge and resources to their families, who can themselves benefit from future library educational programming.

What type of assessment was conducted to identify this need as a priority for the organization? Describe the results of the assessment, including baseline data that can be used to compare with final results to determine the project's success. Why do you consider your approach to be the best solution to meet the needs of the targeted audience?

The Tribe conducted a community needs assessment in 2011 which led to the chartering of SCAC in 2014 because of the importance that the community placed on improving education levels and opportunities in the community. In the words of Tribal Chairman Terry Rambler, "This dream [the tribal college] has been reinforced through a survey of our people who have stated education is the most important issue facing us today." However, for many in the community, seeking a college degree seems impossible due to tribal members lacking high school diplomas, GEDs, or the basic skills and resources needed to attain these. There are scattered resources and programs in the community to address some of these problems, but they aren't centralized in a place where community members in need can learn about them all in one location and receive tutoring and career counseling at times of the day that meet their needs.

Making the library the nexus of these services and activities and having the library offer tailored educational programs to serve the greatest community needs is the best solution to reach those in the community with the greatest needs because it brings together entities that are in the best position to create change.

2. Project Design

What is your proposed work plan? What are your performance goals and objectives; specific project questions; and conceptual design and processes for your project (framed within the context of Section A1)? What are the activities required to implement the project?

Objective 1 Move the library to a better location to improve the perception of the library. The SCAC is being given some space in a building where the Tribe's Language Preservation Department and the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act program are currently located. This space includes a very large room, of approximately the same square footage as the space where the SCPL is located. The large room can house the physical collections, the circulation desk, an area for children's story time, and computers for public use. The space also has a good-sized room that will be a classroom for educational programming and a space where tutors can work with patrons one on one. There is also room for three offices for library staff and tutors to use. In addition, there is a wheelchair ramp, which the library lacks at its current location, making the library accessible for individuals with disabilities. The College has shown great attention to detail and has renovated the spaces where its students congregate to create a sense of pride among the community and this will carry over to the new library space. Because the College already uses part of the building (the WIOA staff are college employees), the College security and maintenance staff can provide in-kind service to the project and take care of the library which currently has no security or maintenance staff. Another benefit of the new location is that WIOA provides career services in the same building, and the Language Preservation department which holds Apache language classes and events for all skill levels will have a place to offer their courses; they currently lack a classroom.

Objective 2 Expand the hours of library operation to include evenings and some weekends so that tutoring for school age students, computer labs for college students, and workshops for adult learners can take place during the times that are most needed by patrons. With the expanded hours of operation, tutors will be hired to assist both K-12 and college students with their needs. SCAC already has tutors for its students, but, these new tutors will also work with high school students and those attending any regional or online college.

Objective 3 Host a variety of workshops such as classes for high school students applying for college, career workshops, computer literacy for elders, adult basic education for high school equivalency degree seekers, and increasing story-time for Head Start and Daycare students and providing tutoring. To really build educational programs for the community, it's necessary to hire someone with an MLS degree, on a part-time basis, to help to develop this programming and to provide overall leadership for this project and mentoring for the tribal librarian. In various conversations with college partners, individuals and entire programs have said they would love to offer their programs through the library if there were space and resources to do so.

Objective 4 Provide ongoing Professional development for library staff. Because the library has only one employee, she is never able to get away to attend conferences or trainings; the library

would need to close to accommodate this. With additional staff that the college can provide for coverage, the library manager will have the time to attend key trainings in the region such as the Arizona Library Association Conference, the Arizona Community College Library Consortium Conference, and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums Conference to continue to develop her skills and professional network which is key for future library growth. In addition to supporting the librarian, the tutors who may be local high school and college students, will benefit from the experience of working in a library and may consider careers working in libraries or as community educators. By exposing the tribal library manager to best practices at other libraries, that knowledge can be brought home to San Carlos.

Objective 5 Engage stakeholders in a process to develop a strategic plan for library growth and development. The tribal chairman has stated a desire, long term, for a state-of-the-art library to serve the Apache people. It will take time, effort, and the contributions of various stakeholders to see this dream come to fruition. A strategic plan developed with broad community input is needed to chart that path. The library lacks an advisory board and is simply existing from year to year instead of thriving and leading community education efforts.

The plan covers two years and includes the following activities. 1. Purchase new furnishings and technology. 2. Move the Library to the new College location. 3. Form Library Advisory Committee. 4. Hire project staff. 5. Host Grand Opening event. 6. Provide professional development for library manager. 7. Hold quarterly advisory committee meetings. 8. *Educational Programming* – Host college workshops, library-use workshops, computer and financial literacy workshops and other relevant trainings. 9. Complete a library strategic plan and present to the Tribal Council.

Conceptual Process - As part of the planning process for this grant, the working group reviewed an outstanding document developed using IMLS funding called Adult Literacy Through Libraries: An Action Agenda found on Proliteracy.org which brings together best practices and strategies to begin adult literacy programs especially when limited funding is a barrier to new project development. The action agenda highlighted strategic partnerships and collaboration as essential for bringing adult education to communities, and this informed our project design. Sharing resources allows both the College and the Public Library to serve their own unique and shared constituencies better. The approach of “working smarter and not harder” makes sense as does “breaking down silos” that limit creative partnerships. The action plan focused on professional development for library staff including promoting graduate level education which influenced choices in our project such as the trainings the library manager should attend and the need for an MLS-level librarian as a part-time mentor for the library manager. It also provided ideas about sustainability through strategic partnerships and has stimulated conversations about one day building a state-of-the art library for the community that is a both a public and tribal college library, hence this project’s objective related to developing a strategic plan by the project’s end.

What are the roles and commitments of partnering organizations, if applicable? The Apache College Board of Regents passed a resolution supporting the project, as did the San Carlos Apache Tribe. In addition, a letter of support from the Gila Country Library and Gila Board of

Supervisors is attached to this application as is a support letter from the current Library Manager who is excited to form this partnership.

Did you engage in any preliminary work or planning? Discussions and visits to the San Carlos Library and with Tribal leaders, including the General Managers Office have been ongoing for some time regarding strategies for helping the Public Library.

If the project or one closely related to it has been supported by IMLS or other funding agencies, what has been accomplished and to what degree has the project met its established goals? (List any print or electronic publications produced so far, with web addresses, information about or statistics on use, and other relevant information. Submit this list as a Supporting Document if necessary). Not applicable.

The project is not specifically using any digital content, although educational programs will be advertised on the library webpage and through the College webpage and social media.

3. Impact

What are the intended goals of the project that will guide your project to completion? (Goals are broad statements that should guide your design of programs, choice of projects, and management decisions).

GOALS:

1. To secure the facilities (physical buildings) and related resources—within the Apache Nation—for successfully establishing, and continuously growing, a multi-faceted joint College-Community Library.
2. To improve the community’s perceptions of, convenient access to, and optimum use of the library.
3. To establish a library with the capacities to continuously enhance community-wide literacy in a range of critical areas.
4. To integrate effectively the services of a joint community and college library.

What results do you want to see at the end of the project period?

- We will have succeeded in promptly negotiating with the leadership of the Tribe the allocation of facilities (physical spaces) and related resources that are appropriate—and preferably *ideal*—for establishing and growing a joint College-Community Library.
- There will be broad community awareness of—and appreciation for—the new and valuable services that all community members can receive from the joint College-Community Library.
- There will be a demonstrable – and continuously growing – “community-wide use” of the library over the period of the project.

What are the intended outcomes for participants? (As noted previously, outcomes can include increased understanding, interest, and confidence among participants).

- Participants will have gained a clear understanding of the various purposes of a multi-faceted library as a powerful vehicle to enhance their education, training, skills, personal development, and overall “critical literacy” to be active citizens.
- Complete families will find the Library to be a very welcoming, inspiring, and safe “place” to learn and grow together. Parents will find the Library to be a “special partner” of theirs in engaging effectively with their children and helping them become more successful students.
- Young participants will acquire the “love of learning” made uniquely possible by a Library.
- College students will greatly enhance their knowledge and understanding of the numerous resources throughout the world that the Library uniquely makes available to them to conduct research, write documents, and develop their reading, writing, and quantitative skills.
- All participants, young and old, will benefit from having convenient and ongoing access to the kind of professional tutors and mentors that are generally found in the best libraries.

How will the project specifically benefit the individuals or groups that you serve? How will you measure progress toward achieving your goals and outcomes? How do you know you will have reliable information upon which to judge impact or base actions? Are there any expected risks?

- We will document the exact type and amount of physical space (and related resources) that has been successfully secured for establishing, opening, and continuously enhancing our multi-faceted Library.
- A monitoring system will be set-up to record the daily number of community members and College students who use the library. Different categories of participants will be used to quantify the amount and type of usage of the library.
- We will record the number of classes, programs, and other educational/training activities created—throughout each quarter of the project period—for the specific use of the Library to enhance community-wide literacy.
- We will record the hours of tutoring services to be provided to participants of all ages.

4. Communications Plan

What is your communications plan? For example, who is your audience and how do you plan to reach them? How will you share results, products, models, findings, processes, benefits and lessons learned from the project openly and effectively? What are your plans for community building and/or audience engagement via discussion, involvement, collaboration, or adoption throughout the project lifecycle? For example, how will you seek and obtain feedback from various stakeholders

The audience for the project the entire San Carlos Apache community both on and off the reservation. Radio, in particular the KYAY radio station, is often the best way to reach community members. Another vehicle will be the local newspaper *The Apache Messenger* with whom the College can easily work to advertise library events. For those with internet access, Facebook is one of the best ways to advertise community events, and the college already has a good following which the library will benefit from as it launches its own social media accounts. The college can help the library to develop its own professional webpage as well. Flyers are also a good way to promote community activities and events, and the College regularly put flyers in all tribal department mailboxes for posting at the various departments. Marketing is one of the College’s strong suits. However, the best way to share the results of the project with the

community will be in reports to the tribal council which can be posted in written form on the library webpage, but which will also be heard by the community over the radio. The project will engage stakeholders through the development of a library advisory committee with representation from the K-12 school district, the San Carlos Health Corporation, tribal workforce development programs like WIOA and TANF, Head Start, and the tribal Youth Council who can provide input and direction based on project performance. The minutes from advisory committee meetings can be posted and community forums can be held to collect community feedback. The College can also poll students about the various improvements to the library.

Who is responsible for outreach, promotion, and dissemination?

The College will take the lead during year one, but this will transfer to the Library Manager during year two.

5. Sustainability

How will you continue to support the project, its results, and/or new models that are created beyond the grant period? For example, will there be ongoing institutional and/or community support of project activities or products? Do you have demonstrated buy-in from potential stakeholders?

As a community partner, the college is committed to having a library that is serving the needs of its students as well as the community at large. It's possible that a joint public and college library will result from this initial partnership and as the college grows, a more academic branch of the library can be established. Successful endeavors attract funders and community partners will leverage resources to continue promising projects that support local goals. After the project, the library will continue to use the new space, and perhaps federal work study, Title III funds once the college is independently accredited, and additional tribal funds can sustain the project post-award. Having the library strategic plan in place will help to answer some of the questions about sustainability.

How will the project lead to systemic change within your community?

By meeting the educational needs of a broader range of community members, the library will be seen as a unit supporting higher levels of educational attainment for tribal members. This will result in more college ready adults and improve the overall outlook for the community.

Systemic change when it comes to educational attainment will only occur when all members of the community at whatever their educational level are afforded opportunities to learn and grow in positive and supportive environments that are sensitive to personal and community realities. The Tribe has created its own state-of-the-art hospital, expanded economic enterprises to bring jobs to the community, and created its own College so that its people can obtain a higher education in their home community, and it has needed to make sacrifices to see these projects come to fruition. Unfortunately, the SCPL has not been nurtured in recent years, but the community is now ready to support its library and to see it grow and improve alongside its own new college.

What are your plans for sustaining any digitized collections, software, and supporting documentation, information systems, and other technology tools? Not applicable.

Two Year Schedule of Completion (Quarterly)

Activity	Sept- Nov 2020	Dec 2020- Feb 2021	March - May 2021	June- August 2021	Sept- Nov 2021	Dec 2021- Feb 2022	March- May 2022	June- August 2022
1. Purchase furnishings /technology.								
2. Move Library to college location.								
3. Form Library Advisory Committee								
4. Hire project staff.								
5.. Host Grand Opening event								
6. Provide professional development for library manager.								
7. Hold quarterly advisory committee meetings								
8. Host college workshops, library use workshops, computer, and financial literacy workshops, and other relevant trainings								
9. Complete strategic plan and submit to Tribal Council								