Undergraduates, Diversity, and the Digital Library Pipeline:
Recruitment and Retention of LIS Professionals through HBCUs and Liberal Arts Colleges

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Advisors and Participants: leadership and staff of the Digital Library Federation (DLF); Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR); DLF Liberal Arts Colleges Pre-Conference committee; HBCU Library Alliance; and DLF Digital Library Pedagogy Group. Letters of support and a list of projected attendees, planning committee members, and advisors from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as well as liberal arts colleges (LACs) will form part of the full proposal.

Building on Recognized Need: Critical engagement with the state of the profession and its diversity initiatives is not new, but must be thoughtfully sustained in order to enact change. The American Library Association's demographic survey results in 2005 confirmed and highlighted the pervasive whiteness of our field and results almost a decade later, in 2014, remained largely unchanged with 87% of respondents identifying as white. As Hathcock asks and addresses in "White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS," "With minority librarians leaving the profession as soon as they are recruited, what can be done to render our abundance of diversity initiatives truly effective? Why are these ambitious and numerous initiatives failing to have the desired effect?" It is this two-fold issue of recruitment in the digital library pipeline and retention of librarians from under-represented groups that the DLF is in a unique position to meaningfully address.

Project Description and Work Plan: DLF proposes a one-day LB21-funded pre-conference and planning summit for approximately 100 HBCU and LAC faculty and librarians as well as undergraduate students considering library careers at the 2017 DLF Forum. Centering the discussion around digital library pedagogy, stakeholders from HBCUs and LACs will converse on topics such as teaching with and in digital libraries, building and curating digital humanities and open science collections, and informational literacy. The event will be a platform to address pipeline problems as participants creatively, collaboratively, and critically consider the professional development of librarians and digital library technologists in the context of undergraduate teaching, and the resources and environments essential to support and inspire students from under-represented groups.

Because DLF hosts an annual Forum, we can draw on many successful event planning models and resources. We anticipate utilizing former participants and planning committee members of our DLF Liberal Arts Colleges Pre-Conferences, members of the DLF Digital Library Pedagogy Group, iSchool faculty affiliated with DLF and CLIR, organizers of the #critlib and THATCamp Unconferences, and contacts from the HBCU Library Alliance. CLIR/DLF staff will operate the logistics by organizing and assisting with services for participants at the Westin Convention Center, handling all business details, managing the online registration system, and publicizing the event.

The event will begin with a keynote address and close with a panel discussion. Certain sessions will be recorded and live-streamed to enable virtual attendance. Following the unconference model, all presentations, discussions, and workshops will be participant-driven. Prior to the event, DLF will also facilitate a lightweight mentorship program for interested unconference participants and encourage those attending the DLF Forum to participate in our Forum mentorship program as well.

Goals and Outcomes: DLF's goal is to enable formal and informal conversations about ways to support the recruitment and retention of librarians and digital library technicians from under-represented groups. Participants will contribute to a white paper drawing from the day's discussion.

It will describe best current pedagogical practices, model librarian and teaching faculty partnerships and programs, community-recommended next steps for HBCU/LAC collaborations within DLF, and will offer an assessment of what is needed from funders to make a real difference in this sphere.

A successful unconference and planning summit will: deepen our relationships with professionals and students at HBCUs and LACs; provide participants with opportunities for networking and collaboration across events, programs, working groups, and communities; and continue much-needed discussions about diversity and inclusion. DLF will offer competitive travel bursaries and free registration for both the summit and the DLF Forum for *20* participants, privileging HBCU faculty, librarians, and students as well as LAC participants who are members of under-represented groups.

Relevance and Impact: The outcomes of this unconference and summit have clear relevance to the entire field in two major ways: the institutional and the personal. Focused conversations at the event will allow our participants to consider strategic ways to harness DLF's relationships with organizations like code4lib, the Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums, Association of College & Research Libraries, American Library Association, Association of Research Libraries, Coalition for Networked Information, Digital Public Library of America, and Visual Resources Association to support institutional change. Wide dissemination of the white paper may ultimately shape the conversations at other professional membership meetings as well as reach our 158 member institutions, which include research and public libraries, liberal arts colleges, museums and museum libraries, digital labs, and consortia. As an organization with a commitment to inclusivity and social justice, DLF's investment in supporting these initiatives will continue long after the event. We will provide subsidized membership in DLF for HBCUs of all sizes at our LAC rate for one year to foster relationships, move forward with recommendations from the white paper, and inform our planning of future conferences. We will also investigate the feasibility of holding a similar unconference and summit for Tribal Colleges and Universities prior to the 2018 DLF Forum.

On the personal level, this event is designed to create professional and mentoring connections within the digital library community at HBCUs and LACs and extend to our entire membership at the DLF Forum. Through the activities of the unconference and Forum, our lightweight mentorship programs, the coffee and meal breaks, and working lunches, the event and the rest of the week will better prepare the digital library community to address the lack of diversity in the LIS field, bringing crucial HBCU voices to the DLF Forum, and leveraging DLF's motivated liberal arts college community tackle the pipeline problem. Representation matters in the workplace, and we need many different platforms and opportunities to address it. These conversations may jumpstart the creation of DLF working groups and subgroups as well as encourage more diverse participation in already existing initiatives. Significant community-based action occurs transparently, openly, and thoughtfully. We hope this event will not only create better institutions, but empower individuals to have and shape the ongoing conversations and work to critically transform the digital library field.

Estimated Budget: We estimate a budget of $50,000, not including a substantial cost share from CLIR/DLF and partners in the form of staff time, travel, and lodging. The budget includes 20 competitive travel bursaries and free registration for the summit and the Forum ($30,000), keynoter's honorarium and travel ($2,000), recording and live-streaming of sessions ($5,000), publication and dissemination of the final white paper ($6,800), catering costs not covered by a low $50 registration fee ($1,000), A/V equipment rental and setup ($5,000), and supplies ($200).