

Summary: The Denver Public Library (DPL), in collaboration with Seattle Public Library, Indianapolis Public Library, New York Public Library, South Carolina Governor's School of Arts and Humanities, Texas State Library, East Carolina University and University of Florida Libraries, seeks a two-year \$247,677 Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant in the Project/Continuing Education/Community Catalyst Category. This project will build on DPL's FY19 LB21 Planning Grant, creating and testing models for libraries to build and support internal cultures representative of the communities they serve, creating replicable staffing models that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and value lived experience and authentic community relationships as qualifications. Project activities will include: the development of a racial equity, diversity and inclusion strategic plan, learning & development training series, and strategic plan for and implementation of a culturally responsive wellness model with corresponding toolkit and templates; a virtual symposium; and creating a national cohort of people serving in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) roles in libraries.

Statement of National Need: As communities nationwide grapple with a history of structural and systemic racism, libraries are being challenged to intentionally consider how they promote racial equity and create an inclusive work environment to support both staff and customers. Both the American Library Association (ALA) and the Public Library Association (PLA) have called on public library workers to commit to structural change and taking action to end systemic racism and injustice. DPL held a virtual symposium in July 2020 as part of its FY19 LB21 Planning grant, [Advancing Racial Equity & Inclusion in the Workplace](#), with 2,200+ national and international attendees engaging in three days of sessions, indicating the strong interest in the field for this work. However, there are limited models for libraries to follow in establishing equity programs that create an inclusive workplace, particularly for those populations underrepresented in the library workforce such as those identifying as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

Project Design: DPL will work with a consultant such as the Center for Public Health Practice at the Colorado School of Public Health to create a 5-year **racial equity, diversity and inclusion strategic plan** to build a common understanding of EDI in the DPL network and facilitate the development of a set of goals and objectives to advance equity at DPL, building upon the findings of its FY2019 LB21 Planning grant. DPL will also work with a consultant such as Sweet Livity, LLC (a wellness consultant for organizations serving vulnerable communities) to create a strategic plan and implement a **culturally responsive wellness model**, a plan to provide individuals currently underrepresented in DPL's workforce with resources & supports to mitigate the day-to-day harms marginalized individuals are exposed to in dominant cultural environments. DPL will also partner with the Texas State Library (also a partner on the current grant) to create and test a **racial equity learning & development training series**. First, 100 DPL staff members will take the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) survey, which assesses intercultural competence. Training will be developed with TSL from this baseline, to increase overall racial equity knowledge, solidify understanding, create common language about racial equity and develop strategies about explaining racial equity for different audiences; participants will then take the IDI again to evaluate progress. The strategic plan, wellness model and training series will be adapted into a **toolkit and templates** for libraries to adapt for their own use. DPL will also hold a second virtual **symposium**, publicized through ALA and PLA networks, 2020 attendees and the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) and with 2,000 expected to attend, to share out these resources, promote discussion around these topics for local, national and international participants and develop a structure to hold regular symposiums in the future. DPL will also seed a network through recruiting and convening a **national cohort of people serving in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion roles** in their libraries. A consultant, based on the priorities of the group, will be engaged to design and provide leadership development training with this cohort to support them in their roles. This group will also serve in an advisory capacity for the project. Representatives from Seattle Public Library, Indianapolis Public Library, New York Public Library, South Carolina Governor's School of Arts and Humanities, Texas State Library, East Carolina University and University of Florida Libraries have already committed to this cohort. A full-time project coordinator will be employed to serve as the overall project manager. In Year 1, DPL will hire the coordinator; recruit and establish the cohort and hold bi-

monthly meetings; contract with a consultant, develop, and roll out the EDI strategic plan, contract with a consultant, develop and roll out the culturally responsive wellness model; and develop and roll out the training series with the Texas State Library. In year 2, DPL will hold the symposium; continue holding bi-monthly cohort meetings; assess the impact of the training series, EDI strategic plan and culturally responsive wellness model; create and share templates and toolkits for EDI strategic plans and culturally responsive wellness models; and finalize and disseminate an overall project report.

Diversity Plan: This project seeks to create and test effective models for supporting racial equity work in public libraries, fostering more inclusive workplaces for those underrepresented in the field of librarianship, including immigrants and refugees, BIPOC and those of lower socio-economic and educational attainment status and is led by DPL's EDI Manager. It builds on DPL's current FY19 LB21 Planning grant, *Building A Pipeline of Community Connection*, which included interviews with staff of these identities on their experiences, a three-day virtual symposium featuring predominantly BIPOC speakers and a national environmental scan on equity work in libraries. Similarly, this project will center voices currently underrepresented in the library field as it creates tools to promote inclusive library organizational cultures; the EDI cohort will also serve in advisory capacity, ensuring a wide variety of perspectives.

Broad Impact: This project offers an opportunity to create and test resources (through producing templates and toolkits for several models) that all libraries can use in building inclusive workplaces. Deliverables will be thoughtfully vetted and collaboratively achieved through the work of professional consultants, national partners and DPL staff. The cohort of people serving in EDI roles will create a network of support and promote dissemination of information, nationally. The symposium will also achieve wide reach for those in the field with an interest in inclusive workplaces cultures; it will allow DPL to share project deliverables from Year 1 as well as to create a platform for exchange and information-sharing. DPL will also create a web-based, ongoing platform such as a website or Slack, for sharing of deliverables as well as present at conferences such as ALA and PLA.

Budget Summary: Project Budget: \$278,733; Cost Share: \$31,056, IMLS Request: \$247,677
Program Coordinator, two years (40 hours, including 35% benefits + fringe): \$150,677; Racial equity learning & development: \$25,000; Symposium: \$20,000; Consultants (DPL Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan Development: \$15,000; Culturally Responsive Wellness Model: \$25,000; EDI Manager Cohort & Leadership Development: \$12,000); Cost Share: 15% of EDI Manager time for two years: \$31,056