

## **Advancing HBCU Scholarship, Diversifying Digital Publishing: A Cross-Organizational Training & Support Program for Library Professionals**

Brown University Library, with support from the HBCU Library Alliance, requests a three-year, \$246,419 Implementation Grant to establish a cross-organizational training program for HBCU library professionals seeking to gain or expand expertise in developing born-digital scholarship. The proposed project aligns with goal 3, objective 3.5 of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program. The program will grow and diversify the digital scholarly publishing landscape, build capacity at HBCU libraries, and increase the visibility of HBCU faculty-authored scholarship. Upon completion, three librarians will have obtained a highly specialized skill set fully realized through the development of a born-digital publication authored by a member of their faculty. The partnership between a predominantly white R1 university library, a consortium of historically Black institution libraries, and a leading university press will elevate and increase the reach of HBCU-generated scholarship. It will provide a replicable model for similar mutually beneficial collaborations in the service of diversifying scholarly publishing by taking an HBCU-centered approach that both contributes to longer-term structures for capacity building and sets the stage for further funding directly to HBCUs.

### **Project Justification**

Born-digital publications create exciting new conditions for the production and sharing of knowledge by advancing scholarly arguments in ways not achievable in a conventional print format, whether through multimedia enhancements or interactive engagement with research materials. Combined with open access publishing models, these new scholarly forms are increasing the visibility and reach of humanities scholarship to global audiences both within and beyond the academy in unprecedented ways. Yet the majority of this innovative work is being generated at well-resourced, predominantly white institutions (digital content development generally falls to the author or their institution rather than to the publisher).<sup>1</sup>

In an effort to help bridge this divide, Brown University Library organized a national training program for scholars who wish to pursue interpretive projects that require digital expression and digital publication, but may lack the necessary resources and capacity at their home institutions. Recruitment efforts for [\*Born-Digital Scholarly Publishing: Resources and Roadmaps\*](#), a National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities, focused on people of color and others who have been historically underserved and marginalized. From an impressive applicant pool of 44 humanities scholars, Brown welcomed 15 outstanding individuals (8 from HBCUs) for three weeks of hybrid instruction in July 2022, helping them to realize their first-rate digital publication projects for the benefit of students, scholarship, and the wider public.

Such consolidated training can play a critical role in advancing authors' plans, but significant challenges remain for faculty with heavy teaching loads and other institutional circumstances that might impede progress. "My university is culturally rich and socially diverse. Our students are super talented! However," according to La Tanya Rogers, Associate Professor of African-American Literature at Fisk University and a member of the 2022 cohort, "the University does not always have the resources or the availability to release me from a course or fund summer research. Some of my colleagues find themselves in a similar situation to mine." Indeed, a recent NEH report, "[Tell Them](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See A. Levy and S. McKee, [\*Multimodal Digital Monographs: Content, Collaboration, Community\*](#) (2022). N.B. All hyperlinked references in this narrative are also made available in Supportingdoc1.pdf.

[We Are Rising: On HBCUs and the Digital \(2010–2021\)](#),” looks at the pressing wants and needs for digital development on HBCU campuses across the nation. “Faculty and staff at HBCUs are doing digital work in the humanities. But there remains a need for additional resources,” the study concludes, “including dedicated training for faculty, staff, and students.”<sup>2</sup>

As a critical next step, Brown University Library proposes a multi-year training and support program that focuses on library professionals and develops expertise in born-digital content development. This expansive approach will build capacity at HBCU libraries while providing extended author support over the full lifecycle of their digital project. In addition, students involved in the development of digital publications will gain experiences and training relevant for a wide range of careers where knowledge and skills with digital media are central. In sum, this multi-pronged intervention addresses equity issues endemic to the academic publishing ecosystem by establishing models for enhanced support for HBCU staff, faculty, and students to enrich and expand scholarly discourse through their contributions.<sup>3</sup>

The proposed project thus has three target groups – those who will be most immediately and positively affected: three library professionals, three faculty authors, and at least nine students across three HBCUs. Insofar as the project supports training the library workforce in open access born-digital content development in order to advance HBCU scholarship and its dissemination, the reach and impact of this training will benefit significantly higher numbers in the mid- and long-term. These ultimate beneficiaries include dozens more HBCU authors, whose scholarship can be developed with new core training in place as part of a growing portfolio at their own institutions, and tens of thousands of readers across the globe thanks to open access distribution models (by comparison, the print run for a conventional print format is typically in the low hundreds).

Brown University Library is uniquely positioned to implement the proposed program. Launched with generous support from the Mellon Foundation and with additional funding from NEH, [Brown University Digital Publications](#) (BUDP) – widely recognized as accessible, intentional, and inclusive – is helping to set the standards for the future of scholarship in the digital age via its novel, university-based approach to digital content development. Further, the HBCU Library Alliance has established a formal partnership with Brown University Library, welcoming Brown into its community of practice as its first invited, non-HBCU affiliate member. For the last three years, Brown has served as a host site for the [HBCU Library Alliance Conservation / Preservation Internship Program](#), and with the support of an LB21 planning grant, the partnership is currently in the midst of running the joint [Stronger Together, Excellence in Library Leadership Program](#).

## Project Work Plan

The following plan has been guided by in-depth, on-going consultation with HBCU Library Alliance Executive Director Sandra Phoenix and Board Chair Tiwana Nevels. The perspectives and

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<sup>2</sup> B. Paige, “‘Tell Them We Are Rising: On HBCUs and the Digital (2010–2021)’” (Office of Digital Humanities, National Endowment of the Humanities, Spring 2021), 9.

<sup>3</sup> See “On Being Excluded: Testimonies by People of Color in Scholarly Publishing,” parts I and II (2018); R.J. So and G. Wezerek, “Just How White is the Book Industry?” *The New York Times Magazine* (Dec. 2020); and S. Romero and A.M. Martínez Figeroa, “‘The Unbearable Whiteness of Publishing’ Revisited,” *Publishers Weekly* (Feb. 2021). See also R. Spencer and D. Harris, “A Jubilee: Can HBCU Publications Revamp Education?” *Black Perspectives* (Oct., 2021).

contributions of the target group(s), based on feedback received during and immediately following the NEH Institute as well as subsequent individual and group conversations focused on staff development and extended author support, have been incorporated. The plan has also been informed by the [Antiracism Toolkit for Black, Indigenous and People of Color](#), created by BIPOC in publishing for the Coalition for Diversity & Inclusion in Scholarly Communications' Toolkits for Equity: Transforming Scholarly Publishing Communities project (2022). Ongoing external input, validation, and consensus building will take place throughout the performance period via regular feedback sessions with HBCU staff, faculty, and student participants as well as fall and spring consults with the steering committee. Annual reports to IMLS, project briefings at industry meetings and disciplinary conferences, and published articles will also provide opportunities for reflection, evaluation, and, as needed, iterative design.

Based on extensive conversations with the HBCU Library Alliance leadership as well as Brown's past experience developing and implementing national training programs for born-digital enhanced content development, the time, financial, personnel, and other resources identified below are appropriate for the scope and scale of the proposed project.

A general note on the allocation of grant funds [see [Budget.pdf](#) and [Budgetjustification.pdf](#) for details]: The proposed project intentionally and significantly foregrounds support for HBCU staff, faculty, and students, and by design centers the three-year training program at the three HBCUs (aside from necessary site visits and conference attendance). With the exception of modest stipends for the AE and non-Brown members of the steering committee, essential travel for the AE and steering committee, some of the PD's essential travel, and a relatively low open access subvention plus project development costs for the press partner, all direct costs will be channeled to the HBCU partners in the form of generous stipends and full coverage of essential travel expenses for the participating library professionals, faculty authors, and students. As such, this novel HBCU-centered approach serves as a model for other PWIs. The hope is also that, in contributing to longer-term structures for capacity building at HBCUs, this program could set the stage for further funding directly to the HBCU Library Alliance and/or the HBCUs.

### Planning, Participation, Execution, and Management

– A 6-person steering committee will advise on all aspects of implementation over the three-year grant period (August 2023–July 2026). The committee will meet virtually twice a year, except for the project launch meeting in fall 2023 to be held in-person at Brown University Library. The following have committed to serving as members, if this project is funded (in alphabetical order by last name):

- Sylvia Carey-Butler, Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity, Brown University
- Trevor Dawes, Vice Provost for Libraries and Museums and May Morris University Librarian at the University of Delaware
- Ida Jones, University Archivist, Morgan State University
- Tiwanna Nevels, Board Chair, HBCU Library Alliance
- Kenvi Phillips, Director of Library Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Brown University
- Sandra Phoenix, Executive Director, HBCU Library Alliance [see [Supportingdoc2.pdf](#) for Letter of Commitment]

– Three HBCUs will participate in the program, involving 1 library professional + 1 faculty author + 3 students (min.) per institution = 15 immediate/short-term beneficiaries. Invited institutions have sufficient capacity to allow one staff member to take on a three-year training program plus the necessary institutional technology investment, as determined by HBCU Library Alliance leadership.

Library staff and students will be selected by the HBCU library directors, with guidance from the Library Alliance. Library staff might specialize in archival or special collections work, scholarly communications, or reference and instruction, among other areas. Invited faculty have an expressed interest in pursuing born-digital publication, with significant research and planning already underway as demonstrated by their participation in the NEH Institute *Born-Digital Scholarly Publishing: Resources and Roadmaps* (Brown Library, 2022). Following multiple conversations and the sharing of the project justification, work plan, and budget, the following universities have committed to participating in this project, if funded:

- Fisk University
  - John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library Director: DeLisa Minor Harris [see Supportingdoc2.pdf for Letter of Commitment]
  - Faculty Author: La Tanya Rogers, Associate Professor of Literature and Drama, and Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Honors Program
  - Publication Project and Abstract: “Mimicry, Minstrelsy, and Masking: Theorizing Black Surrogacy in the Plays of Suzan-Lori Parks”
    - American playwright, novelist, screenwriter, and educator Suzan-Lori Parks (b. 1963) won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2002 for her play *Topdog/Underdog*, making her the first African American woman in U.S. history to win the prize in drama. “Mimicry, Minstrelsy, and Masking” examines this and three other plays by Parks—*The America Play*, *In the Blood*, and *F—ing A*—through the lens of what the author calls Black Surrogacy, a dramatic technique that involves replacing white literary and historical figures with Black characters. The digital book, enhanced with video clips of productions of Parks’ plays, argues that while the playwright uses Black Surrogacy to challenge convention and offer social and political commentaries, the technique ultimately reinforces the very stereotypes and misconceptions about Black people that it seeks to counter.
  
- Kentucky State University
  - Paul G. Blazer Library Director: Sheila Stuckey [see Supportingdoc2.pdf for Letter of Commitment]
  - Faculty Author: TaKeia Anthony, Interim Dean, Whitney Young Honors Collegium; Academic Support Liaison for the Center of Excellence for the Study of Kentucky African-Americans (CESKAA); Associate Professor of History
  - Publication Project and Abstract: “We Can Do it for Ourselves: The Delta Research and Educational Foundation, Black Women’s Intellectualism, and Black Women’s Philanthropy, 1967–2022”
    - Founded in 1913 by 22 women at Howard University, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority’s first act of public service was participating that same year in the Woman Suffrage Procession. Since its founding, the organization of college-educated Black women has been committed to serving Black communities throughout the African Diaspora. With the establishment in 1967 of the Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF), a public charity supporting scholastic achievement, public service programs, and research initiatives focused on African American women, Delta Sigma Theta became the first Black sorority and first Black women’s organization to own and

operate a foundation. “We Can Do It for Ourselves” chronicles DREF’s impact over half a century, centering both DREF and the Sorority in Black women’s intellectual and philanthropic histories with previously unpublished archival materials and oral interviews.

- Prairie View A & M University
  - John B. Coleman Library Director: Musa Olaka [see Supportingdoc2.pdf for Letter of Commitment]
  - Faculty Author: Marco Robinson, Assistant Director of the Ruth J. Simmons Center for Race and Justice; Associate Professor of History
  - Publication Project and Abstract: “‘On the Upward Trend’: The Impact of Prairie View A & M University’s College of Agriculture and Agricultural Extension Services on Communities of Color during the Jim Crow Era in Texas”
    - The history of Prairie View, Texas’ oldest state-supported historically Black university, entails the rich and vibrant experiences of Black and Brown Texans from the Antebellum period to the present day. This digital monograph presents the history of PVAMU’s College of Agriculture—since its founding in 1879 a leader in the true land-grant tradition of academics, extension, and research—with a focus on women’s work within the program and outreach to the Latinx community in Texas and beyond during the Jim Crow era. It incorporates material from PVAMU’s Special Collections and Archives Department that are currently being digitized thanks to a Preservation Assistance Grant from the NEH. The inclusion of interactive elements will further enhance the reading experience.

– [The University of Michigan Press](#), with its demonstrated commitment to issues of equity, diversity, and social justice, will serve as the press partner.

- “The University of Michigan Press strongly supports the struggle for racial justice. We publish and distribute books in the humanities and social sciences that seek to make sense of society and culture. We must and will question through whose lens those concepts are constructed. In addition, we recognize the important role that we play in helping to determine which voices are able to participate in the social and academic discourse, making it all the more important that we evaluate our practices critically and progressively. We seek to increase the participation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in our publishing as authors, domain experts, and selectors. We commit to developing an anti-racist workplace climate, improving our shared awareness of the language and systems that serve to perpetuate racism so we can change them. We will also continue to develop strategies that improve equitable access to our publications, recognizing that current systems exclude many readers who need the important works that we publish but cannot access them.” – Statement on Equity, Justice, and Inclusion

The selection process also drew on Brown University Digital Publications’ past experiences and ongoing conversations with Press leadership to develop new collaborative models for publishing born-digital, enhanced open access scholarship in ways both scalable and sustainable.

The University of Michigan Press will collaborate with Brown Library to mentor the cohort, and will commit to publishing the HBCU-generated scholarship developed as part of the program

(conditional on the final manuscripts being approved by the faculty Executive Committee of the Press on the recommendation of the acquiring editor and the independent peer reviewers). The Press publishes in a wide range of humanities and social science disciplines and boasts a global distribution program. It has demonstrated capabilities for supporting born-digital multimedia works using the publishing platform [Fulcrum](#), which, supported by a generous grant from the Mellon Foundation, presents the full richness of authors' research in a durable, discoverable, accessible, and flexible form. Key staff:

- Charles Watkinson, Director of University of Michigan Press; Associate University Librarian, Publishing, University of Michigan Library; President, Association of University Presses [see [Supportingdoc2.pdf](#) for Letter of Commitment]
- Elizabeth Demers, Editorial Director
- Sara Jo Cohen, Senior Acquiring Editor (AE) for American studies, disability studies, class studies, music and media studies

Examples of Fulcrum enhanced open access publications:

- [i used to love to dream](#) by A.D. Carson (2020) is a mixtap/e/ssay that performs hip-hop scholarship using sampled and live instrumentation; repurposed music, film, and news clips; and original rap lyrics.
- [Soul Liberty: The Evolution of Black Religious Politics in Postemancipation Virginia](#) by Nicole Myers Turner (2020) uses local archives, church minutes, and innovative GIS mapping to reveal how freedpeople in Virginia adapted strategies for pursuing the freedom of their souls to worship as they saw fit.
- [Music on the Move](#) by Danielle Fosler-Lussier (2020), with its innovative multimodal approach, invites readers to listen and engage with many different types of music as they read about music as a mobile art. The text introduces a variety of concepts related to music's travels—with or without its makers—including colonialism, migration, diaspora, mediation, propaganda, copyright, and hybridity.
- [Being Human during COVID](#), edited by Kristin Ann Hass (2021), examines how literature, music, and media became crucial means of connection as the twindemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice tore through the U.S. The book draws on scholarly expertise and lived experience via traditional scholarly essays, personal essays, and multimedia art projects.

– Brown University Digital Publications (BUDP), a Mellon Foundation- and NEH-supported program of distinction based in the University Library's renowned Center for Digital Scholarship, is uniquely prepared to execute and manage the proposed project. A hallmark of BUDP is the centering of access and inclusion in the practice and production of digital scholarship, from a deep commitment to training and mentorship to the broad, barrier-free sharing of resources.

- Project Director (PD) Allison Levy, Director of Brown University Digital Publications, has over five years' experience working with faculty authors – including, as PD of the NEH Institute, HBCU faculty – to develop born-digital, media-rich publications. At the industry level, she has advanced conversations around the development, evaluation, and

dissemination of born-digital scholarship as well as the necessity of extended author support and inclusivity.<sup>4</sup>

- Other members of BUDP will lend support throughout the grant period, and include Crystal Brusch, Digital Publications Designer; Holiday Shapiro, Digital Content Specialist; and an Assistant Editor (search in progress, expected start date June 2022).

Landmark publications include:

- [\*Furnace and Fugue: A Digital Edition of Michael Maier's Atalanta fugiens \(1618\) with Scholarly Commentary\*](#) edited by T. Nummedal and D. Bilak (University of Virginia Press, 2020), winner of the 2022 Roy Rosenzweig Prize for Creativity in Digital History by the American Historical Association;
- [\*Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report with Commentary on Context and Impact\*](#) (Brown University Digital Publications, 2021);
- [\*Shadow Plays: Virtual Realities in an Analog World\*](#) by M. Riva (Stanford University Press, 2022), winner of the 2023 PROSE Award in the eProduct category;
- [\*A New Vision for Islamic Pasts and Futures\*](#) by S. Bashir (MIT Press, 2022); and
- [\*Race & ... in America\*](#), a 13-volume series delving into comparative perspectives on the roots and effects of racism in the U.S. (Brown University Digital Publications, 2020–22)

Thirteen other works by Brown faculty are currently in development and represent a broad disciplinary range. BUDP also partners with the MIT Press to produce the multimodal book series [\*On Seeing\*](#), which is committed to centering underrepresented voices and understudied questions at the intersection of visual culture and social justice. This series represents one more way that Brown is extending its impact on digital scholarship by working with scholars beyond its own campus.

### Activities, Progress & Evaluation, and Dissemination

Overview of major activities and sequence:

- Year 1 (Aug. 1, 2023–July 31, 2024)
  - Cohort (3 library professionals) + steering committee + PD & AE convene at Brown Library for project launch
  - Cohort training commences
  - Spring consult with steering committee
  - Cohort + PD & AE attend Library Publishing Forum (May, 2024)
  - First-year program evaluation
- Year 2 (Aug. 1, 2024–July 31, 2025)
  - Cohort training continues
  - PD & AE travel to HBCUs for on-site training and to meet with faculty authors

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<sup>4</sup> See A. Levy, “[The Future of Monograph Publishing](#),” *Inside Higher Ed* (2022). Her presentations on this topic include “[Diversifying Digital Publishing: Lessons from Brown University Library's National Endowment for the Humanities Institute](#),” delivered at the fall meeting of the Coalition for Networked Information (Dec., 2022); and a forthcoming presentation at the April 2023 event, [Toward Radical Imagination: HBCUs, Digital Libraries, and Authentic Collaboration](#), a celebration of The Authenticity Project, an IMLS-funded CLIR–DLF–HBCU Library Alliance mentorship program.

- Fall and spring consults with steering committee
- Cohort + PD & AE attend Association of University Presses annual meeting (held virtually in June, 2025)
- Mid-program evaluation
- Year 3 (Aug. 1, 2025–July 31, 2026)
  - Cohort training continues
  - Cohort + PD & AE convene at the University of Michigan Press to meet with leadership, editorial, production (Fulcrum), and marketing teams
  - Fall and spring consults with steering committee
  - Cohort + PD & AE attend/present at the Charleston Conference (Nov., 2025)
  - Final-year program evaluation; preparation of white paper

– Curriculum development is already underway and will be ready to implement at the start of the grant cycle. Training will take place virtually via highly structured monthly modules [synchronous (approximately four hours or one afternoon per month) and asynchronous] and in-person via multi-directional annual site visits. The modules, building on Brown’s NEH Institute experience, will be taught by PD Levy with support from AE Cohen. Communication channels via email, Slack, and Google Drive will be established for frequent, direct guidance. Topics include but are not limited to the following:

- Identifying genre and audience
- Crafting argument, amplifying relevance
- Readability (writing for specialist and non-specialist audiences)
- Scoping an enhanced digital publication (nice-to-haves vs. need-to-haves; feasibility vs. reasonability)
- Establishing workflow
- Perfecting project management skills
- The importance of documentation
- Setting and managing budgets
- Training and mentoring students
- Preparing embedded resources (non-text resources such as images, audio, video, visualizations, etc.)
- Getting it right: Fair use and rights management
- Presenting primary sources (from historical documents to ephemera)
- Understanding user experience and agency
- Meeting accessibility standards
- Mastering metadata
- Keeping authors on track!
- The art of offering constructive feedback
- Navigating peer review
- Embracing collaboration and community-building
- Time management and self-care

– There will be frequent, structured opportunities for the PD and AE to track progress and identify areas or stages of work that require additional, customized guidance or resources. The program will begin with a detailed assessment of the library professionals’ experience to date with digital content development and/or transferable skills as well as the authors’ research and writing goals and



timelines. [Authors will participate in all site visits and will join virtual sessions as applicable.] Evaluations tied to each module will assess the quality and usefulness of the topic, the delivery of instruction (synchronous or asynchronous, virtual or during site visits, with or without guest speakers), required and recommended readings, assignments, and opportunities for networking and community-building. The PD will adjust the modules accordingly. The PD will also share cohort feedback with the steering committee and will make further adjustments as advised. With a chief intended result being the publication or advancement to publication-readiness of three projects over the course of the grant cycle, the PD and AE will establish milestones and deadlines customized to each project, and will continually assess project advancement, providing added support as needed [see [Scheduleofcompletion.pdf](#), [perfmeasurement.pdf](#), and [Digitalproduct.pdf](#)].

– Student participants, once identified by the HBCU libraries with guidance from the HBCU Library Alliance, will form a cohort of their own. A student-centered launch meeting will bring together this key constituency from across the three HBCUs to share what they hope to learn and gain from the experience. Students will be supported locally by the selected library professionals. Regular check-ins facilitated by the PD will assess learning objectives, foster networking, and provide resources for students interested in pursuing a career in scholarly publishing at either a library or a press. This support structure also allows for peer-to-peer mentoring insofar as the makeup of the cohort will fluctuate every year with some students continuing their involvement into a second or third year and others committing to a single academic year or semester. The PD will actively seek out opportunities for the students to publicly present on their contributions to the publication projects and to share how their experiences complement the disciplinary training provided in their academic programs. Both undergraduate and graduate students from humanities and humanistic social sciences disciplines will be eligible to participate.

– Project findings and training content will be disseminated to multiple communities of interest through multiple channels:

- PD Levy will present frequently on the program's progress, outcomes, and lessons learned in an effort to advocate for replicability by other PWIs. Possible venues include ACRL, ARL, CNI, and DLF.
- PD Levy will pitch opinion pieces, co-authored with program participants, to *Inside Higher Ed*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and the African American Intellectual History Society's *Black Perspectives*, among other venues.
- The cohort + PD & AE will organize a panel discussion for the Charleston Conference (Nov. 2025) and will seek out other networking and dissemination events, including HBCU-focused conferences.
- Other forms of communication used to publicly highlight the work of the partnership include frequent social media posts and news stories. Brown Library's Office of Communications will work with publicity managers at the HBCUs and the University of Michigan Press to coordinate coverage.
- A dynamic, public-facing website (designed by BUDP at no additional cost) will facilitate discoverability of the work of the cross-organizational partnership by the broader library and publishing communities. Over the course of the program, supplementary course materials, asynchronous lessons, and other resources will be shared publicly on the website, which will be modeled on the website for the NEH Institute *Born-Digital Scholarly Publishing: Resources and Roadmaps*. The website will also be used to highlight the HBCU authors.

- At the close of the program, PD Levy will write a white paper for future LB21 applicants, also to be shared on the website.
- BUDP will continue to be available to the cohort beyond the close of the grant period.

## **Diversity Plan**

A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion undergirds every aspect of “Advancing HBCU Scholarship, Diversifying Digital Publishing,” which has been designed to provide robust training and support to HBCU library professionals, faculty, and students in order to increase the visibility and reach of HBCU-generated scholarship. This commitment is underscored by the makeup of the steering committee, which includes diverse voices from the HBCU Library Alliance and Brown’s Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity to advise at all stages of implementation. The University of Michigan Press shares this commitment as demonstrated by its backlist and forthcoming titles, strategies for equitable access, and ongoing evaluation of its practices. The rigorous and comprehensive resources shared with the HBCU library partners will contribute to the development and retention of a diverse workforce.

## **Project Results**

At the close of the three-year program, three HBCU library professionals will have gained expertise in born-digital content development via rigorous training tied directly to publication projects authored by a member of their faculty. Projects will be published or advanced to publication-readiness over the course of the grant cycle. Via an open access publishing model, excellent scholarship by HBCU faculty will be disseminated to the broadest possible audience for the greatest possible impact. The Press will develop an innovative and robust marketing and publicity campaign for the HBCU titles.

Equipped with an expanded network of library digital experts and university press editors developed via conference attendance and participation, cohort members, as newly trained library-based digital scholarship editors, will be prepared to grow a portfolio of born-digital publications at their own institutions as well as at regional HBCUs. HBCU students involved in the work will gain experiences and training relevant for a wide range of careers where knowledge and skills with digital media are central. Moreover, by sharing the training content publicly on a designated ADA-compliant website, the curriculum will be readily accessible and adaptable by other institutions and communities nationally and internationally.

“Advancing HBCU Scholarship, Diversifying Digital Publishing” will have a broad impact beyond the three institutions invited to participate in the implementation grant cycle. The proposed partnership between a predominantly white R1 university library, a consortium of HBCU libraries, and a leading university press will nucleate networks of HBCU content generators/facilitators and publishers; produce outstanding scholarship that, without the developmental investment and enhanced visibility, might not have had the same kind of impact on the academy; and promote a broader array of scholarly thinkers and research programs to help shape scholarly discourse going forward. Moreover, the project encourages replicability by other well-resourced institutions in support of HBCU-generated scholarship. The benefits of the project will thus be sustained beyond the conclusion of the performance period.

### Schedule of Completion

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Year 1 (Aug. 1, 2023-July 31, 2024)											
Surveys and Planning	■										
3 library professionals + 3 authors + Steering Committee + PD &AE convene at Brown Library for Project Launch		■									
Cohort Training		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Student Check-Ins			■					■			
Spring Consultation with Steering Committee							■				
Cohort + PD &AE attend Library Publishing Forum									■		
First-Year Program Evaluation											■

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Year 2 (Aug. 1, 2024-July 31, 2025)											
Cohort Training	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Student Check-Ins			■					■			
PD & AE travel to HBCUs for on-site training with library professionals and to meet with faculty authors		■	■								
Fall and Spring Consultations with Steering Committee			■				■				
Cohort + PD & AE attend Association of University Presses annual meeting (held virtually in June, 2025)										■	
Mid-Program Evaluation											■

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Year 3 (Aug. 1, 2025-July 31, 2026)											
Cohort Training											
Student Check-Ins											
3 library professionals + 3 authors + PD & AE convene at the University of Michigan Press to meet with leadership, editorial, production (Fulcrum), and marketing teams											
Fall and Spring Consultations with Steering Committee											
Cohort + PD & AE attend/present at the Charleston Conference (Nov., 2025)											
Final-Year Program Evaluation											

## Digital Products Plan

### Type

The proposed project will generate three born-digital enhanced scholarly works that will be published by the University of Michigan Press, conditional on the final manuscripts being approved by the faculty Executive Committee of the Press on the recommendation of the acquiring editor and the independent peer reviewers (alphabetical by author last name):

- “We Can Do it for Ourselves: The Delta Research and Educational Foundation, Black Women’s Intellectualism, and Black Women’s Philanthropy, 1967–2022” by TaKeia Anthony, Kentucky State University
- “On the Upward Trend?: The Impact of Prairie View A & M University’s College of Agriculture and Agricultural Extension Services on Communities of Color during the Jim Crow Era in Texas” by Marco Robinson, Prairie View A & M University
- “Mimicry, Minstrelsy, and Masking: Theorizing Black Surrogacy in the Plays of Suzan-Lori Parks” by La Tanya Rogers, Fisk University

The project will also produce a dynamic, public-facing website (designed by BUDP at no additional cost), which will facilitate discoverability of the work of the cross-organizational partnership by the broader library and publishing communities. Over the course of the program, supplementary course materials, asynchronous lessons, and other resources will be shared publicly on the website, which will be modeled on the website for the NEH Institute *Born-Digital Scholarly Publishing: Resources and Roadmaps*.

### Availability and Access

The three publications will be published as open access titles on the Fulcrum platform, which, supported by a generous grant from the Mellon Foundation, presents the full richness of authors’ research in a durable, discoverable, accessible, and flexible form. The Press publishes in a wide range of humanities and social science disciplines and boasts a global distribution program.

The website will be created using WordPress. It will be ADA-compliant and all content will be openly available long-term to anyone.

### Sustainability

Durability is among Fulcrum’s core values. Digital preservation is often discussed in terms of technologies and file formats, but the Fulcrum team considers preservation primarily a commitment of time, attention, and active management of data and metadata. Fulcrum fulfills its preservation commitments through a strategy based on balancing local and distributed resources. By engaging in a number of partnerships, Fulcrum guards against the risk of technological failure, changes in institutional priorities, or inability to meet commitments at any one institution, thereby eliminating single points of failure and ensuring the long-term access to content published on Fulcrum.

The strength of Fulcrum’s preservation commitment derives from its home within a Tier 1 research library which embodies preservation as core to its mission. As a result, Fulcrum adheres to the policies and practices of U-M Library, and content hosted on Fulcrum is preserved according to

the same policies and practices, and with the same dedicated, committed effort, as all of U-M Library's digital materials. Fulcrum's file format guidelines are based on the recommendations of the Library of Congress and reflect the accepted best practices of the digital preservation community.

Fulcrum follows the principle of "Preservation is Access, Access is Preservation." Its Hyrax platform is backed by a Fedora 4 repository where preservation masters are managed in the U-M datacenter; masters are stored and backed up using enterprise-quality equipment and services provided by U-M Information Technology Services. This same repository is used for managing both the preservation masters and the access derivatives which are served to the browser in a user session, their relationship expressed explicitly via RDF metadata in our data model. In this way the same resources that maintain the access repository also benefit the preservation repository, and any problems that arise are more visible to the system administrators. Furthermore, by keeping content in its preservation repository, Fulcrum is also committing to maintaining its access by readers.

Fulcrum has diversified its preservation portfolio through relationships with a number of other organizations, each with their own technological implementation and management structures. Fulcrum has contracted with CLOCKSS, which is CRL-certified TRAC-compliant and introduces geographically distributed redundancy to our preservation solutions. U-M Library is a member of APTrust and routinely deposits all Fulcrum content into their cloud-based, consortially governed service, providing further organizational and geographic redundancy for everything published on Fulcrum. Michigan Publishing is a partner in the Mellon-funded Enhancing Services to Preserve New Forms of Scholarship grant administered by NYU, exploring methods with CLOCKSS and Portico to preserve the richness of digital media enhancements to ebooks on Fulcrum among other platforms. Furthermore, U-M Library is a sustaining member of the Software Preservation Network.

The culmination of local and partnered preservation commitments, which place Fulcrum's content into storage networks distributed across multiple continents, actively managed by a range of mission-driven, non-profit consortia and partnerships (some of which have their own succession plans), mitigates the risk of catastrophic failure on any number of fronts, and helps ensure that the content published on Fulcrum today will remain in the scholarly record for many years to come.

U-M Library will conduct a review after a 10-year period to determine if objects hosted on Fulcrum should be retained and be subject to further, periodic, reviews thereafter. The goal of these reviews is to identify and possibly remove objects that have reached the end of their use and reuse life cycle, or have become unusable due to format obsolescence. U-M Library may conduct the review before 10 years if it identifies that a format is becoming obsolete. The retention review will be conducted by U-M Library and, whenever possible, by the partner who is responsible for its deposit. In the eventuality that material is removed due to retention review or for legal or contractual reasons, Fulcrum will maintain tombstones with the metadata and a removal notice to which durable identifiers (DOIs, Handle System URLs) will continue to resolve. Where possible and applicable, the tombstone record will point to and/or resolve to the new location for the content.

The project website, created with a strong design and user experience by Brown University Digital Publications, will be curated by the PD and maintained by the Library's Digital Technologies department.

## Organizational Profile

The Brown University Library is a dynamic physical, virtual, and intellectual hub for Brown and a vital partner in furthering the University's global mission of educational leadership, academic excellence, and diversity and inclusion. The Library is a place of invention and an engine of collaboration where faculty, staff, and students explore the past, seek to understand the present, and innovate for the future. Accordingly, the Library has adopted the following mission statement: *The Brown University Library advances instruction, learning, and research in the University by providing critical expertise, curated collections, and responsive technology and spaces in an environment of creativity and inclusivity. Partnering with students, faculty, staff, and members of the global scholarly community, we foster and guide the creation, acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge at Brown and beyond in a spirit of free and open inquiry.* —Brown University Library Strategic Plan, 2019–2024 (July 2019); approving body: Shared with Provost, President, and Brown University Corporation Academic Affairs Committee, October 2019.

Brown University Library is a key partner in the educational and research mission of the University. The Library reports to the Provost (chief academic officer) who in turn reports to the University President. The University Librarian is a member of the University's Senior Deans group. The Corporation of Brown University is the University's governing body. The Corporation is responsible for selecting the University President; siting buildings; setting the budget, tuition and fees; establishing policy and strategic plans; appointing faculty and senior administrative officers; and accepting gifts and naming opportunities. In general, the Corporation concerns itself with matters of policy and does not become involved in the daily administration of the University. The University's mission—to serve the community, the nation, and the world by educating and preparing students (in the words of the College charter) to “discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation”—is fulfilled through strong faculty-student collaboration.

The Library shares the University's strategic commitment to create and sustain the diverse and inclusive community necessary for the advancement of knowledge, learning, and discovery. In Fall 2022, enrollment comprised 7,222 under-graduates, 2,920 graduate students, and 595 medical students. The undergraduate Class of 2026 included 51% students of color, 15% first generation students, and 13% international students. There are 1,603 faculty and 3,162 staff employed by Brown.

The seventh oldest university in America, Brown was established in 1764 as Rhode Island College in the town of Warren, Rhode Island, and enrolled its first students in 1765. In 1770 the College moved to its present location, and in 1804 it was renamed Brown University (to honor a donation from local merchant Nicholas Brown). Today the University's main campus covers nearly 150 acres in the historic College Hill neighborhood overlooking downtown Providence, a vibrant city of some 190,000 people and the capital of Rhode Island. Brown's campus in the Jewelry District is home to the Warren Alpert Medical School, Laboratories for Molecular Medicine, School of Professional Studies and South Street Landing, which houses more than a dozen administrative departments.

From foundational breakthroughs dating back to the 1960s in areas such as computational linguistics, hypertext, hypermedia, web-authoring, visualization, and text encoding, to today's pathbreaking development of born-digital scholarly monographs advancing research well beyond the conventional book, Brown faculty and staff have long played a pioneering role in digital scholarship. Brown's Center for Digital Scholarship (CDS), housed within the University Library, provides expert staff and support resources. With a current portfolio including 31 digital projects and 16 digital publication projects, CDS works with faculty across the campus including Africana Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Classics, East Asian Studies, Egyptology and Assyriology, History, History of Art and Architecture, Italian Studies, Judaic Studies, Literary Arts, Modern Culture and Media, Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, Religious Studies, and Sociology, along with the Brown Arts Institute, Data Science Institute, Institute for Environment and Society, and the School of Public Health. Digital projects and publications include close collaborations with the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice and the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America. CDS additionally partners with the Cogut Institute for the Humanities to offer a Ph.D. certificate in Digital Humanities. Brown University Digital Publications (BUDP), a program of distinction within CDS, was launched in 2014 with generous support from the Mellon Foundation and has received additional support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Widely recognized as accessible, intentional, and inclusive, BUDP's novel, university-based approach to born-digital content development is helping to set the standards for the future of scholarship in the digital age.