

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Cultural Preservation
Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant

ABSTRACT

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) National Library and Archives is the lead applicant of this grant. This Office seeks to better serve Creek Citizens by broadening their access to resources through increased public access and promoting lifelong learning through preservation and revitalization and educational programming.

The MCN National Library and Archives is utilized as a research library and is charged with protecting Muscogee Nation Historical documents, MCN history and anthropology books, Archaeological Journals and Surveys, and materials regarding MCN ancestral homelands. The MCN Cultural Preservation staff utilizes the MCN National Library and Archives resources to justify the National American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) claims and respond to the over 4,000 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requests received each year. The library is also used by scholars doing research for dissertations and MCN Citizens for general research and pleasure.

As a research library our materials currently are “non-circulating” however, the MCN National Library and Archives would like to allow MCN Citizens to check out books. The ability to be able to check out books would enhance services to MCN Citizens that the Library never has been able to offer. The MCN National Library and Archives is proud of its library collection, but desires MCN Citizens to be able to fully leverage the collection by allowing additional circulation opportunities. In opening the MCN National Library and Archives to the public, it will increase MCN Citizens education and awareness of the MCN written history. MCN’s written history is a subject that is not taught in schools and most MCN Citizens have no knowledge of. In order to accomplish opening the MCN National Library and Archives to the public, funding is needed to purchase additional books that are currently located in the Library.

The MCN National Library and Archives also offers traditional arts classes to twenty-five (25) MCN communities. The goal of this program is to encourage the development of new artisans and teachers to ensure the preservation of the unique Muscogee ways of stomp dance can making, basketry, pottery, moccasins, finger weaving, beadwork, traditional food making and more. In order to achieve this goal, MCN National Library and Archives would like to extend the classes for each project to three (3) to four (4) weeks. This would allow for participants to learn by repetition until MCN Citizens are able to perform the task on their own. To accomplish this goal additional funding is needed to provide for additional supplies and resources to pay our teachers.

This project will be a two (2) year project to allow for development of policies to allow the MCN National Library and Archives time to purchase additional books and provide for a check out policy for MCN Citizens to access the library. In addition, the timeframe will allow for traditional art classes to be offered to MCN Citizens for two (2) years to encourage the preservation of the Muscogee ways.

NARRATIVE

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) is the fourth largest federally recognized tribe with 86,654 Citizens across the United States and a jurisdictional area spanning eleven counties in northeastern Oklahoma. The MCN is one of the Five Civilized Tribes with historic ties to the southeastern United States and the tribal government capital is located in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

The MCN has a current population (citizenship) of 86,654 Citizens with 64,249 (74.14%) of those living in the state of Oklahoma¹.

The Muscogee (Creek) people descend from a remarkable culture that, before 1500 AD, spanned the entire region known today as the Southeastern United States. Early ancestors of the Muscogee constructed magnificent earthen pyramids along the rivers of this region as part of their elaborate ceremonial complexes. Later, Muscogee people built expansive towns within these same broad river valleys in the present states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. The Muscogee were not one tribe but a union of several. This union evolved into a confederacy that, in the Euro-American described “historic period,” was the most sophisticated political organization north of Mexico. Member tribes were called tribal towns. Within this political structure, each tribal town maintained political autonomy and distinct land holdings.

The confederacy was dynamic in its capacity to expand. New tribal towns were born of “Mother towns” as populations increased. The Mvskoke (Muscogee) Confederation was expanded by the addition of tribes conquered by towns of the Confederacy, and, in time, by the incorporation of tribes and fragments of other tribes devastated by the European imperial powers. Within this confederacy, the language and the culture of the founding tribal towns became dominant.

Throughout the period of contact with Europeans, most of the Muscogee population was concentrated into two geographical areas. The English called the Muscogee peoples occupying the towns on the Coosa and the Tallapoosa rivers, Upper Creeks, and those to the southeast, on the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, the Lower Creeks. The distinction was purely geographical. Due in parts to their proximity to the English, the Lower towns were substantially affected by intermarriage and its consequent impact on their political and social order. The Upper towns remained less affected by European influences and continued to maintain distinctly traditional political and social institutions.

In the early 19th century, the United States Indian Policy focused on the removal of the Muscogee and the other Southeastern tribes to areas beyond the Mississippi River. In the Removal Treaty of 1832, Muscogee leadership exchanged the last of the cherished Muscogee ancestral homelands for new lands in Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Many of the Lower Muscogee (Creek) had settled in the new homeland after the Treaty of Washington in 1827. But for the majority of Muscogee people the process of severing ties to a land they felt so much a part of proved impossible. The U.S. Army enforced the removal of more than 20,000 Muscogee (Creeks) to Indian Territory in 1836 and 37, which is detailed in history as the “Trail of Tears”.

¹ Data obtained from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizenship Office. <http://www.mcn-nsn.gov/services/citizenship/citizenship-facts-and-stats/>

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In Indian Territory, the Lower Muscogee tribal towns located their farms and plantations on the Arkansas and Verdigris rivers, while the Upper Muscogee re-established their ancient towns on the Canadian River and its northern branches. All the tribal towns continued to send representatives to a National Council which met near High Springs. The Muscogee Confederacy as a whole began to experience a new prosperity.

The American Civil War was disastrous for the Muscogee people. The first three battles of the war in Indian Territory occurred when Confederate forces attacked a large group of non-combatant Muscogee (Creeks) led by Opothle Yahola. The majority of the Muscogee people desired neutrality, which proved impossible as the Confederacy was caught up and embroiled in the conflict. Eventually Muscogee Citizens fought on both the Union and Confederate sides. The Reconstruction Treaty of 1866 officially ended the Civil War in Indian Territory and required the cession of 3.2 million acres - approximately half of the Muscogee land base.

In 1867, the Muscogee people adopted its first written constitution that provided for a Principal Chief and a Second Chief, a judicial branch and a bicameral legislature composed of a House of Kings and a House of Warriors. Tribal towns determined representation in both houses of this Legislative Assembly. This “constitutional” period lasted for the remainder of the 19th century. A new capital was established in 1867 on the Deep Fork of the Canadian at Okmulgee. In 1878 the Confederacy constructed a familiar native stone Council House which remains at the center of the modern city of Okmulgee.

In the late 1800s the Dawes Commission began negotiating with the Muscogee Nation for the allotment of the national domain. In 1898, the United States Congress passed the Curtis Act which abolished the National governments of the Five Civilized Tribes and the allotment of collectively-held tribal lands became inevitable. In 1890, the noted statesman Chitto Harjo helped lead organized opposition to the dissolution of Muscogee National government and allotment of collectively-held lands. In his efforts he epitomized the view of all Muscogee people that they possessed an inherent right to govern themselves. For individuals like Chitto Harjo it was unimaginable that the Nation could be dissolved by the action of a foreign government. This perception proved to be correct.

The end of the Muscogee Nation as envisioned by its architects within the United States Congress did not occur. In the early 20th century, the process of allotment of the national domain to individual Citizens was completed. However, the perceived dismantling of the Muscogee government was never fully executed. The Nation maintained a Principal Chief throughout this stormy period.

In 1971, the Muscogee people, for the first time since the partial dismantling of their tribal government, freely elected a Principal Chief without having to have Presidential approval. In the decade of the 1970s the leadership of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation drafted and adopted a new constitution, revitalized the National Council and began the challenging process of political sovereignty and economic development. In the 1980’s United States Supreme Court decisions affirmed the Nation’s sovereign rights to maintain a tribal court system and levy taxes. The

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federal courts have also consistently re-affirmed the Muscogee Nation's freedom from state jurisdiction.

The MCN maintains a sophisticated and complex tribal government initially formally organized under the MCN 1867 Constitution. In 1971, MCN reaffirmed the organizational structure during a constitutional convention so that the modern government includes three branches. Powers between the three branches government – Executive, Legislative, and Judicial remain distinct and separate.

The Executive Branch includes the Office of the Principal and Second Chief who prepare the annual budget request, administer appropriated funds, determine the organization structure of the executive branch and guide overall operations of the Nation. The Principal Chief reviews and approves every order, resolution, or legislative act approved by the Legislative Branch and appoints a 13-member Cabinet. The Cabinet is responsible management oversight of nine departments and several independent agencies. The Principal and Second Chief are elected by a majority of the votes cast by eligible voters and serve four years upon election. The current Principal Chief, James R. Floyd, and Second Chief, Louis H. Hicks, are serving in their first term and will remain in office until 2020.

The Legislative Branch consists of a single chamber comprised of sixteen elected tribal representatives from the eight MCN districts. Together, these officials make up the MCN National Council. The National Council reviews and approves every proposed order, resolution, and legislative bill. The National Council can legislate on a variety of matters that affect the public health and safety, education, and welfare of tribal Citizens, the Nation's relationship with other sovereigns, the Nation's fiscal decisions, and the MCN's real property. Each representative is elected by a vote of all the eligible voters of the Nation and serves a term of office for four years. The next election for National Council Representatives will take place in 2019 to serve a term from 2020-2024.

The Judicial Branch is divided into two branches including the MCN Supreme Court and District Court. The Supreme Court is composed of seven (7) members appointed by the Principal Chief and approved by the majority of National Council representatives. The MCN District Court has two judges and oversees cases related to violations of MCN's criminal, civil, and family code.

STATEMENT OF NEED

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) National Library and Archives is the lead applicant of this grant. This department has determined through community involvement and engagement that a need exists to better serve the tribal and non-Indian community by expanding access to resources through increased public access and promoting lifelong learning through preservation and revitalization and educational programming.

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The mission of the MCN Historic and Cultural Preservation Office is to ensure the protection and preservation of valued historic and cultural resources for future generations. The Historic Preservation Department serves as the contact for statutory and regulatory compliance consultation regarding Federal Historic and Cultural Preservation Laws. The design and operation of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Office is to conduct documentation and preservation projects necessary for sustaining an integrated culture. The Nation is committed to its historic duties, not just within the jurisdictional geopolitical boundaries in Oklahoma, but also within the Southeastern United States that comprise the traditional or aboriginal territory of the Mvskokvlke.

The MCN Library and Archives Program is a part of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Office and addresses the research and information needs of both citizens and non-citizens engaging in serious inquiry into Muscogee culture and history. The Library houses a collection of over 3,000 volumes of reference materials, an almost complete set of Bureau of American Ethnology reports and bulletins. 730 reels microfilmed records of MCN from 1828 to 1840, the Final Dawes Rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes, and the Grant Forman collection of Oklahoma Pioneer Histories. Also in a special collection are the private letters of Pleasant Porter, the MCN Principal Chief during the Allotment Act Era in the early 1900's. Due to the fragile condition, one of a kind, or limited availability of most works, all MCN National Library and Archives collections are non-circulating. The hours of operation of the library are Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the staff consists of one (1) librarian and one (1) archivist.

The MCN National Library and Archives does not offer public library services to MCN Citizens. Funding from this grant would allow for the library to develop a procedure to allow all MCN Citizens access to the library and to check out all books except those deemed as irreplaceable. MCN Citizens do not have access to historical books to broaden their knowledge of the Muscogee culture and history which inhibits the ability to promote lifelong learning and preservation of Muscogee history and culture.

The MCN National Library and Archives currently offers week long traditional arts classes to the twenty-five (25) MCN Charter Indian Communities. The classes promote preservation and revitalization of the Muscogee culture and history through educational programming to more than 40,000 MCN Citizens living within the MCN jurisdiction. Traditional arts include stomp dance can making, basketry, pottery, moccasins, finger weaving, beadwork, and traditional food making ensure the Muscogee ways never end. However, one (1) week sessions do not provide adequate opportunities for Citizens traditional arts skills after. Therefore, the MCN National Library and Archives intends to extend the classes from weekly to three (3) to four (4) weeks to allow for learning through repetition.

The MCN National Library and Archives is utilized as a research library and is charged with protecting MCN historical documents, MCN history and anthropology books, archaeological journals and surveys, and materials regarding MCN ancestral homelands. The Cultural Preservation staff utilizes the MCN National Library and Archives resources to justify

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the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) claims and respond to the over 4,000 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requests received each year. The Library is also used by scholars doing research for dissertations and MCN Citizens for general research and pleasure.

The MCN National Library and Archives is proud of its library collection, but desires MCN Citizens to be able to utilize the library and be proud of all it has to offer as well. In opening the MCN National Library and Archives to the public, it will increase MCN Citizens education and awareness of the MCN written history. MCN's written history is a subject that is not taught in schools and most MCN Citizens have no knowledge of. MCN Department of Education and Training also has a library for students, teachers and citizens to be able to check out books for educational purposes. The Department of Education and Training library is a separate entity in that it does not house any MCN cultural and historical books unlike the MCN National Library and Archives.

The preservation of the unique Muscogee ways of stomp dance can making, basketry, pottery, moccasins, finger weaving, beadwork, and traditional food making are ongoing activities that will continue to preserve and revitalize the MCN culture.

PROJECT DESIGN

The MCN National Library and Archives will successfully implement the project in three (3) phases: Phase I – Planning & Start-up, Phase II –Development and Implementation, and Phase III – Closeout.

The key activities include:

- Phase I: The Librarian will develop and obtain approval for a lending policy so MCN Citizens can begin to utilize the library and check out books. Librarian and artisan teachers will also develop an extended curriculum and schedule to offer three (3) to four (4) week traditional arts classes. Finally, the Librarian and Historic and Cultural Preservation Manager will contract teachers to instruct traditional arts classes.
- Phase II: Open the MCN National Library and Archives to all MCN Citizens, provide traditional arts classes to Citizens at twenty-five (25) MCN Community Centers, enact the Resource Mate software to track book check outs and returns, create and disseminate a survey for community input on the project, track funding, complete reporting, and work closely with the Planning and Grants Office to meet project goals.
- Phase III: Begin closeout and transition to service continuation. All final reports will be prepared and submitted within thirty (30) days.

Goal 1: Development and implement a library check out policy.

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Objectives:

- Develop and implement the library check out policy for MCN Citizens
- Implement the Resource Mate software to provide for tracking book borrowing
- Create a press release advertising the MCN National Library and Archives is open to MCN Citizens

Measurable Activities

- Approved library check out policy
- Number of MCN Citizens who utilized the library for check out of books
- Number of media outlets utilized to advertise the MCN National Library and Archives is open to MCN Citizens

Goal 2: Develop the extended curriculum and schedule for traditional arts classes to MCN Citizens located at the twenty-five (25) MCN Communities and recruit and contract seven (7) traditional art teachers.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement the extended traditional arts curriculum and schedule
- Create a press release outlining the schedule and classes offered at the MCN Community Centers
- Recruit seven (7) traditional art teachers
- Contract seven (7) traditional art teachers

Measurable Activities

- Approved extended traditional arts curriculum and schedule
- Outlets utilized to advertise the traditional cultural arts classes.
- Number of MCN Citizens participating in each class at each location
- Completed contracts

Goal 3: Develop a survey to engage community input on the traditional art classes and library services

Objectives:

- Develop a survey for community input on the traditional art classes and library services
- Disseminate the survey through social media, MCN website, newsletter, and newspaper for MCN Citizens to provide feedback on the project

Measurable Activities:

- Number of MCN Citizens responding to survey

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- Results from the survey

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The MCN National Library and Archives will create a press release for dissemination on the MCN website, social media pages, newsletter and newspaper informing all MCN Citizens of that the Library policies have changed to allow MCN Citizens to check out books. A press release will also be created for the traditional arts classes that will be offered at the twenty-five (25) MCN Community Centers. This will also be disseminated via the MCN website, social media pages, newsletters and newspaper. The MCN Public Relations Department is charged with all press releases and promotion of the Library and traditional arts classes. The Librarian is in charge of creation of the press release and the community outreach regarding the project.

The Librarian will also create a survey for MCN Citizens to provide feedback on the traditional arts classes and library check out services. The survey will document any improvements the community feels are necessary to ensure the project is successful.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the project is centered on MCN's continued commitment to increased public access and promoting lifelong learning through preservation and revitalization and educational programming of the MCN history and culture. This is a part of the mission of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Department's mission to conduct preservation projects necessary for sustaining an integrated culture. In addition, the MCN National Library and Archives librarian has a strong commitment to maintain cultural and historical materials for future generations. MCN National Library and Archives will also continue to maintain the curriculum set in place beyond the projects conclusion and has broad support from the MCN and community for maintaining the traditional arts classes and library after grant's conclusion.

The traditional arts classes are designed to provide horizontal knowledge sharing activities. This will create and expand the ability of MCN Citizens to engage others in preserving and revitalizing the MCN culture and history by passing along the traditional arts skills learned to future generations.

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DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to federally funded digital products (e.g., 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. 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

All applications must include a Digital Product Form.



Please check here if you have reviewed Parts I, II, III, and IV below and you have determined that your proposal does NOT involve the creation of digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, assets, software, or datasets). You must still submit this Digital Product Form with your proposal even if you check this box, because this Digital Product Form is a Required Document.

If you ARE creating digital products, 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 the format(s) 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. How will you 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?