

## **Students Taking Center Stage: Developing a Student-centered Outreach Model for Academic Archives**

### ***Introduction***

Towson University, in collaboration with Central Michigan University and Georgia State University, seeks a two-year Forum project grant totaling \$150,000 from the IMLS National Leadership Grants for Libraries program to bring together students, faculty, and practitioners at a series of virtual forums to discuss student-centered outreach programming in academic archives. These forums will inform a data-driven, cost-effective, and generalizable student-centered outreach model for academic archives that will be disseminated to librarians, archivists, educators, and undergraduate and graduate students across the country. Our project builds on existing research conducted at Towson University<sup>1</sup> and aligns with NLG-L goal 5, objective 5.1 by inviting students, practitioners, faculty, and allied professionals to work collaboratively and share decision-making to gather perspectives on and suggestions for student-centered outreach.

### ***Project Justification***

Outreach related to archives—“activities and programs that promote use of archives, archival resources, and archival collections” (*Dictionary of Archives Terminology*)<sup>2</sup>—has been a topic of discussion in the professional literature for over four decades. A \*CENSUS II<sup>3</sup> reports that external outreach is a primary job duty for 17% of those working in archives (Figure 97). Academic archivists and librarians dedicate significant time, energy, and resources to outreach programming with the goal of encouraging students to visit, donate to, and make use of campus archives. Yet, the literature consistently shows that student awareness of archives is low,<sup>4</sup> which means that students are highly unlikely to engage with archives as researchers or donors.

Addressing this lack of student engagement with academic archives is now more important than ever. As archivist Laura Millar asserts in *Matter of Facts* (2019): “We need to encourage evidence literacy, especially in the born-digital generation, who will be the decision makers of the future.”<sup>5</sup> Archives are a prime avenue to engage college and university students in developing primary source (or evidence) literacy.

Effective and meaningful student outreach is not simply a matter of “if you build it, they will come.” Traditional forms of outreach such as exhibits, class visits, and lecture series too often position students as passive recipients of information rather than collaborators and agents. These efforts, which are the norm for archival outreach, miss a key component that this proposal’s project team believes to be crucial in making outreach successful: cultivating a sense of belonging for students within their college and university archives by centering their needs in outreach efforts.

Reaching out to students must include building genuine connections between them and their academic archives. The National Council for Social Studies has provided guidelines for those in history and civics education that puts a primary emphasis on making content “meaningful.”<sup>6</sup> The guidelines add that curricular programs should “relate to the age, maturity, and concerns of students” and “should help students connect [the] content to their lives.” In other words, students should see themselves in content, just as they should see their stories represented in the archives, and feel a sense of belonging through learning, whether that learning takes place in a classroom or reading room. Students are important agents and collaborators in accessing, preserving, and contributing to history, and their intellectual and material contributions to the archives have inherent and enduring value. Successful outreach that empowers students to engage with, and find a sense of belonging in, their academic archives is the first step in creating lifelong archives users who are well-versed in primary source literacy.

Aligning with Objective 5.1 to develop a replicable model that can be used to maximize the use of archives by formalizing workflow processes and protocols, and establishing guidelines and standards, this project intends to dig into what efforts, programs, and techniques are most effective to help students develop a sense of belonging in the archives. Additionally, the goal to develop a student-centered outreach model for academic archives will align with Objective 1.1 by developing a replicable model to

support primary source and archival literacy, and Objective 2.1 to create a replicable model that engages diverse populations in an effort to increase equity and access to information.

The target group for this proposal includes the 40 individuals—20 university students and 20 faculty and professional practitioners—who will participate in forum discussions to develop a generalizable model for successful student-centered outreach in academic archives. A secondary target group includes the academic archives professionals who can implement the resulting model at their institutions. Based on the A\*CENSUS numbers<sup>7</sup>, there could be upwards of 4,000 academic archivists for whom the model would be applicable (38% of the 5,699 N for A\*CENSUS II is 2,165 and a generous response rate for the survey would be 50% of all of those who are archivists in the United States).

Beneficiaries of the project include academic archives and library staff who see increased and more meaningful engagement with students as a result of implementing an effective student-centered outreach model. Undergraduate and graduate students who engage with archives as a result of student-centered outreach initiatives will have the opportunity to develop lifelong primary source literacy skills and self-confidence as archives users. Finally, as students develop a sense of belonging within their academic archives, they will be more likely to become users of other archives (government, religious, private, corporate) in the future, thereby benefiting archives beyond higher education institutions. Most importantly, students of all backgrounds will have more opportunities to see themselves in university history, preserve their own stories, and contribute to institutional memory as active stakeholders.

Though there are many types of archives, A\*CENSUS II<sup>8</sup> notes the plurality of U.S. archivists (38%) work at academic archives. Low levels of student awareness and engagement are a challenge faced by a significant portion of the field. Because of the fact that college and university students are at a point in their studies in which they develop critical thinking skills through more intense research, and they are in need of high-quality research resources to do so, academic archives are a prime entry point for students to familiarize themselves with the essential evidence of our societies and our cultures.

There is currently no generalizable model for student-centered outreach in the archives profession. Some archivists have implemented outreach programs<sup>9</sup> that engage students as active participants; however, these programming examples are case studies that reflect the experiences of single institutions, not replicable models. Furthermore, the A\*CENSUS II Administrators Survey<sup>10</sup> reports that outreach is the second least likely part of an archives budget to increase (Fig. 13), with many other aspects of archives work taking financial precedence over making meaningful connections with students and researchers. Considering that most administrators reported to A\*CENSUS II that staffing in their archives is insufficient (Fig. 29), it is not likely the archives will be in a position to hire archivists with a special focus on implementing customized outreach programs that emphasize students.

In such an environment, there is clearly a place for an effective, practical, and generalizable model of student-centered outreach programming that recognizes students' needs and perspectives. Such a model will increase awareness, engagement, and a sense of belonging in the archives among student populations of diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and varied educational goals.

### ***Project Work Plan***

Our project aims to develop a best-practice model for student-centered outreach in academic archives. To achieve this goal, we propose a series of forums bringing together students, practitioners, and other stakeholders to discuss major themes of outreach, awareness, and engagement and make suggestions for improving existing outreach programming. Our primary research question is: How do college and university students want to be centered in academic archives' outreach efforts? The perspectives of target group(s) have been incorporated into the Work Plan based on initial data collected between 2020-2022 at Towson University, where two of the Co-PIs, Ashley Todd-Diaz and Peyton Cleary, surveyed undergraduate and graduate students about their perceptions of archives and their likelihood of engaging with the archives as researchers or donors. Student responses helped inform the design of this project, such as highlighting a need to facilitate dialogue between students and archival professionals and encourage mutual understanding.

Our research will improve current practice by bridging the gap between academic archivists, who seek to collect and preserve institutional memory, and students, whose experiences make up an integral part of that institutional memory. As long as students remain unaware of what archives are and demonstrate low levels of engagement as researchers or donors, academic archivists cannot effectively fulfill their role as stewards of institutional memory, and the student experience will not be appropriately documented. The model for student-centered outreach resulting from this research will be a direct reflection of student *and* archivist perceptions and suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of outreach efforts and building lasting relationships between students and the archives.

## PROJECT TEAM

“Students Taking Center Stage: Developing a Student-centered Outreach Model for Academic Archives” will be enacted by a **four-person project team** possessing nearly 40 years of archival experience:

- Dr. Ashley Todd-Diaz (PI), Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections and University Archives at Towson University
- Peyton Cleary (Co-PI), MLIS student at Simmons University and Towson University alumnus
- Brittany Newberry (Co-PI), Archivist and Curator for Special Collections and Archives at Georgia State University
- Bryan Whittleage (Co-PI), Public Services Librarian and Archivist at the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University.

The project team will also benefit from the expertise of a **six-person advisory board**:

- Gabe Fanning, First-year undergraduate at the University of Michigan
- Michelle Viard, Third-year undergraduate at Georgia State University
- Jasmine Malone, Second-year MLIS student at University of Hawaii
- Tiffany Atwater Lee, Head of Research Services, Archives Research Center at Atlanta University Center Robert Woodruff Library
- Jay-Marie Bravent, Graduate Outreach & Teaching Archivist, Special Collections Research Center at University of Kentucky Libraries, and former chair of SAA’s Reference, Access, and Outreach section
- Carlos A. O. Pavão, Associate Professor, Georgia State University School of Public Health

With the exception of funds allocated for expenses incurred by the project team such as travel to conferences, the majority of funds will be channeled to advisory board members, student forum participants, and professional forum participants in the form of stipends. Advisory board members will receive \$1,000 each over the course of the project and forum participants (both students and professionals) will receive \$300 each over the course of the project. Other paid contributors to this project include a graduate assistant and five Inclusion Advocates (IAs).

## STAGE 1: August 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024 (Year 1)

- **Project Website Creation:** Using web tools available through Towson University, the project team will establish a website in August 2024 that will share details and deliverables from the project. This website will be updated on a regular basis throughout the project to promote transparency and communication.
- **Secure IRB Approval:** The project team will submit an IRB Application for a Human Subjects Research Project through Towson University in August 2024. Each team member has completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) human subjects research investigator training program.
- **Inclusion Advocates Recruitment:** The project will also benefit from the presence of Inclusion Advocates (IAs) during the forums. Modeled after Towson University’s successful Inclusion Advocates Program that has enhanced equity, validity, diversity and representation in faculty hiring since 2021,<sup>12</sup> the project team will recruit five IAs in August-September 2024 drawing on the resources and connections of both Towson’s Office of Inclusion and Institutional Equity and professional organizations in the library and archival fields. IAs will ensure that all participants,

especially students, feel safe, comfortable, and respected during forum discussions and will serve as advocates and resources for participants. IAs will receive \$2,500 each over the course of the project.

- **Facilitation Training:** Working with the Inclusive Excellence Education and Support team at Towson University,<sup>11</sup> the project team will engage in training in August 2024 that will prepare them for effectively facilitating forum discussions. The project team will be trained to facilitate productive conversations that are grounded in respect and inclusion. This will include leading with curiosity, deep listening, suspending judgment, using open questions, and learning more about each others' identities, experiences, and views.
- **Forum Planning:** The project team will develop agendas and activities for the three scaffolded forums beginning in August 2024. The project team will meet bi-weekly and work asynchronously in between meetings to develop a run of show document for each forum, including writing discussion prompts, assigning discussion facilitators and inclusion advocates, planning breakout sessions, drafting agendas to share with participants, and developing evaluation instruments. Acknowledging that the audience for each forum will be different and will benefit from different types of engagement and support, the project team will be intentional about how they craft questions, introduce topics, and leave space for engagement, as well as who they welcome as facilitators and inclusion advocates. Input, validation, and consensus on the run of show documents and forum agenda items and activities will be provided by Advisory Board members. The design of the forums is iterative, with each forum following the same structure and discussion topics informed by preceding sessions, but facilitation will be designed with each audience in mind.
- **Convene Advisory Board:** The project team will convene the advisory board for quarterly meetings starting in September 2024, with meeting agendas set by the project team. Each two-hour meeting will be conducted virtually using Zoom and recorded with the consent of participants. The schedule of meetings and major topic(s) to be discussed in **Year 1** is as follows:
  - September 2024 (Review *Student Forum* agenda; Invite participants for *Faculty & Professionals Forum*)
  - December 2024 (Finalize *Student Forum* participants and Inclusion Advocates; Finalize *Faculty & Professionals Forum* participants; Review *Faculty & Professionals Forum* agenda)
  - March 2025 (Discuss preceding forums; Review *All Participants Forum* agenda)
  - June 2025 (Preliminary discussions of data).
- **Participant Recruitment and Selection:** The project team's goal is to recruit a diverse group of participants to engage in the three forums. The project team defines diversity as the range of differences across human beings, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, religion, and academic major. Student forum participants will be recruited in September-October 2024 via Handshake, job boards, campus email, college councils, ambassador programs, and university communications departments across all partner institutions. Interested students will provide demographic data, identity profiles, and their current awareness of archives via a brief Google Form. Upon reviewing the responses, the project team and Advisory Board will invite 20 students representing diverse identities, backgrounds, disciplines, academic years, and experiences with archives to participate. Student participants will be notified in December 2024. Faculty & Professionals Forum participants will be personally invited by the project team and Advisory Board in October-November 2024 with the goal of bringing together voices representing a wide range of research areas, disciplines, and roles within the field. The primary type(s) of professionals we hope to involve in the forum are: academic archivists, specifically those involved with outreach and instruction, and faculty members, both those who have taken classes to the archives before and those who have not facilitated student engagement with the archives. Faculty and professional participants will be finalized in December 2024.

## STAGE 2: January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025 (Year 1)

- **Student Forum (February 2025):** A half-day virtual forum using video conferencing software will gather perspectives from 20 students on libraries and archives, outreach initiatives, interest in collective memory, and preferred methods of engagement. The forum will be recorded with the consent of participants. The forum will include whole-group discussion and three thematic breakout sessions: **awareness of archives, outreach preferences, and belonging in the archives.** Sample discussion questions include: Have you ever engaged with an archive? If so, how? (awareness of archives); What kinds of initiatives or marketing strategies do you find yourself most responsive too? (outreach preferences); How do you feel about the inclusion of student history in the archives? (belonging in the archives). Open-ended questions such as these are designed to encourage a broad range of responses and encapsulate diverse student experiences. *To view an example presentation slide from each forum, please see the Supporting Document “Sample Forum Materials.”* Breakout sessions will consist of five students, one Inclusion Advocate, and one project team member. Project team members will provide discussion prompts, answer questions, and engage in creative facilitation strategies like visually recording discussion output using Zoom’s Whiteboard feature. While project members will provide guidance during discussions if needed, the objective of both the whole-group discussions and breakout sessions is to hear from the students. A graduate assistant will take notes during the whole-group sessions. After the forum, participants will be asked to complete a brief, anonymous feedback form.
- **Faculty & Professionals Forum (April 2025):** A half-day virtual forum using video conferencing software consisting of 20 faculty and professionals that will follow a similar structure as the student forum. The forum will be recorded with the consent of participants. The forum will include whole-group discussion and three thematic breakout sessions: **perspectives on student engagement and awareness, existing outreach efforts, and imagining student-centered outreach.** Sample discussion questions include: How would you describe the current relationship between students and archivists at your institution? (perspectives on student engagement and awareness); How do you currently engage students with the archives? What approaches do you think students have been most receptive to? Why? (existing outreach efforts); How do you strive to meet the needs of students in your archive or at your institution more broadly? (student-centered outreach). *To view an example presentation slide from each forum, please see the Supporting Document “Sample Forum Materials.”* Breakout sessions will consist of five professionals and one project team member to facilitate discussion and record output. Although discussion prompts and breakout topics will be decided at the December 2024 Advisory Board meeting, the project team will pay special attention to instances where student perspectives from the Student Forum can be integrated into discussion, especially in the sessions focused on student-centered outreach. A graduate assistant will take notes during the whole-group sessions. After the forum, participants will be asked to complete a brief, anonymous feedback form.
- **Preparation for All Participants Forum (May 2025):** In preparation for this final forum, the project team will collaborate to review the qualitative data and feedback collected during and after the first two forums. This initial round of coding will identify where the two groups’ perspectives align and diverge, what opportunities for further exploration have emerged, and what questions were posed. The resulting themes and questions will act as the basis of discussion points for the final forum.
- **All Participants Forum (June 2025):** The final, full-day virtual forum will convene *all* project participants to discuss student-centered outreach. The forum will be recorded with the consent of participants. It will follow a similar structure as the preceding forums but careful thought will be applied to ensure that this combined audience will feel safe and comfortable participating. The project team will offer a brief overview of the preceding forums, moderate whole-group discussion, and oversee four breakout sessions of five students and five professionals. The goal of

this forum is facilitating dialogue and collaboration between students and professionals regarding how to foster positive student engagement with the archives through student-centered outreach. After the forum, participants will be asked to complete a brief, anonymous feedback form.

### STAGE 3: July 1, 2025 – July 31, 2026 (Year 2)

- **Reconvene Advisory Board:** The advisory board will reconvene for Year 2 in September 2025. The schedule of meetings and major topic(s) to be discussed in **Year 2** is as follows:
  - September 2025 (Model development)
  - December 2025 (Model development)
  - March 2026 (Discuss feedback following model dissemination)
  - June 2026 (Scaling, implementation, and model testing)
- **Data Analysis:** Data collected during the forums and feedback collected following the forums will be primarily qualitative with some quantitative data and demographic details that will help stratify the results. Data will be organized by forum and by discussion question and/or topic as appropriate. Using NVIVO software, the project team, with the assistance of the graduate assistant, will analyze the data for patterns such as how students generally perceive archives, how academic archivists generally perceive their existing relationship with students, how students envision themselves engaging with the archives, what outreach methods are commonly employed by archivists, and what kinds of outreach initiatives students generally prefer. To strengthen intercoder reliability, the project team will establish a codebook and will check in regularly during the data analysis process. The data will be used to develop a best-practice model for student-centered outreach directly informed by forum proceedings.
- **Model Development:** In consultation with the advisory board, the project team will develop a best-practice model for student-centered outreach at academic archives directly informed by the forum discussions. The model will include data-driven and cost-effective guidelines for academic archivists and librarians interested in implementing student-centered outreach, recommendations for measuring and increasing student awareness, and resources for students to guide their engagement with the archives, enhance their information and primary source literacy skills, and cultivate their sense of belonging in the archives. Examples of possible content include:
  - Student-centered outreach programming suggestions
  - Specific program materials, implementation instructions, and related budgets
  - Measurement tools for gauging success of existing or new programs
  - Resources for students (i.e. An introduction to archives, a guide to archival research, how to identify possible donations, why student donors matter, etc.)
  - Sample survey materials for student-awareness studies
- **Dissemination:** The project team will author a foundational report to brief readers on the issues of student awareness, engagement, and sense of belonging and explain the student-centered outreach model and its benefits to stakeholders. The foundation report, model, and data will be made publicly available and widely accessible to all stakeholders via a project website, the SAA Dataverse,<sup>13</sup> professional publications such as *American Archivist*<sup>14</sup> and *College & Research Libraries*,<sup>15</sup> and national and regional archives and library conferences, including those of the Society of American Archivists, Rare Book and Manuscript Section, Midwest Archives Conference, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, and Maryland Library Association, Society of Georgia Archivists.
- **Assessment:** Assessment will be an important aspect of determining the success of our project. We will define success based on metrics such as the number of people who interact with the model (e.g., download it, provide feedback, pilot it, etc.), the number of workshops with other institutions who are interested to learn more about the model, the quantitative and qualitative feedback of people who review or implement the model in their archives, and pre- and post-survey data gauging how student awareness of and appreciation for archives has changed (e.g., when was the last time you visited an archives?, do you feel comfortable visiting an archives?,

have you recommended archives to anyone?) following an outreach experience implemented via the new model. Additionally, we recognize there is opportunity for longitudinal assessment following the term of this project to explore the observed impact of changes to student engagement as future generations of students experience the model.

### ***Diversity Plan***

Our project will engage a wide array of student voices representing different races, ethnicities, academic backgrounds, and extracurricular engagement, which will enrich the resulting model and ensure its replicability. By involving students as forum participants as well as in advisory capacities, their diverse perspectives will be centered in every phase of the project, including in the model that is ultimately produced. For our faculty and practitioners forum, we will invite participants from a variety of backgrounds and institutions in order to have diverse representation. Furthermore, because our institutions have highly diverse student bodies<sup>16</sup> and represent varied geographic areas and enrollment size, we are confident that the project and its deliverables will represent diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

We plan to not only recruit forum participants in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive manner, but also ensure that the virtual space in which the forums take place aligns with these values as well. To ensure a safe and productive environment, the project team will create guiding principles and a code of conduct to be used across all forums. Using these documents, we hope to minimize the likelihood of problems occurring and outline strategies to address any issues that arise. The code of conduct will be modeled off of other institutions and organizations who have held forums or large gatherings, such as ArchivesSpace<sup>17</sup> and the Society of American Archivists.<sup>18</sup> The guiding principles will address why and how we are conducting these forums and will ensure that all work done by the project team, advisory board, and forum participants is as open and transparent as possible. For the student forum, to make sure that participants from traditionally underrepresented demographics feel empowered to share freely, Inclusion Advocates (IAs) will be present and students will have the option to join breakout rooms based on identity facets. All participants will be encouraged to reach out to the project team or IAs if they have any concerns during the forums. Additionally, any recordings made during the forums will not be made public and will only be used by the project team and advisory board. Participants will have the option to participate anonymously and/or off camera during the forums. We will provide multiple avenues for participation during the forums, such as Padlet, Google Docs, and other applications.

Moreover, the project's budget demonstrates our commitment to diversity and inclusion. If we do not compensate the work of the advisory board and forum participants, especially those representing marginalized groups, we would undermine the work of the project. Uncompensated labor would not benefit the goals of the project. As outlined in our project work plan and budget, a large portion of our funds will be used to compensate project team, advisory board members, forum participants, and IAs with stipends for their time and expertise.

A focus of this project is to increase a sense of student belonging within academic archives. Embracing the goals of diversifying collections and creating an inclusive space for all voices within archives, this initiative aims to develop a space where students not only feel like they belong, but also feel that their intellectual or material contributions have value and where they are viewed as important agents and collaborators in accessing, preserving, and contributing to university history.

### ***Project Results***

This project is the first step in a larger initiative to think more intentionally and critically about how archives can expand their approach to outreach in order to build stronger relationships with key stakeholders: undergraduate and graduate students. The intended results are sevenfold: 1. Initiating a rich discussion between a diverse array of voices regarding new forms of outreach that move away from the comfort of traditional approaches to center students and their interests. 2. An increased sense of student awareness of and belonging in academic archives by actively inviting students to the table as partners. 3. A generalizable model of student-centered outreach that is directly informed by the input of students,

faculty, and practitioners and can be adapted to different types of archival organizations and users. 4. Reusable content for future workshops or forums to continue discussing and refining the topic of student-centered outreach in archives. 5. Qualitative and quantitative data that can be used to advocate for dedicating resources and team members to outreach in archives. 6. A foundational report to share the project's findings, practical implications, and pathways for future research. 7. A project website providing regular updates throughout the project, information about the key deliverables, and contact information for learning more and furthering the conversation regarding student-centered outreach.

Several of these results will advance the knowledge and understanding surrounding a new approach to archival outreach. A primary result and deliverable of this project will be the development of the model discussed above. This model will be primarily directed at academic archives with the goal of increasing intentional and meaningful engagement with students through outreach activities. Acknowledging there are many forms outreach can take, this model will be scoped to focus on the forms of outreach that emerge most prominently from the forum discussions. This model will address the challenge of increasing students' sense of belonging in archives by intentionally centering outreach on students and thoughtfully incorporating how they want to engage with archives to increase their agency and engagement. This model will move past traditional, passive forms of outreach and instead view students as active partners of archivists and librarians. Drawing on principles of Universal Design for Learning, the model will blend text and visual components to help guide readers through considering stakeholders, partners, timeline, goals, potential barriers, and assessment plans. Through using this model, archivists and librarians will have the opportunity to reflect on their current outreach practices and be inspired to pursue student-centered approaches. Additionally, students using this model will have an increased awareness of archives, how this resource relates to them, and how they can engage with archives.

Though the initial model will chiefly address the needs of undergraduate and graduate students and academic librarians and archivists to provide a manageable focus for the project, we plan to expand the scope of the project over time to benefit other types of cultural heritage institutions, such as government and community archives that also seek to strengthen their relationship with young adults. Considering the broad mission of archives and cultural heritage institutions to document and provide access to collective memory and culture, this project benefits society by supporting these institutions to build meaningful connections with students and young adults, increase the authenticity and representativeness of this memory, and enhance the active engagement of students with these institutions. By intentionally listening to a wide variety of voices and incorporating more viewpoints into outreach planning, we aim to greatly increase students' sense of belonging and agency with respect to archives of varying kinds.

Following the conclusion of the funded period and the publication of the model in Spring 2026, the project team will continue to solicit feedback, test, and refine the model. Understanding that even among academic archives there is considerable variation in size and resources earmarked for outreach, a primary focus of the model will be adaptability across institutions. To this end, the project team will identify partner academic archives across the U.S. interested in piloting the model to determine which elements are most easily adaptable, where implementation challenges or questions arise, and where there are opportunities to make the model more streamlined and generalizable. These efforts will include using broad terms and definitions rather than context-specific jargon and centering core archival values<sup>19</sup> so the model resonates across sectors. Additionally, future research that focuses solely on the experiences of students with specific identities, such as BIPOC or genderqueer students, or addresses outreach to student organizations may be warranted. The project team believes that the model has the potential for national impact beyond academic archives, given that academic archives are not the only type of archive or cultural heritage institution that struggle to increase awareness and engagement through public outreach. After testing within academic institutions, the project team will identify partner archives in other sectors (e.g., government, non-profit) to test the model and determine the generalizability beyond the academy.

The sustainability of this project is particularly important to the project team because we view this as the first step in a larger initiative. To this end, intentional actions will be taken throughout the



course of the project to lay a foundation for future work in this area. During phase one, the IRB application and participant consent form will be written to allow for the anonymized data and model to be shared in SAA's Dataverse repository<sup>20</sup> to ensure broad availability of results following the project. The relationship and trust building that occurs in phase two will be critical for establishing the foundation for long-term connections with forum participants that will carry past the end of this project. In phase three, prior to depositing the data in the Dataverse, the project team will ensure any personally identifying information is removed, that file formats are stable and nonproprietary, and that there are accompanying read me files and codebook or data dictionary files to aid with reuse of the data. By partnering with SAA to disseminate the data and model via a reliable data repository, we can better ensure the long-term accessibility of these files. Additionally, the Dataverse platform will provide a passive element of assessment by tracking metrics such as how many times the files have been downloaded.

Following the period of performance, our focus will include maintaining connections with the practitioners and students across the country who contributed to developing the model, the practitioners who piloted the model, and the students who are engaging with us at our institutions, as well as building new connections with additional groups of practitioners and students through future forums. To continue the momentum of this project and further embrace the potential of student-centered archival outreach, we plan to pursue a Laura Bush 21st Century implementation grant to extend the reach of the model, gather more feedback regarding student-centered outreach, and allow for a longitudinal study of impact, generalizability, and effectiveness. We see the evolving prominence of primary source literacy as a critical topic in the field, but also acknowledge the need to meet students where they are. This is still an area where our field can benefit from additional examination and partnership and we see this project as an important step towards this goal.

## Schedule of Completion

Stage 1: August - December 2024					
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Project website will be created with regular updates.					
Secure IRB approval.					
Project team will engage in training for inclusive facilitation.					
Inclusion Advocate recruitment.					
Convene Advisory Board and meet quarterly thereafter.					
Project team will develop a run of show for each forum, including discussion questions, breakout rooms, and evaluation					
Student participant recruitment will occur Sept to Nov. Participants will be notified in Dec.					
Faculty and professional participant recruitment will occur Oct to Nov. Participants will be notified in Dec.					
The final run of show documents will be shared with the advisory board for feedback.					

Stage 2: January - June 2025						
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Run of show documents will be finalized.						
Student forum via Zoom (Feb).						
Project team will meet with advisory board to debrief from student forum and discuss initial feedback.						
Faculty and professionals forum via Zoom (Apr).						
Project team will review data and feedback from the first two forums to prepare for the all participant forum.						
All participants forum via Zoom (Jun).						
Meet with advisory board to discuss the forums and layout plans for data analysis and model development.						



## **Digital Products Plan**

**Applicant Name: Towson University**

**Project Title:** Students Taking Center Stage: Developing a Student-centered Outreach Model for Academic Archives

### **Type of Digital Products Created as Part of this Project**

As part of this grant, we will create 1. forum data on students and professionals perceptions of archives and archival outreach, 2. a best-practice model for student-centered outreach at academic archives directly informed by the forum discussions, 3. Reusable content for future workshops or forums to continue discussing and refining the topic of student-centered outreach in archives, 4. a foundational report to share the project's findings, practical implications, and pathways for future research, and 5. a project website providing regular updates throughout the project, information about the key deliverables, and contact information for learning more and furthering the conversation regarding student-centered outreach.

The data, model, forum content, and foundational report will be in document format, except for graphics, logos, and videos, which will be produced in JPG, TIFF, and MPEG4 formats, depending on the media selected. For the project website, we will seek either an open-source option or a site that is already supported by one of the project team's institutions. Possible sites include Drupal, WordPress, and LibGuides. The project site will include formats like the other digital products. It will additionally include links to other sites and resources.

### **Availability**

The project website will be made widely available via the chosen site application. The anonymized data, forum content, the foundation report and model will be made publicly available and widely accessible to all stakeholders via the project website and Society of American Archivist Dataverse. Additionally, the foundational report will be shared in our institutional repositories.

We will publicize the release of the data and model via social media campaigns, in media outlets, at professional publications, and regional and national conferences. and symposia, and for peer reviewed articles and book chapters. When anything is published in a journal or book chapter, we will first prioritize those in gold open access platforms where free access is guaranteed. If this is not possible, i.e. most likely in the case of book chapters, we will guarantee that green open access, or self-archiving is still possible with publication.

### **Access**

All materials will be produced and labeled with a CC-BY-NC-SA license, meaning that the work may be adapted with proper attribution to TU, CMU, and GSU as long as it is for non-commercial uses and that adaptations are shared under the same terms.

### **Sustainability**

The sustainability of this project is particularly important to the project team because we view this as the first step in a larger initiative. Prior to depositing the anonymized data in the SAA Dataverse, the project team will ensure any personally identifying information is removed, that file formats are stable and nonproprietary, and that there are accompanying read me files and codebook or data dictionary files to aid

with reuse of the data. By partnering with SAA to disseminate the data and model via a reliable data repository, we can better ensure the long-term accessibility of these files.

For any drafts of materials, we will maintain these in shared Google Drive and/or Microsoft OneDrive project folders for three years after the project concludes. This includes drafts of papers, forum content, best practice document drafts, drafts of our foundational reports, social media communications and templates and other project communications. The project website will be regularly maintained by one of the partner institutions.

Long-term we will share the grant outputs in our institutional repositories, such as TU's ScholarWorks/ MD-SOAR repository, which is hosted by the central consortial USMAI team on DSpace. MD-SOAR, a DSpace-based open access institutional repository platform, is used within the USMAI consortium for hosting and distribution of open access resources such as electronic theses and dissertations, journal article preprints and manuscripts, institutional grey literature, and other forms of output from USMAI library consortium member institutions. MD-SOAR is hosted at the University of Maryland College Park and is administered by the USMAI's Consortial Library Applications Support (CLAS) team. Regular backups of files uploaded to MD-SOAR are performed with backup copies stored at both the Cherry Hill Data Center and the A. V. Williams Data Center, providing geographically redundant storage for backups. Fixity checks are regularly performed to ensure data are not corrupted on our production instance. MD-SOAR is supported through member funding with infrastructure and development staff provided by UMCP. After the grant period concludes, we will regularly review the file types used for the digital projects to make sure they are still sustainable, or if conversions may be necessary.