

*Autistic Lived Experience: Community Curation and Memory Workers Fellowship
IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grants - Final Narrative - 3/20/24*

Project Justification:

The vision of the *Autistic Lived Experience: Community Curation and Memory Workers Fellowship Project* (“the Project”) is to address neuro-normative assumptions and practices within the field of archives and oral history, moving the field toward a neuro-affirming framework for working with and supporting Neurodivergent people. To achieve this vision of increasing accessibility and inclusion within the field, the Association of Moving Image Archivists submits this proposal for \$182,388 on behalf of the *Autistic Voices Oral History Project* (tAVOHP) in collaboration with the *Association for Autism and Neurodiversity* (AANE).

This Implementation project led by Project Director Casey Davis will:

1. Deliver targeted training to archivists and oral historians on Autistic communication and culture, significantly improving their ability to inclusively serve their communities. This aligns with IMLS Strategic Objective 1.2, focusing on the professional development of the museum and library workforce.
2. Equip members of the Autistic community with oral history skills, promoting their active engagement in the co-curation of their lived experiences. This effort supports IMLS Strategic Objective 2.1, which aims to foster inclusive engagement across diverse communities.

This project aims to address and begin to rectify the ongoing underrepresentation of lived Autistic experience within the historic record. Central to the project's objectives is the professional development of non-Autistic (allistic) memory workers and Autistic memory workers alike, enhancing their competencies in cross-neurotype¹ communication and oral history practices. Memory workers frequently interact with the Autistic community, whether through collaborations, acquisitions, interviews, or service provision. Many memory workers may have colleagues (superiors, peers or direct reports) who are Autistic. The knowledge and skills gained through this project will enable them to better understand, serve, and partner with Autistic individuals, extending the project's impact well beyond its duration. In addition, the project prioritizes the involvement of the Autistic community in the oral history process, providing a platform for Autistic individuals to both document and share community narratives. This collaborative approach not only enriches the archival record but also validates, represents and honors the diverse lived experiences within the Autistic community.

Launched in 2023, tAVOHP records, preserves, and makes accessible the stories of Autistic people, documenting our perspectives, our culture, our struggles, and our joy. tAVOHP records interviews (video, audio or written testimonies) for preservation with a repository partner and makes interviews available online to the extent permitted by interviewees. The Library of Congress' American Folklife Center has enthusiastically accepted a first batch of interviews, and we intend to continue depositing future interviews with them. While tAVOHP aims to capture

¹ A neurotype is a type of brain, in terms of how a person perceives and interacts with the world. Autism is a neurotype.

stories across the widest possible spectrum of the Autistic experience, the project gives special attention to ensuring that the stories of people historically marginalized from dominant representations and understanding of autism are preserved. Our goal is to facilitate the use of these video, audio, and written artifacts as agents of change, tools for advocacy, and as means to contribute to a more representative historic record. tAVOHP challenges the conventional approaches to oral history, which have historically been designed from a neuro-normative perspective and are exclusive of neurodivergent ways of thinking, processing, feeling, remembering, and communicating. tAVOHP oral history interviews are Autistically designed to ensure mental and emotional comfort and to reduce stressors. Details on our methodology, ethics and privacy practices are publicly available on the [tAVOHP website](#) and further described in the Work Plan.

AMIA and tAVOHP are proud to partner with the *Association for Autism and Neurodiversity* (AANE) on this pioneering initiative. Since its inception in 1996, AANE has been at the forefront of empowering Autistic and similarly Neurodivergent individuals to lead meaningful and connected lives. With a commitment to education, community, and support, AANE stands out in the autism space for its inclusive and validating approach. Uniquely, AANE's programs and services are directly informed by the insights and experiences of Autistic team leaders and members, including staff, facilitators, coaches, peers, and board and committee members. Unlike medical models that pathologize autism, AANE embraces it as an integral part of an individual's identity, celebrating strengths while addressing support needs and advocating against discrimination. This alignment with tAVOHP's goals—to document and preserve Autistic lived experiences through oral history—ensures our collaboration not only amplifies Autistic voices but does so with an authenticity and respect that challenges societal misconceptions and promotes a broader understanding of neurodiversity.

Addressing the nuanced challenges of cross-neurotype communication is paramount to this project, particularly due to the phenomenon known as the "double-empathy problem²." This theory, first coined in 2012 by Autistic autism researcher Damian Milton, proposes that the common difficulties that Autistic and allistic people face in communicating are due to a mutual breakdown in empathy and understanding between both parties, not due to a deficit in communication within either group. The double-empathy problem emphasizes that misunderstandings and miscommunications often stem from the disparate ways in which Autistic and allistic people perceive, interact with, and interpret the world around them. This theory is in direct opposition to the outdated and inaccurate medical model view of autism as a “disorder” and that Autistic communication is inherently deficient. This project will help address communication challenges across neurotypes; tAVOHP staff consider cross-neurotype communication a necessary core competency among people doing memory work.

For Autistic individuals, communication and information processing manifest distinctly from their non-Autistic counterparts. Many in the Autistic community express a preference for direct, unambiguous communication, finding nuanced or implied meanings challenging to navigate. Conversely, current oral history practice emphasizes the value of open-ended questions. Some Autistic people find eye contact prohibitive in their ability to engage, process information, or

² Damian E.M. Milton (2012) On the ontological status of autism: the 'double empathy problem', *Disability & Society*, 27:6, 883-887, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2012.710008

respond, this can even be painful at times. Conversely, current oral history practice often makes assumptions about the type of environment an interviewee would find comfortable. Because Autistic people process significantly more information in their environments than allistic people, processing speeds can also be slower than their allistic counterparts. This difference can make instantaneous integration of information and response-forming more challenging. Conversely, current oral history practice values spontaneity and immediate responses. The diversity within the Autistic spectrum also includes individuals who are visual thinkers—those who understand and relate to the world primarily through images—and conceptual thinkers, who grasp concepts and ideas in the abstract. The diverse ways in which people remember their own past requires thoughtful and intentional understanding between the interviewer and interviewee in order to yield an honest and representative interview.

Recognizing and adapting to these differences is critical for memory workers who seek to accurately capture and preserve the diversity of Autistic narratives. By integrating an understanding of the double-empathy problem and the diverse communication preferences within the Autistic community, memory workers can move beyond mere accommodation towards true inclusivity. This project aims to equip memory workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate these complexities, fostering environments where Autistic voices are not only heard but deeply understood and valued. Through such efforts, we anticipate not only enhancing the archival record but also contributing to a broader societal shift towards appreciating the full spectrum of human neurodiversity.

tAVOHP has begun assembling a collection of oral history interviews with members of the Autistic community. Awareness of tAVOHP is steadily building through outreach via social media and word of mouth. Recorded interviews are made available on the tAVOHP website at <https://autisticvoices.org>. To date, all interviews have been conducted by Casey Davis and Sam Fleishman, both of whom recognize their privilege as white, speaking, high-masking Autistic people.

A primary audience for the broader tAVOHP initiative is the Autistic population, approximately 3-4% of humanity, a group wildly unvoiced and underrepresented. Due to decades of historically gendered bias and limited research on autism focused only on a narrow demographic of Autistic identity (primarily white, middle or upper class, cisgender boys whose Autistic traits are externally presenting), countless Autistic individuals were missed and went undiagnosed. After years of struggling to fit into neurotypical society without understanding their differences, they are only now becoming aware that they are Autistic as adults. Often, this awareness comes as a result of seeking psychological help during mental health crises or after their children are diagnosed. The awareness gained can be transformative, giving us permission to deny neurotypical norms that are unnatural to us, new understanding and language to describe our brains, strategies for accommodating and advocating for our needs, compassion for ourselves, and a community of people with shared experience.

tAVOHP's work seeks to serve as a catalyst for not-yet-identified Autistic people to discover their Autistic identity. A primary goal of tAVOHP is to center the voices and stories of women, non-binary, and trans people, people of color, non-speaking Autistic people, Autistic elders, and others whose experience has been historically marginalized from dominant representations and

understanding of autism. This project will provide funding for people whose Autistic identity intersects with other marginalized identities to participate in the oral history workshops and will empower them to collect oral histories from others who share their lived experiences.

Our audience extends much farther, though. The interviews collected through this project will be shared with neurotypical families, bosses, coworkers, friends, partners, teachers, students, therapists, researchers, journalists, and others in hopes that they develop a better understanding of Autistic lived experience. Our goal is to provide a collection of first-hand perspectives that can educate the public about the myths and misrepresentations of autism that stand in the way of genuine appreciation and understanding of neurodiversity.

Overall, tAVOHP seeks to address the narrow lens through which autism has been understood by the public and fill significant gaps in the historic record. While Autistic people represent approximately 3-4% of the human species, tAVOHP is the only such archive in the United States with a specific focus on preserving our experiences. Historically, autism has been pathologized by non-Autistic psychologists, researchers, doctors, and ultimately our families and the public, viewing autism as a “disorder” featuring “deficits” in need of a “cure.” Meanwhile, the Autistic community embraces our Autistic identity and culture, advocating for #NothingAboutUsWithoutUs and #AutisticPride. Autistic activists and researchers have sought to combat negative stereotypes, misconceptions and pseudo-science, but this cross-continent movement has yet to be documented and preserved.

Project Work Plan

The project work plan will be undertaken by the tAVOHP staff in collaboration with project partners, advisors, oral history consultants, fellows and interviewees. Casey Davis (Project Director) and Sam Rhoades Fleishman (Project Manager) have co-led tAVOHP since the beginning.

In 2023, Casey Davis (Project Director) founded tAVOHP after recovering from an Autistic Burnout that had led to an autism diagnosis in 2021. Casey has over a decade of leadership experience in archives, oral history, education and project management in public broadcasting and academia. She has directed or managed grants totalling over \$25 million, including multiple federal grants from IMLS and NEH. Over the past year, Casey has expanded her expertise in Autistic community building and advocacy through her work at Autism Tennessee.

Sam is a writer, researcher and performer with a passion for multimedia storytelling and disability advocacy. Sam was professionally identified as Autistic at the age of 24, which inspired an on-going educational pursuit of autism and neurodiversity. Currently, Sam works in autism research at the Lurie Center for Autism at Massachusetts General Hospital, where they brings their lived experience as a late-diagnosed Autistic individual to the field. They are also a teaching artist at Partners for Youth with Disabilities where they teach theatre as part of the Access to Arts program.

Laura Rooney has been the Managing Director of the Association of Moving Image Archivists since 2002. In her role, she leads a team of three staff and oversees all day-to-day activities of the

international association, including coordinating membership, liaising with special projects, managing the AMIA board of directors, and planning and executing all AMIA events.

The Project will occur in 7 Phases over a 15 month period.

Phase 1 (Month 1)

In Phase 1 (Month 1), tAVOHP staff (Davis, Fleishman and Rooney) will select two oral history consultants to support the Project. The oral history consultants will be identified based on their expertise in oral history and interest in neurodiversity, with a priority for those with lived experience as Neurodivergent. AMIA will enter into contracts with tAVOHP staff, AANE, oral history consultants and the advisory committee. tAVOHP staff will hold a kick-off Zoom meeting among staff, AMIA, AANE, oral history consultants and our Advisory Committee. The meeting will include a review of the Project goals and timeline. The kick-off meeting will also establish the Project communication plan, tools and organizational methods.

tAVOHP staff and partners will use the following communication tools over the course of the Project:

- Zoom for meetings and oral history interviews
- Asana for project management (overall project management, interview planning, and post-production)
- Email and Slack for project communication
- Calendar invitations for scheduling meetings and interviews
- Google Drive for project documentation, including workshop content, interview documentation, and fellow applications
- Social Media Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to share project updates and to disseminate the work of the fellows and the interviewees' stories with the wider public

Phase 2 (Months 2-5)

During Phase 2, tAVOHP staff, AANE, and the oral history consultants will design the "Oral History with Autistics for Memory Workers Workshop" content. tAVOHP, the oral history consultants, and AANE will also collaboratively design the "Autistic Community Oral History Workshop" content. Throughout this phase, the tAVOHP staff will actively seek feedback from AMIA's Oral History and Accessibility Committees to ensure the workshops are inclusive, accessible, and accurately represent a wide range of Autistic experiences, reinforcing the project's commitment to diversity and Autistic acceptance.

Phase 3 (Months 4-5)

During Phase 3, tAVOHP, AMIA and AANE will issue two separate calls for fellow applications, one for Memory Workers Fellows and one for Autistic Community Fellows. The call for applications will be shared via archives and oral history listservs and online Autistic community spaces and AANE's vast membership. Twelve memory workers and 12 Autistic community members will be selected by tAVOHP staff and the Advisory Committee.

From the memory workers applicants, we will seek fellows who have a vested interest in neurodiversity either personally or professionally, and we will give priority to applicants who are part of other marginalized communities. Memory Workers may either be Autistic or allistic to

participate in the fellowship. From the Autistic community applicants, we will seek fellows who have a vested interest in history, storytelling, or Autistic advocacy, and we will again prioritize applicants who are part of other marginalized communities. After becoming aware of their Autistic identity, many people in the Autistic community (such as ourselves) develop a passion and Special Interest³ in autism specifically, so we anticipate many members of the community will be greatly interested in this opportunity.

Phase 4 (Month 6)

In Phase 4, the tAVOHP staff will hold two workshops, the “Oral History with Autistics for Memory Workers Workshop” and The “Autistic Community Oral History Workshop.”

The “Oral History with Autistics for Memory Workers Workshop” will be free and open to any archivist or oral historian to attend. It will be co-taught by tAVOHP staff and AANE. This workshop will cover neurodiversity acceptance and inclusion, focusing specifically on the Autistic experience and ways of being, and it will offer recommended practices for conducting oral history interviews with people with an Autistic neurotype.

The “Autistic Community Oral History Workshop” will be open only to Autistic Community Fellows. This workshop will cover an introduction to oral history and recommended practices for conducting oral history interviews with Autistic people. tAVOHP will share our inclusive interview practices and the process by which we came to create it.

Phase 5 (Months 7-10):

For Phase 5, fellows will conduct their oral history interviews. After the workshops, the tAVOHP staff and AANE will offer support and guidance to all 24 fellows via scheduled group meetings and regular office hours. A Slack channel will be created to share questions and experiences. The fellows from each cohort will each conduct two oral history interviews with other Autistic community members to be added to the collection.

During this time (and/or in advance of this phase), AANE will help recruit interviewees from the AANE community. The tAVOHP staff will also support fellows with the recruitment of interviewees via direct outreach to individuals such as Autistic activists, writers, scientists, and others, as well as via outreach to Autistic-led organizations. The team will also introduce interviewers and interviewees to each other as appropriate, helping create a safe, accessible and welcoming space for both in their participation. In other cases, fellows will interview colleagues, friends or family members with whom they already have a connection. A total of 48 interviews will be conducted by the 24 fellows.

Phase 6 (Months 8 - 14):

Phase 6 will involve post-production. Interview recordings, completed release forms, and biographical forms will be delivered by fellows to the tAVOHP staff. After each interview is conducted, fellows will obtain sign-off on the interview by the interviewee. Feedback from interviewees may include redaction requests or edits. Once approved, the fellows will deliver to the tAVOHP staff the original video file, signed appearance release, completed biographical

³ An intense and passionate interest in which an Autistic person often becomes an expert, and in which engaging brings them great joy.

form, and minimal metadata record to the tAVOHP staff. The preliminary metadata will include, at minimum, the interviewee name (or pseudonym), interviewer name, time-stamps for any redactions, interviewee and interviewer pronouns, interviewee location, a description of the interview, topics covered, date of interview, and a significant quote from the interview.

tAVOHP staff will enhance the metadata for each interview, perform any necessary editing and create closed captions. tAVOHP staff will also create an accompanying image description of the interviewee and their interview environment for enhanced accessibility of video recordings. tAVOHP staff will upload interview recordings to the tAVOHP Vimeo account for streaming and will connect the recordings with metadata records on the project's Wix website. Copies will also be deposited with an archival repository. The Library of Congress' American Folklife Center has enthusiastically accepted a first batch of interviews already conducted, and we intend to continue depositing future batches with them. Details regarding interview deliverables and metadata can be found in the Digital Products Form.

Phase 7 (Months 1-15):

Phase 7 will be dedicated to project outreach and will take place over the duration of the grant. The tAVOHP staff will utilize social media to share news and updates on the Project. To share the Project with the archival community, tAVOHP staff will propose sessions for the AMIA, SAA, and OHA conferences. At the end of the Project, a culminating online event bringing together the 24 fellows will support continued community engagement and sharing of experiences and feedback on the Project. tAVOHP staff will also organize an online get-together among all of the interviewees who participated in the Project as a way to support connection, sharing of experiences and gathering feedback on ways we can make tAVOHP more impactful for all involved.

Commitment to Accessible and Ethical Practice

Throughout the Project, fellows will receive training on the implementation of tAVOHP's ethical practices across all interactions with interviewees. tAVOHP and its interviewers will pledge adherence to the best practices and ethical principles advocated by the Oral History Association (OHA), as detailed in their Statement on Ethics: <https://oralhistory.org/oha-statement-on-ethics/>.

We perceive the tAVOHP initiative as a collaborative endeavor between the tAVOHP staff, interviewers and the interviewees, anchored in mutual care, dignity, and respect. This collaborative framework is vital in ensuring that interviewees feel empowered to narrate their stories as they see fit. In practical terms, this neuro-affirming collaboration involves:

Pre-Interview Preparation: Interviewers will provide interviewees with a list of questions ahead of the interview, allowing them the freedom to edit this list by omitting specific questions or proposing new ones. This process ensures interviewees have control over their narrative and can adequately prepare for their interview. It can also mitigate social and performance anxiety often experienced by neurodivergent folks.

Care, Respect, and Psychological Safety: Interviewers will actively engage with interviewees to understand the aspects of their story they are most keen to share. The Project will emphasize the importance of respecting the interviewees' time and energy, recognizing the potential for Autistic

burnout. We make it clear that interviews can be paused, stopped, rescheduled, or reconvened to accommodate the interviewee's needs, ensuring they feel energized and comfortable sharing their experiences in a safe space. Part of the fellows' training process will include general mental health literacy given that many interviews could include discussion of sensitive subjects such as mental health, suicide, self-harm, medical trauma, ableism, racism, substance abuse or addiction, domestic violence, or other forms of trauma.

Autistically-Informed Interview Methodologies: tAVOHP's interviewing approach is Autistically informed, accommodating the various communication styles, processing methods, and experiences among Autistic individuals. Training for fellows will cover specific neuro-affirming practices and protocols, such as, but not limited to, crafting direct interview questions, obtaining prior consent for follow-up questions, and offering interviewees a variety of ways to communicate their narrative. Additionally, interviewees may have a support person present to aid in telling their story.

Sensory and Environmental Considerations: All interviews are conducted virtually on Zoom, giving interviewees the freedom to choose their environment. Interviewees are encouraged to choose a sensory-friendly environment that accommodates their needs and sensory profile. We explicitly state that eye contact is not required, and stimming is welcome during the interview process.

Privacy and Consent: tAVOHP upholds high standards of privacy, allowing interviewees to control their level of disclosure. This includes options for anonymity, choice of medium (video, audio, or written testimonies), and decisions regarding the inclusion of personal information in the interview metadata. Interviewees also have the right to redact content from their recorded narratives. Each interviewee agrees to participate in the project by signing an Appearance Release form (see Supportingdoc3.pdf), in which interviewees retain copyright to their story and grant a worldwide, non-exclusive, perpetual license to the Project and the Archive Home for its discretionary uses of the Materials in addition to all uses permitted by law. Such discretionary uses may include but are not limited to cataloging, preservation, copying and migration for preservation purposes, exhibition, display, and making works available for non-commercial research, educational and informational purposes (including online), in accordance with Project policy and applicable law. Participants can further grant permission for the Project and the Archive Home to use a clip from their interview for social media or other purposes to promote the Project. Consistently throughout the project, we will solicit and integrate feedback from interviewees, fellows, and project partners to enhance the safety, welcoming atmosphere, and accessibility of the project for all participants.

Diversity Plan

We are dedicated to ensuring that our work exemplifies equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in all aspects and phases of implementation. We are committed to uplifting and including underrepresented groups within both the Memory Worker and Autistic fellow communities and the interviewees. We will cultivate an accessible and inclusive community throughout the project and disseminate our oral history methodologies to help address historical underrepresentation and ableist discrimination.

In the initial phase, the project will adopt inclusive meeting practices, ensuring materials and discussions accommodate sensory and communication preferences. We will send out a survey prior to meetings that allow for individuals to respond to questions about their unique needs. We will also expand our Advisory Committee to reflect a multitude of backgrounds and insights. Our Advisory Committee currently includes individuals with these identities: disabled, Autistic, queer, Black, neurotypical, partner of Autistic person, parent of Autistic person, AuDHD, trans, and gender non-conforming. We will actively engage them in guiding the project to achieve its vision.

The recruitment phase for fellows will emphasize an equitable selection process, aiming to attract applicants from marginalized communities through targeted outreach strategies that extend into typically underrepresented groups. Among the Memory Workers applicants, we will prioritize selection of professionals (Autistic and allistic) who are part of other marginalized communities. Among the Autistic Community applicants, this will include, to name a few: non-speaking individuals, Autistic elders, Autistic individuals across all gender identities, Autistic people of color, those with co-occurring disabilities, Autistic people across geographic location, and Autistic veterans.

As we transition into designing workshop content, the focus will remain on inclusivity, soliciting contributions and feedback from AMIA's Oral History and Accessibility Committees comprising members of varied lived experiences to ensure comprehensive representation. Conducting workshops with a lens on accessibility will allow us to highlight diverse Autistic experiences, utilizing inclusive techniques to foster understanding across a wide audience. As fellows are conducting their interviews, they will be encouraged and supported in capturing a diverse array of narratives, while being trained in respectful and adaptive interviewing practices that cater to the interviewees' unique cultural, sensory, and communication needs. Post-production efforts will prioritize inclusive editing and captioning, ensuring narratives are preserved authentically.

Outreach and engagement activities will be designed to be inclusive, employing various platforms to reach and resonate with diverse audiences, with a keen focus on soliciting feedback to refine the project's inclusivity efforts continually. tAVOHP staff will undertake an iterative evaluation approach to measure the effectiveness of the Project in achieving its vision. This holistic approach aims not only to amplify underrepresented voices but also to foster a project environment that is welcoming, respectful, and reflective of the diverse society in which we live.

While tAVOHP aims to capture stories across the widest possible spectrum of the Autistic experience, the project gives special attention to ensuring that the stories of people historically marginalized from dominant representations and understanding of autism are preserved. Research and diagnoses of autism have historically focused on a narrow demographic, primarily focusing on young white cisgender boys whose Autistic traits are externally-presenting, leaving generations of women, non-binary and trans individuals, people of color, and other Autistic individuals who have been socialized/forced to mask their Autistic traits, undiagnosed and without the support they could have received if identified at an early age. We are in an age where many adults who have struggled for much of their lives to fit into neurotypical society are realizing that they are Autistic and were never diagnosed. Media representation of Autistic people has also been incomplete or inaccurate, leading to a lack of understanding of the diversity

of the Autistic community. By archiving the stories and lived experiences of Autistic individuals, tAVOHP hopes to provide an accurate and authentic primary source for individuals seeking to understand the Autistic experience better.

We pledge to cultivate an inclusive culture throughout all of our efforts. We stand in solidarity with the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community. We assert that underrepresented voices deserve to be an essential part of the fabric of our society and the stories we preserve. We commit to amplifying diverse voices in all of our endeavors.

Project Results

Through this project, we will engage the Autistic population and educate memory workers on intentional documentation of neurodivergent people in accessible and inclusive ways. In addition to the broader IMLS Strategic Goals outlined in the Justification, this project will achieve the Laura Bush 21st Century Grant Program goal 3 of enhancing the training and professional development of the library and archival workforce to meet the needs of their communities. Specifically, the project will address Goal 3.2, to create a training and fellowship program that builds library and archival workforce skills and expertise in contributing to the well-being of their communities.

Specific results include: 1) knowledge and understanding gained via workshops and fellowships by 12 memory workers; 2) engagement of 12 Autistic community members passionate about Autistic advocacy and oral history to help build a collection of Autistic voices that represents the diversity of our community; 3) engagement with and addition of 48 Autistic voices to the historic record; and 4) broad dissemination of the project throughout the archival community.

The results will extend well beyond the grant. We anticipate trained memory workers will take this new knowledge with them as they continue to serve their communities throughout their careers. We also hope this project helps set a precedent that cross-neurotype communication becomes considered a core competency for practitioners in the field. By providing the fellowship opportunity to Autistic individuals specifically, we will support them in pursuing interests and exploration in future careers within library and information science.

Additional results lie within the connections cultivated among our entire community of involved participants. Alongside AANE, tAVOHP dreams of a world in which Autistic people feel included and accepted. This project will help move towards that dream by building a community about shared interests. This project seeks to help create a world in which Autistic people can feel we belong in it, where we can be our natural selves in all environments without having to use all of our brain energy to try to communicate and behave in ways unnatural to us in order to make the neuromajority⁴ feel comfortable around us. We envision these fellowships as a way to center Autistic ways of being in oral history practice, creating space for us to unmask and share our authentic perspectives.

⁴Those whose behaviors and ways of being are deemed socially acceptable; comprises those who are neurotypical.

***Autistic Lived Experience: Community Curation and Memory Workers Fellowship
IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grants - Digital Products Plan - 3/20/24***

The tAVOHP staff has created the following Digital Products Plan, which provides details on preservation and metadata practices, standards and protocols, availability and access strategies and considerations, as well as plans for sustainability.

Type

The project will create the following types of digital products:

- PowerPoint presentations for 2 workshops
- Video recordings for 2 workshops (h.264 .mp4 video files)
- Meeting notes and other project documentation (text documents)
- 48 final interview recordings (video, audio and textual documents)
- 48 signed appearance releases (PDF files)
- 48 completed biographical forms (PDF files)
- 48 preliminary metadata records (delivered via CSV files)
- 48 md5 checksums
- 48 closed captioning files, and
- 48 web pages at <https://autisticvoices.org>

The project will use the Zoom video conferencing tool to conduct all video and audio interviews. Fellows will export video interviews as h.264 .mp4 video files. Audio interviews will be saved as .mp3 files. Any written interviews collected during the project will be delivered as text documents and saved as .docx and .pdf files. During post-production, the team will use FFmpeg to generate md5 checksums for each final interview recording.

Metadata

Metadata records created by the Fellows and enhanced by tAVOHP staff will include the following fields, drawn from the Dublin Core metadata schema (allowing for flexibility as needed): resource type, contributor/interviewee name (or pseudonym), creator/interviewer name, interviewee pronouns, interviewer pronouns, interviewee location, description, date, language, rights information, subjects, relevant resources mentioned during the interview, and a significant quote from the interview. The project team will use a speech-to-text tool to create (and later fully correct) time-stamped transcripts of each interview.

The tAVOHP staff will deliver interview packages, including all metadata and caption files, to the archival repository (the Archive Home). We intend to continue depositing interviews with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

Availability

Workshop content will be made available on the AMIA website and the tAVOHP website. The

recordings of the instructional content only (not discussion) will also be made available to the public and hosted on Vimeo, embedded on both the AMIA and tAVOHP websites.

Interviews (once approved with any necessary redactions) will be made available online in full, worldwide, on the tAVOHP website at <https://autisticvoices.org>. The tAVOHP website is a Wix website. Interview access copies are stored in Vimeo and embedded on the Wix website. Corrected transcripts will be made available as closed captions (SRT files) with the interviews.

Access

Workshop content will be made available under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike 4.0 International License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en>.

When interviewees sign an appearance release to share their story with the tAVOHP project, they will agree to donate digital copies of the interview to tAVOHP and give permission to tAVOHP to deposit copies of the interview to the Archive Home.

Interviewees retain copyright to their interview and grant a worldwide, non-exclusive, perpetual license to tAVOHP and the Archive Home for their discretionary uses of the interview in addition to all uses permitted by law. Such discretionary uses may include but are not limited to cataloging, preservation, copying and migration for preservation purposes, exhibition, display, and making works available for non-commercial research, educational and informational purposes (including online), in accordance with Project policy and applicable law.

Before tAVOHP does anything with an interviewee's interview recording, we will seek written sign-off by the interviewee on the approved interview recording. We allow for the interviewee to note any timestamps requiring redaction.

Any requests for uses outside of the permitted uses are directed back to the interviewee for permission on a case-by-case basis.

Sustainability

AMIA is fully committed to hosting the workshop content and workshop recordings in perpetuity.

tAVOHP fully commits to continuing to support the tAVOHP Vimeo account and Wix website for at least 10 years, which will host all interviews and workshop recordings. If Vimeo and Wix tools become obsolete, the project team is committed to migrating access copies to new hosting platforms.

Once interviews are delivered to the Archive Home (i.e., the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center), they will be preserved and migrated over time in accordance with the archive's preservation policies.