

### Project Justification

The UKB Department of Education will mainly focus on Goal 3, Objective 3.1 and 3.2 for our proposed project. By supporting collections care and management and promoting access to our library and its research and study spaces we will be fulfilling the need for such a space within our tribe and for the community at large. Today, there is no place that a Keetoowah citizen can go to learn about their heritage, language, and culture. Moreover, there is no place for members of the community to come and learn about the Keetoowah. This lack of access is extremely detrimental to our tribal members because each generation is losing aspects of the culture, language, and traditions of the Keetoowah people that they may only learn about in books as our elders are passing on. The UKB Education has identified that we can help this glaring problem by transforming our seldom-used and dated library into a multi-use, Native-centric, library research space.

As it stands right now, our library has many books that can be found at the local library and our citizens are not utilizing the space. The UKB Education Department wants our library to be completely stocked with books both written by and about Native Americans, making it more akin to a special collection of Native resources, both print and digital. The UKB is 14,000 members strong and the majority of the tribe lives within our nine tribal districts in northeast Oklahoma. Over half the tribal members live below the poverty line and do not have internet access at home, making the need for updated technology in our library all the more pressing.

The target group for our project is members of the tribe, from youth to the elderly, and members of the community. For the previous six months we have polled everyone that has come through our doors and asked them what they would like to see from the library in the next two years. We heard from a total of 311 individuals with the themes of “Native books,” “language

materials,” “Native movies and tv,” “technology,” and “study/meeting space” overwhelmingly requested. We then sorted our findings by age group and identified what each group most wanted from our library. It is our goal to provide an entire section of Native Children’s, YA books, and language materials for our youngest clients as well as invest in age-appropriate technology for them. We will provide a plethora of Native literature, language materials, and Native movies and television to our adult patrons while also focusing on technology to help our elders navigate a world that can be increasingly frustrating for the technology challenged. We also want to provide exceptional new technology and study space to our high school and college-aged members. Out of the 311 surveyed, fifty were children or young adults, two hundred were adults or elders, and sixty-one were classified as high school/college aged.

We hypothesize that the ultimate beneficiaries of this project will be similar to that of our target group. It is our goal to see eight hundred people, tribal citizens and community members of all ages, come through our doors in the first year of the project’s completion.

#### Project Work Plan

We have been proactive in our future plans by already stripping the library of any non-Native books and adding them to our monthly free book-drive that is advertised and open to everyone in the community. Next, we would like to purchase approximately 40,000 dollars’ worth of new books, magazines, movies, and digital materials to re-stock the library with resources written and made by and about Natives. We will also put in all new shelving for the materials. Next, we will replace all the computers and printers in our technology center. We would also like to add a smart board to the room so that we may offer remote classes in the near future. Finally, we will outfit that room with study tables, chairs, desks, etc. for the ultimate research and study space.

We do not foresee any risks in completing this project as the plan will be carried out and managed by Dr. Leslie Hannah, Education Director, and Jacqueline Watson-Baker, Education Generalist. We believe the project will be completed within one year with each Education Department personnel dedicating approximately one day of each work week to this project. This project shall be completed for 80,000 dollars and no further resources should be necessary. Every tribal member and the larger community will be informed of our general findings and lessons learned through a story in the Keetoowah Newspaper both digital and in print. We will also be providing the newspaper with quarterly updates on the project.

#### Project Results

The project's intended results are twofold: first, we want our library to be of value and use to our tribe and the community. Second, we want to increase awareness and traffic both of and in the library and study space. We want our building to come alive and for Keetoowahs to know that they can come to the Education Department to learn about who they are and to feel safe and represented. Because of this project, the target groups will become more knowledgeable in Native history, culture, and language. All target groups should also become much more comfortable with technology and its ease of access at our library. It is our hope that this project will help spark language classes, book clubs, etc. – all of which we have the space to host – and will help us see truly tangible results. Beyond the year mark, we will work to maintain all new equipment, technology, books, and furniture so that everything is available for years and years to come for our citizens.

Schedule of Completion

**September 1, 2022:** Begin Project

**September 1 – January 1, 2023:** Acquire all new library shelving and re-arrange library

**September 1 – January 1, 2023:** Acquire, catalog, and shelve books, magazines, movies, and other resources.

**January 1 – April 1:** Outfit the Community Technology Center with computer tables, office chairs, study chairs with desks, and a research table and chairs.

**April 1 – August 31:** Outfit the Community Technology Center with computers, the latest software programs, printers and a Smart Board.

**August 31, 2023:** Project Concludes