

## HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Louisiana Libraries Collaborative (HBCU-LLC)

### Introduction

Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is seeking support from the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program for their collaborative initiative, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Louisiana Libraries Collaborative (HBCU-LLC). In partnership with deans and directors from Louisiana Historically Black Colleges and Universities, including Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern University New Orleans, Southern University Shreveport, and Xavier University, this project aligns with LB goal 1 and objective 1.1, aiming to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse workforce. Crucial aspects of the HBCU-LLC's strategy involves providing informational forums and fostering mentorship within the library profession. According to research, mentoring can play a pivotal role in accelerating diversity goals in academic libraries by promoting collaborative mentoring focused on ongoing development of both mentees and mentors ("The collaborative effort")<sup>1</sup>. The collaborative effort will provide a cadre of forums for a broad audience of HBCU undergraduate students and current library staff at HBCU libraries. Southern University and A&M College, with Dr. Dawn Kight serving as Principal Investigator, will take the lead in implementing this initiative, drawing upon Dr. Kight's extensive experience managing grant projects. The HBCU-LLC's comprehensive approach includes two tracks for forum participants, Track A focusing on recruiting and exposing HBCU undergraduate students of color to library science graduate school education, and Track B providing online forums for current library support staff with the goal of retaining and developing talent. This unique mentorship opportunity will contribute to the overarching mission of the HBCU-LLC, which seeks \$149,603 to implement this national model of collaboration for the success of the library profession.

### Project Justification

HBCUs are greatly impacted by the need to develop a diverse library workforce. According to the 2021 report of the US Bureau of Labor statistics, only 7% of librarians in the US are black. This is a decline from the 2010 numbers, where African Americans represented 10% of the librarian workforce. While recruiting and retaining librarians is a national problem, HBCUs are selecting from an even smaller pool of applicants desiring to work at HBCUs. The Association of College and Research Libraries' website states, "Recruitment of the next generation of librarians is one of the most pressing issues facing the profession and the association today." The decline of Black librarians in the workforce is an issue worth illuminating for the growth of diversity in librarianship. A key component to recruiting and retaining librarians of color is mentorship. According to *Mentoring in Libraries*, an active mentoring relationship proves to be very beneficial to libraries and has shown to be one of the most significant factors in contributing to retention, promotion, and long term success.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, HBCUs have traditionally provided educational opportunities to underserved communities and the HBCU-LLC will focus on this population to recruit, develop, and mentor prospective undergraduate students of color and current library

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<sup>1</sup> Reid, Janet M. and Sobczak, Patricia D. (2022) "Challenging the Glass Ceiling: Collaboration as the Key to Increasing the Number of Librarians of Color in Academic Libraries," *Collaborative Librarianship*: Vol. 13: Iss. 1, Article 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ramos, Melissa, and Ravonne Green. "Mentoring in Libraries ." *Mentoring in Libraries – Library Worklife*., 16 Dec. 2007, ala-apa.org/newsletter/2007

workers. Furthermore, HBCUs have been traditionally underfunded.<sup>3</sup> Libraries at HBCUs are challenged with funding quality development programs that promote the empowerment of staff with 21st-century skills. The HBCU-LLC will offer a series of virtual forums to recruit, inform, and develop students and library staff at HBCU institutions with the ultimate goal of participants attending library science graduate school. Informational forums will be offered to participants online, recorded for future viewing, and made accessible through multiple websites including the HBCU Library Alliance where one of the HBCU-LLC deans, Adrienne Webber, Grambling State University, serves as the Board Chair. The other deans are participating members of the Alliance.

This proposed project under the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program distinctly differs from, complements, and builds upon existing theory, scholarship, and practice in several key ways. In the realm of library science, there has been a longstanding recognition of the need for diversity and inclusion, yet practical, concerted efforts to address this have been limited. Our project seeks to bridge this gap by not only acknowledging the importance of diversity in the library workforce but by actively implementing a comprehensive strategy focused on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). This approach is unique as it leverages the rich cultural and educational heritage of HBCUs to foster a new generation of librarians. Unlike previous initiatives that might have targeted individual aspects of diversity or professional development in isolation, this project comprehensively integrates these elements, creating a holistic model that could serve as a blueprint for future efforts nationwide. The HBCU-LLC project distinguishes itself from initiatives like the Hampton University Forum on LIS Minority Recruitment and Retention, which primarily focused on challenges faced by librarians of color already working in the field. The HBCU-LLC Forums will include proactive steps to target undergraduate students and non-librarian library staff, sharing opportunities in the library field and building upon feedback received in the Hampton project.

Furthermore, this project complements and expands upon existing scholarship by translating theoretical concepts of diversity and inclusion into tangible, actionable plans. The focus on professional development forums, mentorship programs, and recruitment efforts rooted in HBCU communities adds a new dimension to the academic discourse on diversity in library science. It moves beyond the theoretical discussions often found in academic literature to practical, on-the-ground actions that have the potential to effect real change in the composition and culture of the library workforce. This approach not only enriches the theoretical understanding of diversity in library science but also sets a new precedent for applying these theories in a way that is deeply embedded in the community and cultural context of HBCUs.

The proposed project, while sharing similarities with existing initiatives such as the Association of Research Libraries Leadership and Career Development Program (ARL-LCDP), particularly in its mentoring aspects and emphasis on diversity, presents distinct elements that set it apart. Unlike the ARL-LCDP, which is primarily focused on the development of current library professionals, our project extends its reach beyond existing librarians to include a broader audience. This includes potential library professionals and undergraduate students, thereby casting a wider net in fostering diversity within the library science field.

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<sup>3</sup> Knott, Katherine, "States Underfunded Black Land Grants by \$13B over 30 Years," Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Events and Jobs, accessed March 19, 2024, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/2023/09/20/states-underfunded-black-land-grants-13b-over-30-years>.

Furthermore, the project differentiates itself from the HBCU Library Alliance Leadership program, which was exclusively aimed at librarians. Funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the HBCU Library Alliance program was structured into four phases, offering both theoretical and practical instruction to enhance leadership skills within the HBCU library community. In contrast, our project adopts a more inclusive approach, targeting aspiring professionals and students. This approach not only cultivates leadership and professional skills among existing library staff but also aims to inspire and educate the next generation of library and information science professionals, thus contributing to a more diverse and well-prepared workforce in the longer term.

Notable of this initiative, is the opportunity for participants to be advised by six African American deans and directors with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and expertise linked with the common desire to see more people of color choosing careers in librarianship. Participating HBCU-LLC library deans boast experiences in technology, archives, information literacy, research, instruction, digitization, design, leadership, and management. The forums will be designed with intentionality and inclusivity of the HBCU culture while providing pertinent information about the library profession. Presenting the online forums and culminating institute in a virtual and in-person format allows for greater participation and inclusion of students and library staff from HBCUs throughout the United States.

### **Target Audience & Beneficiaries:**

The target audience and beneficiaries of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Louisiana Libraries Collaborative (HBCU-LLC) project under the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program are diverse, encompassing undergraduate students of color from HBCUs (Track A) and current library support staff at HBCU libraries (Track B). With a primary focus on addressing the urgent need for diversity in the library workforce, the initiative aims to recruit, expose, and develop talent within HBCU communities. The HBCU-LLC's comprehensive approach, integrating theoretical concepts into actionable plans, positions it as a pioneering effort in fostering diversity within the cultural context of HBCUs. The initiative targets aspiring library professionals and students, casting a wider net to contribute to a more diverse and well-prepared library workforce. Southern University will provide an online platform for live forums which can include up to 1,000 attendees.

### **Personnel:**

The key personnel for the HBCU Louisiana Library Collaborative play crucial roles in the success of the project. Serving as the Principal Investigator (PI) is **Dr. Dawn V. Kight**, Dean of Libraries at Southern University & A&M College. Joining her as Co-PIs are **Dr. Maya Riley-Banks**, Head of User Services, and **Quiana R. Wright, MLIS**, Asst. Professor & Reference Librarian, both representing John B. Cade Library. Together, this dynamic team brings a wealth of experience and expertise, ensuring the project's excellence and alignment with the goals of the Laura Bush 21st Century Library program.

### **HBCU Louisiana Library Collaborative Institutions & Advisory Committee:**

The advisory committee for the HBCU-LLC project, composed of six distinguished African American deans and directors from partnering HBCUs, will play a major role in guiding the initiative's strategic direction. Responsible for providing expertise on technology trends, effective communication, project management, and diverse and inclusive practices in library services, the committee will also oversee the selection of participants in both tracks of the project. With their collective experience and commitment to

mentorship, the advisory committee will be instrumental in shaping the project's trajectory, contributing significantly to the HBCU-LLC's mission of increasing diversity within the library profession.

- **Dillard University: Jennifer Collins**, Director, Will W. Alexander Library | Expertise in leadership, management, programming, and customer relations.
- **Grambling State University: Adrienne Webber**, Dean of Libraries and Learning Commons | Expertise in library design, renovations, and construction, and information literacy. Current Board Chair of the HBCU Library Alliance.
- **Southern University and A&M College:** Leading the libraries' team is **Dr. Dawn Kight**.| Expertise includes technology, digital equity, leadership development, digitization, library management, grant writing, and project management.
- **Southern University New Orleans: Shatiqua Mosby Wilson**, JD, Director, Leonard S. Washington Memorial Library. Expertise in instruction, management, OER, research, and data analytics background.
- **Southern University Shreveport: Jayne O'Riley**, Director | Expertise in technical services, user access, and library management.
- **Xavier University: Nancy Hampton**, Director | Expertise in collection development, archives, preservation, library programming, and research.

## **Project Work Plan**

HBCUs have access to thousands of students of color and will work closely with university faculty in diverse academic disciplines to recruit students for participation in Track A. HBCU library administrators will recommend library support staff for participation in Track B. Both tracks will include a minimum of four online discussion forums, as well as a culminating institute. From August 2024- June 2026, participants in Tracks A and B will be exposed to expert speakers, discussion panels, online social engagement, mentoring sessions, and a culminating institute (offered virtual and in-person) that includes a recruitment fair. While forums will be available virtually and open to a broad audience of interested students and staff at HBCUs & other academic libraries, mentoring and support for travel to the culminating in-person institute and recruitment fair will be reserved for participants from Louisiana HBCU institutions. Participants in other states will have virtual access to institute sessions.

## **Track A: The HBCU-LLC Forum for Library and Information Science Graduate Education**

This track will focus on recruiting and informing underrepresented and underserved students from HBCU institutions about the academic library profession. Library Science educators, along with current library science students, recent graduates, and librarians of color will lead Track A forums, sharing experiences, resources, and opportunities in library and information science education and the library profession. Track A will conclude with a one-day institute with in-person and virtual options for greater reach. The institute will include a Library and Information Science Graduate Programs recruitment fair, along with discussions, seminars, and presentations. Students from HBCU-LLC institutions will attend in person and present their experiences and information gained in the forums. The Advisory Team, made up of library administrators from each institution, will select two (2) students to participate in an application process. Students from participating institutions will be selected based on the following criteria:

- A letter of recommendation from the library administrator or dean

- A 250 word essay expressing the student's interest and reasoning for wanting to be selected.
- Completion of an application for the program.

Students from outside of Louisiana will be invited to submit an application which will be reviewed by the Advisory Team. Students selected from this process will be given the option to attend forums and the culminating event in person, but without the use of IMLS funding. Virtual attendance of forums will be promoted through electronic fliers posted via social media, BCALA, ARL, ALA, ACRL, and HBCU Library Alliance listservs and shared by HBCU library administrators.

### **Proposed Forums for Track A include:**

1. ***Navigating Library Science Programs:*** This forum will provide insights into choosing the right library science graduate program, with a focus on factors such as curriculum, faculty, and specialization options.
2. ***Diversity in LIS Education:*** This forum aims to focus on discussing the importance of diversity in library and information science education, featuring experiences of library professionals of color and their journey to librarianship.
3. ***Career Paths in Academic Libraries:*** Explores various career paths within academic libraries, including roles in research, instruction, technology, and administration.
4. ***Library Advocacy and Social Justice:*** Discusses the role of librarians in advocating for social justice issues and promoting inclusivity in library spaces.

### **Performance Metrics for Track A:**

To assess the success of Track A, various performance metrics will be used. Firstly, the participation rate will be measured to understand how engaged underrepresented and underserved students from HBCU institutions are in the forums. The impact of the recruitment fair will be evaluated by tracking the number of students showing interest in the library field and/or pursuing graduate education in library and information science. The effectiveness of student presentations during the institute will be assessed through feedback surveys, ensuring the shared information is relevant and impactful. The Advisory Team's selection process for student participation will also be measured by evaluating its fairness and effectiveness through transparency and feedback from the selected students. Virtual attendance during the one-day institute will be measured to understand the program's reach and accessibility beyond the physical location.

Moreover, the effectiveness of the outreach strategy will be gauged by tracking the response to electronic flyers posted via social media, BCALA, ACRL, ALA, ARL, and HBCU Library Alliance listservs, aiming to attract students from outside of Louisiana. Social media engagement, measured through likes, shares, and comments, will provide insights into the effectiveness of online promotion efforts. These metrics collectively aim to ensure Track A's success in recruiting, informing, and engaging a diverse group of students in the academic library profession. Adjustments may be made based on feedback and the evolving nature of the program.

### **Track B: The HBCU-LLC Forum to Build a Diverse Workforce**

This track will focus on support staff of color working in Academic libraries who have already earned a bachelor's degree and want to expand their skills and education by obtaining a graduate degree in library and information science. Topics in Track B will differ from Track A since these individuals are currently

employed in libraries. Online forums will focus on skill-building topics, library issues and advocacy, best practices, and trends to improve resources, services, student success, research, and scholarship. Local and national speakers/experts will be from within and outside of the library field for broader impact. The Advisory Team will select two (2) support staff members from each HBCU-LLC library to participate in an application process. Staff outside of Louisiana will be invited to attend forums through electronic fliers posted via social media, HBCU library administrators, ACRL, ARL, ALA, BCALA, and HBCU Library Alliance listservs.

### **Proposed Forums for Track B include:**

1. ***Technology Trends for Library Support Staff:*** Exploring current and emerging technologies relevant to support staff roles in libraries, with practical applications and hands-on demonstrations. This forum aims to equip support staff with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the rapidly evolving landscape of library technology, ensuring they stay abreast of the latest trends.
2. ***Effective Communication in Libraries:*** Workshops on communication strategies for support staff, focusing on internal collaboration, patron interactions, and conveying information effectively. Through practical exercises and real-world scenarios, support staff will develop communication skills that are essential for fostering positive relationships within the library team and ensuring seamless interactions with library patrons.
3. ***Project Management for Library Support Staff:*** This practical and hands-on session aims to enhance participants' project management skills, equipping them to navigate diverse tasks and responsibilities inherent in library projects. Through case studies and interactive exercises, support staff will gain a comprehensive understanding of project management principles applicable to their roles.
4. ***Diverse & Inclusive Practices in Library Services:*** Discussing and implementing inclusive practices in library services, ensuring that support staff contribute to creating welcoming and accessible library environments highlighting the rich history of the HBCU culture. Participants will explore practical strategies for promoting inclusivity and diversity in their day-to-day interactions, fostering an environment that is both culturally sensitive and responsive to the unique needs of the HBCU community.

### **Performance Metrics for Track B:**

The success of Track B will also be evaluated through several performance indicators. The participation rate of support staff working in HBCU libraries will be assessed to understand the forum's effectiveness in attracting individuals interested in expanding their skills and education. The online forums' impact will be measured through skill-building topics, library issues and advocacy discussions, best practices, and trends to enhance resources, services, student success, research, and scholarship. The diversity and expertise of local and national speakers/experts will be considered for a broader impact. The Advisory Team's selection process for support staff members participating in Track B will also be assessed for fairness and transparency. Another indicator that will be implemented will be focus groups which will address and bring to light existing barriers support staff members face when contemplating Library school. Additionally, the reach of the forums beyond Louisiana will be evaluated by tracking virtual attendance and the success of electronic flyers posted via social media, HBCU library administrators, BCALA, and

HBCU Library Alliance listservs. Southern University's provision of the online platform, accommodating up to 1,000 attendees, will also be a crucial metric for evaluating the forums' accessibility and scalability.

### **HBCU-LLC Culminating Event:**

The Culminating Event, taking place in the Spring as part of Phase III of the project, represents a pivotal moment in the Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Louisiana Libraries Collaborative (HBCU-LLC) initiative. This event is meticulously designed to support participants in their academic and professional journeys. The culminating institute, offered both in-person and virtually, will serve as a comprehensive platform featuring a Library and Information Science Graduate Programs recruitment fair, engaging discussions, informative seminars, and insightful presentations. Participants, including undergraduate students and library staff, will have the opportunity to showcase their learning experiences, share mentor/mentee highlights, and interact with graduate program representatives during the recruitment fair. Sessions at the culminating institute will be shaped by feedback and focused on topics where participants desire more or new information. A renowned keynote speaker will address all institute participants, highlighting the importance of the library and information science field. Travel stipends exclusively provided to selected participants from HBCU-LLC institutions underscore the commitment to supporting active program contributors. Recognizing the importance of accessibility, the culminating institute will extend its reach through an online platform hosted by Southern University. This dual approach aims to maximize participation and ensure a diverse and inclusive culmination of the HBCU-LLC initiative.

### **Phase I *Outreach and Recruitment:* (August 2024 – November 2024)**

The initial phase of the project involves formative planning meetings, recruitment, and participant selection for each track. During this stage, the focus will be on pre-program preparation and recruitment efforts, with the primary objective of enhancing awareness and recruiting underrepresented and underserved students for Track A. This includes setting participation targets and implementing a strategic outreach plan through various channels such as social media, BCALA, ALA, ACRL, ARL, and HBCU Library Alliance listservs. Simultaneously, efforts will be directed towards promoting and reaching out to support staff in HBCU libraries for Track B, to create a diverse and inclusive participant pool through effective communication and engagement strategies.

#### **Objectives:**

- Collaborate extensively with HBCU Library Administrators, Directors, and Faculty to identify and engage underrepresented students for participation in Track A.
- Facilitate dialogue with HBCU Library Administrators to secure recommendations for dedicated support staff interested in Track B.
- Develop visually compelling and informative electronic fliers that emphasize the benefits of participation, targeting social media platforms, BCALA, ALA, ACRL, ARL, and HBCU Library Alliance listservs for mass dissemination.

### **Phase II *Online Forums:* (November 2024 – November 2025)**

As the program progresses into its second phase, it will encompass online forum sessions for both Track A and Track B, fostering engagement and knowledge sharing. Track A will focus on facilitating engaging and inclusive online discussion forums led by library science educators, current students, recent graduates, and librarians of color, sharing valuable experiences and resources. Simultaneously, Track B will feature

skill-building and knowledge enhancement forums tailored for support staff employed in HBCU libraries, addressing relevant topics with contributions from local and national speakers/experts within and outside the library field. Additionally, online social engagement and mentoring sessions will be provided, with HBCU-LLC deans/directors serving as mentors for participants from Louisiana institutions and providing online group mentoring for cohort participants outside of Louisiana. This integrated approach aims to offer comprehensive support and engagement opportunities for participants across both tracks.

**Objectives:**

- Design and implement a series of a minimum of four impactful online discussion forums for both Track A and Track B. Strategically feature library science educators, current students, recent graduates, and experienced librarians of color to provide diverse perspectives.
- Ensure virtual accessibility to forums, fostering inclusivity and attracting a broad audience of interested students and staff at HBCUs nationwide.
- Encourage active participation and engagement in the forums, creating a dynamic and interactive learning environment.
- Utilize Southern University's online platform for live forums, accommodating up to 1,000 attendees, ensuring a seamless and immersive experience.

**Phase III *Culminating Institute, Forums, and Continuous Support:*  
(December 2025 – June 2026)**

In the final phase, attention turns towards finalizing the culminating institute, which is scheduled for the spring to provide participants with ample time to submit applications to graduate schools, if they desire. The institute will offer both in-person and virtual options and will feature a Library and Information Science Graduate Programs recruitment fair, discussions, seminars, and presentations. Participants will have the chance to present their experiences and engage with mentors and graduate program representatives during the recruitment fair, open to any interested undergraduate student and library staff. However, travel stipends to the institute will exclusively be provided to HBCU-LLC institutions' selected participants, ensuring support for those actively involved in the program. Additionally, the culminating institute's accessibility will be extended through an online platform hosted by Southern University.

**Objectives:**

- Organize a comprehensive one-day culminating institute that seamlessly integrates with the ongoing online forums, offering both in-person and virtual options to maximize reach and impact.
- Include key elements such as a recruitment fair, discussions, seminars, and presentations during the institute, providing a holistic experience for participants from Tracks A and B.
- Encourage participants from HBCU-LLC institutions to present their unique experiences and insights gained from the forums during the in-person component of the institute.
- Implement a transparent and fair application process overseen by the Advisory Team to select two students and two support staff members from each HBCU-LLC library to actively participate in the culminating institute.
- Provide continuous mentoring and support, focusing on travel assistance, exclusively for participants from Louisiana HBCU institutions to ensure their participation in the in-person institute.



- Extend virtual access to institute sessions for participants outside of Louisiana, ensuring a seamless transition from online forums to the culminating institute.
- Execute pre- and post-forum assessments to quantitatively measure the impact on participant knowledge and perceptions, fostering ongoing improvement.
- Collect rich qualitative data through surveys and focus groups to evaluate the project's effectiveness, identifying areas of success and opportunities for refinement.
- Analyze participant feedback to understand detailed perspectives, fostering continuous improvement and contributing to the development of future initiatives aimed at advancing diversity and inclusion in Library Sciences.

## **Mentoring**

Utilizing a collaborative mentoring approach, each forum participant will have opportunities for individual or group mentoring sessions. Individuals selected from HBCU-LLC institutions will be paired with a mentor from the Advisory Council. Participants from outside of Louisiana will engage in group sessions where a mentor from the Advisory Council or an HBCU Library dean or director will be matched with a cohort of mentees. A call for volunteer mentors will be extended to all HBCU library deans and directors and shared through the HBCU Library Alliance, JCLC, and BCALA listservs. Mentoring engagement sessions will take place virtually and occur bi-monthly during the project. Mentor/mentee matches will be made based on skills, interests, and project needs. Mentors will participate in a pre-mentoring training session to ensure the effectiveness of the mentorship program. A mentoring schedule, expectations, progress monitoring, and evaluation will guide this component of the project. Using technology to impact the broader participant audience, mentors and mentees will utilize blogs and jamboards to share tips, highlight events of interest, submit questions/answers, and engage in a welcoming online environment. Participants may choose anonymity when posing questions to online boards. Mentors will collaborate to support each other and strengthen the mentoring component. Through personalized guidance, networking opportunities, and exposure to diverse career pathways, mentorship initiatives within the HBCU-LLC will play a pivotal role in creating a more inclusive and equitable landscape for participants.

## **Incorporating Evaluation and Iterative Design:**

To ensure the effectiveness and adaptability of the HBCU-LLC project, we intend to utilize an integrated approach that is both evaluative and iterative. Assessments will be conducted throughout the project, employing formative and summative evaluation methods. Pre- and post-forum surveys will be created for each track to measure participants' garnering of knowledge, overall satisfaction, and perceived impact. This feedback will be utilized iteratively, allowing us to tweak the content and structure of upcoming sessions based on input from our participants, emerging trends, and identified areas for refinement. By tapping into an iterative design process, we aim to enhance the overall quality and relevance of the forums and in-person institutes.

## **Progress Tracking and Performance Metrics:**

Performance indicators are key to monitoring progress toward achieving our intended results. Those indicators should be aligned with the project's initial goals and objectives. Proposed indicators may include participant numbers, engagement levels, knowledge acquisition, and library career awareness, among others. Special attention will be paid to creating a structured data collection system that will be put

in place to capture participant demographics, attendance rates, and feedback. Analysis of these performance indicators will provide insights into the project's success and areas for development, allowing for informed decision-making and adjustments as needed.

### **Dissemination of Findings and Stakeholder Engagement:**

Throughout the duration of the project, dissemination of project findings, coursework, and training content will be an integral and ongoing aspect of our collaborative efforts, targeting a diverse range of stakeholders. We are committed to engaging participating institutions, academic communities, and relevant professional organizations through multiple channels, including reports, presentations, articles, conferences, newsletters, and a dedicated project website. Our comprehensive communication plan is designed to reach a broad audience and facilitate knowledge sharing, emphasizing the importance of continuous dissemination throughout the HBCU-LLC initiative. Furthermore, we will actively solicit feedback from stakeholders, fostering ongoing communication and collaboration to maximize the impact of the HBCU-LLC project. In summary, our approach underscores the significance of continuous evaluation, iterative design, and strategic dissemination, creating a dynamic and responsive framework that not only ensures the success and sustainability of the project but also contributes to the broader goals of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program.

### **Project Results**

Throughout the project's duration, our commitment to knowledge sharing and collaborative learning will extend beyond the immediate goals of the forums and culminating institute. We recognize the importance of capturing the valuable insights gained during the HBCU-LLC initiative to create a sustainable and replicable national model for other institutions, states, and regions. To this end, we will develop a "Lessons Learned" project document that comprehensively shares our processes, experiences, and strategies. This document will outline the best practices, challenges, and innovative approaches encountered throughout the project, offering a roadmap for replication at other institutions. The forums' primary objectives are to increase the representation of underrepresented individuals in library schools and enhance the skills of current library workers at HBCU-LLC institutions. As we approach the conclusion of the project, undergraduate students of color and HBCU library support staff will be equipped with knowledge, opportunities, and resources in library and information science education and the library profession. Comprehensive data, including surveys, oral feedback, and proceedings from the culminating institute, will be made openly available in the Southern University Online Open Repository, contributing to a thorough understanding of the project's impact.

In addition to quantitative measurements, the project's success will be measured qualitatively through the stories, strength, and empowerment of HBCU students and staff connecting with successful black library administrators. To further ensure the project's accessibility and replicability, we will conduct focus groups and utilize program publications to create a comprehensive recap and documentation. This wealth of information will be easily accessible for future replication, shared at conferences such as the HBCU Library Alliance Conference, ACRL, and other library conferences, and presented in a report to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). By disseminating this information widely, we aim to stimulate conversations, inspire ideas, and encourage other institutions to collaborate and undertake similar impactful projects.





## **Digital Products Plan**

The HBCU-LLC initiative will include diverse digital products. The project team is committed to using best practice standards and following guidance outlined in the Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative.

### **Type**

- Videos
- Presentation Slides
- Forum Recordings
- Pictures

### **Availability**

Digital content will be made available through the openly available Southern University Library's digital repository system. Virtual forum sessions will be viewable through Zoom and the library's YouTube channel. Additionally, digital content also will be provided to the HBCU Library Alliance and made available via their website and listserv.

### **Access**

All digital products created for or resulting from the HBCU-LLC project will be released with a Creative Commons License of CC BY-NC. This license will allow users to adapt and share for non-commercial use only, with attribution.

Participants will be requested to sign optional release forms for photos and videos at the beginning of the project for all forums and the culminating institute. Only summary data from surveys and evaluative feedback will be shared in presentations and papers submitted for publication to protect the privacy of participants and according to Southern University Institutional Review Board protocols.

### **Sustainability**

Digital products will be stored in the Southern University digital repository system. An individual DOI will be assigned automatically to each file deposited. Backup files of digital assets will be stored on a protected drive, stored in the PI office, and available only to key project staff. Public access files made available through the library's website are stored on a protected secured access server with a remote site back-up location.