Illinois Fire Service Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Libraries as Partners for Emergency Preparedness and Response in Times of Crisis

Libraries as Partners for Emergency Preparedness and Response in Times of Crisis is a two-year $150,000 National Leadership Grants for Libraries planning type project which will conduct a **preliminary investigation into partnerships between libraries and community emergency response partners during emergencies by focusing on three key areas in times of crises: 1) Emergencies; 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership; and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership**. Area 1) Emergencies will identify the types of emergencies that libraries have responded to in the past, are currently responding to, or have created plans to respond to, and will inform understanding of the scope and extent of library-community partnerships, as partnerships may vary depending on the specific challenges and needs related to emergency type. Area 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership will clarify the past and existing presence of library-community partnerships during emergencies, especially if partnerships have occurred, why or why not partnerships have occurred, and how partnerships have been developed and maintained if partnerships do exist. Area 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership will define the role of libraries as partners during emergencies and suggest future roles for libraries to fill.

These three key areas will guide *Libraries as Partners'* preliminary investigations at every step of the project and build towards the project's four goals: 1) to co-define with community service stakeholder partners what "partnership" means between libraries and community partners; 2) to make visible the scope and nature of library-community partnerships; 3) to develop a baseline framework and identify areas of further study to prepare for future collaborative research projects that will examine in-depth the practices, lessons learned, gaps in service to marginalized communities, and emergency management educational programs and training for collaboration with community partners; and 4) to develop a widely disseminated report of findings in the three key areas and with the previous three goals that can help libraries and community partners begin to understand the potential roles of libraries during emergencies and paths of future work which build on this preliminary investigation. These goals will be achieved through a case study survey focused on the multi-type libraries and community partners of Illinois (Year One), and two two-day Zoom Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs) which will discuss common themes found in the survey and raise the conversation and findings to national relevancy. Through these key areas and goals, *Libraries as Partners* will discover and promote the essential role that libraries play in community safety and well-being, and serve as the conversation starter for future discussions, collaborations, and research on library-community partnerships.

This preliminary planning investigation joins as co-partners the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) Library, Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), and School of Information Sciences at UIUC (iSchool), whose investigations will be closely informed by a robust network of confirmed state and national advisors (see Work Plan and Supporting Document 1: State and National Advisors). These advisors represent multi-type libraries and community partner organizations who play active roles in community emergency preparedness, response, and recovery, such as the fire service, emergency medical services, local and state public health departments, and other emergency response groups. The project's close work with both state and national advisors will ensure that findings uncovered through this preliminary planning investigation are abundant and well-representative of library and partner communities across the nation, as well as reflective of the needs of the diverse communities which libraries and partners serve during emergencies.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION. *Libraries as Partners'* overarching research questions related to the three key areas and four project goals above are: **what types of emergencies do libraries already respond to or have responded to in the past, and have partnerships between libraries and community emergency response partners been present during these emergency responses? If not, why? If so, what are the extent and scope of these partnerships and the libraries' role in these partnerships?** This line of questioning and the project's four goals align with the following program goal and associated objective of the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program: NLG Goal (4) to strengthen the ability of libraries to provide services to affected communities in the event of a disaster or emergency, especially Objective (4.2) to support the implementation of such emergency and disaster management plans or otherwise enable libraries to provide appropriate services to affected communities in the event of emergencies or disasters; and with the Institute of Museum and Library Services Goal (2) to strengthen community engagement, Objective (2.2) to support community collaboration and foster civic discourse.

Literature review has revealed that libraries have a history of providing services to their communities during different types of emergencies and are often cited as information hubs during emergencies for enhancing resiliency and post-disaster recovery efforts[1]. Libraries have consistently proven their ability as providers during a myriad of public crises including but not limited to the Covid-19 Pandemic[2], Uvalde school shooting[3], California wildfires[4], opioid crisis[5], destructive hurricanes[6], and many others. In fact, libraries are designated by the federal government in the Stafford Act 2011 as essential community organizations alongside public services such as fire protection, police, EMS, education, and utilities as a priority to get "up and running" after a disaster, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recognized libraries as essential emergency organizations as well[7]. This designation by the federal government gives official weight to libraries' importance for aiding community recovery during and following emergencies[8].

Despite libraries' successful work during emergencies and recognition by the federal government as an essential community organization during emergencies, many key emergency response organizations such as the fire service, EMS, health departments, and other emergency response and preparedness groups do not recognize libraries as equally essential emergency preparedness and response partners[9] or are not aware of the role that libraries can take on before, during, and after emergencies[10]. At the same time, there is a literature gap in research on library-community partnerships during emergencies, with little systematic research conducted on the scope and nature of library partnerships with community emergency response organizations or the role that libraries play in these partnerships if partnerships do exist, as well as the different types of library-community partnerships and library partnership roles that may stem from different types of emergencies. While there have been some successful cases of libraries joining forces with community partners during emergencies (ex. Delaware Libraries and Disasters Summit, resulting in the Delaware Libraries and Disasters Initiative[11], medical libraries' collaborations with partners during Covid-19[12]), the combination of lack of available literature on and practice between libraries and community emergency response groups alongside little to no knowledge by these groups of the role of libraries indicates that libraries are rarely included in emergency planning and response despite their past work during public crises. If library-community partnerships during emergencies do exist, there is little to no baseline information or research available on these partnerships in the areas of how emergency type effects partnerships, the scope and nature of partnerships, and the role of libraries in partnerships, information which would increase libraries' ability to provide services during crises.

Libraries as Partners will begin to fill this research gap through this initial planning grant project and begin the process of creating a deeper understanding of library-community partnerships during crises. Libraries face the significant need and

[1] Stricker, M. (2019). 'Ports in a storm: the role of the public library in times of crisis.' *Collaborative Librarianship*, 11(1), pp. 11-16.

[2] American Library Association. (2021). 'The state of America's libraries 2021: a report from the American Library Association.'

[3] LibLime. (2022). *Library of hope and healing: Uvalde*. Available at: https://liblime.com/2022/10/13/library-of-hope-healing-uvalde/ (Accessed 26 January 2023).

[4] Peet, L. (2018). 'California libraries reopen, respond to wildfires.' *Library Journal*. Available at: https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/181121CAWildfires (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

[5] Allen, S., et al. (2019). 'Public libraries respond to the opioid crisis with their communities: summary report.' *OCLC*.

[6] Stricker, M. (2019). 'Ports in a storm: the role of the public library in times of crisis.' *Collaborative Librarianship*, 11(1), pp. 11-16.

[7] Hagar, C. (2013). 'Public library response to natural disasters: a 'whole community approach.'' San José State University School of Information. Available at: https://ischool.sjsu.edu/ciri-blog/public-library-response-natural-disasters-whole-community-approach (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

[8] Patin, B. (2020). 'What is essential?: understanding community resilience and public libraries in the United States during disasters.' *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 57(1).

[9] Smith, M. (2019). 'Top ten challenges facing public libraries.' *Public Library Quarterly*, 38(3), pp. 241-247. doi:10.1080/01616846.2019.1608617.

[10] Hagar, C. (2015). 'Public library partnerships with local agencies to meet community disaster preparedness and response needs.' *12th International Conference of the Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management*, 24-27 May. Proceedings of the ISCRAM 2015 Conference.

[11] Young, P. (2020). 'Libraries as public health partners in times of crisis.' *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, 6(4), pp. 24-25. doi: 10.32481/djph.2020.09.009

[12] Charney, R., Spencer, A., & Tao, D. (2021). 'A novel partnership between physicians and medical librarians during the Covid-19 pandemic.' *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*, 40(1), pp. 48-55. doi: 10.1080/02763869.2021.1873617

challenge of learning how they can form relationships with and work with community emergency response partners during times of public crisis. No one organization can respond to widescale crises alone, and multiple organizations from the international level (ex. World Health Organization[13], United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees[14]) to the national level (ex. Centers for Disease Control[15], National Highway Traffic Safety Administration[16]) have acknowledged the importance of partnerships in response to public emergencies. Collaboration and partnerships between multiple organizations are necessary for more effective emergency preparation, response, and recovery. No matter the type of public emergency (including but not limited to natural disasters and climate change emergencies, pandemics, gun violence, mental health crises, discrimination and hate crimes, water shortages and water quality crises, and energy crises among others), partnerships will benefit communities effected by crises. Thus, the target group of *Libraries as Partners* is multi-type libraries across the United States who will become aware of the role that they can take in partnerships with community emergency response groups and begin to develop strategies to create and maintain these partnerships. Through libraries' increased understanding of these partnerships, the ultimate beneficiaries of *Libraries as Partners* will be the general public including historically underserved communities, who will benefit from the increasingly comprehensive community support, resources, and services during public crises that more library-community partnerships will bring.

For the safety and well-being of the communities that they serve, libraries and community emergency response groups must form collaborative partnerships to include libraries during the planning, response, and recovery stages of crises. Libraries have shown that that the services they provide during emergencies are beneficial to their communities, and the potential benefits to their communities will only increase when included as equal partners alongside other emergency response groups. The gap in research on library-community partnerships during emergencies necessitates this planning level grant to develop an initial understanding of libraries current' and potential role as partners, how emergency response groups understand the role of libraries during emergencies, the extent and scope of partnerships that do exist between libraries and community partners, and future directions of research that will deepen and expand the understanding of these partnerships and the possibilities for libraries to help their communities even more than they already are during crises.

PROJECT WORK PLAN. *Libraries as Partners* has been designed to address these gaps in understanding library-community partnerships in the key areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership and to answer the corresponding questions: what types of emergencies do libraries already respond to or have responded to in the past, and have partnerships between libraries and community emergency response partners been present during these emergency responses? If not, why? If so, what are the extent and scope of these partnerships and the libraries' role in these partnerships? To answer these questions, *Libraries as Partners* will take place over two years (Aug. 2023-July 2025) and utilize one case study survey of the multi-type libraries and community partners of Illinois, two two-day Zoom Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs) with multi-type library and community partner panelists and participants from across the nation, and related deliverables such as one project website which will make easily available all deliverables including one survey findings report, two CERs findings reports, and one project white paper. These activities, their deliverables, and their results will increase understanding of library-community partnerships in the project's three key areas and provide the baseline understanding of how libraries can establish and maintain successful partnerships with community emergency response groups during crises.

To establish vigorous findings which will address the three key areas and inform the future development of emergency response across libraries and multiple partners, the design methodologies of both the survey and the CERs will utilize Targeted Universalism and Team Cognitive Work Analysis (TeamCWA). Targeted Universalism is a framework which

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[13] World Health Organization. (2023). *Strengthening partnerships for emergencies*. Available at: https://www.who.int/westernpacific/activities/strengthening-partnerships-for-emergencies (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

[14] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2023). *Working with partners on emergency preparedness and response*. Available at: https://emergency.unhcr.org/working-with-partners (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

[15] Centers for Disease Control. (2017). *Building partnerships*. Available at: https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/cerccorner/article_022817.asp (Accessed 24 February 2023).

[16] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2022). *EMS collaboration with public safety, emergency management & health disciplines.* Available at: https://www.ems.gov/issues/ems-collaboration/ (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

sets universal goals and achieves these goals through targeted processes. The universal goals are set for all groups that exist within a larger community, while the targeted processes are set depending on each group's situation within the community's structure, culture, and geography and acknowledge the differences in groups[17]. This approach to *Libraries as Partners* will ensure that while whole communities benefit from project's discoveries, groups with different needs, especially underserved populations and those shown to be at a higher risk during emergencies using the social vulnerability index[18], will experience equitable service in library-partner crisis response. TeamCWA is an analytical approach for examining the collaborations in a complex sociotechnical system across sectors. Leveraging successful use of TeamCWA to analyze multiple-stakeholder environments[19], *Libraries as Partners* will identify factors in shared decision-making among multiple different community partners that contribute to effective partnerships and intended shared outcomes. Knowing the factors that contribute to intended outcomes becomes even more critical in a crisis. Recent work with TeamCWA has shown how this approach can be used for a variety of purposes including modeling where individuals need to collaborate[20], how to enhance collaboration within organizations[21], and modeling team coordination and information sharing strategies[22] in multiple areas including crisis management[23]. Modeling *Libraries as Partners'* investigations on TeamCWA and Targeted Universalism will increase the project's capabilities for achieving useful results which will be relevant across different communities and organizations, even beyond the two years of the grant.

The project team is composed of experienced library and information science professionals who each have dedicated roles as part of the project. The project team includes the Project Director, Research Director, Coordinator for the State Advisory Committee and National Advisory Board, Facilitator for the two Community Engagement Roundtables, and Project Assistant (see Key Project Staff and Resumes). Additionally, two graduate students, one for each year, will be hired from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to assist with various project activities (see Budget Justification). The project team will be guided by the experience and knowledge of confirmed state and national advisors who represent multi-type libraries and community emergency response partners in Illinois and across the nation. Throughout the development of the *Libraries as Partners'* proposal, the project team has worked closely with both groups of advisors to receive feedback on the proposed project activities and project design, and all advisors have provided strong letters of support for the project (see Supplemental Document 2: Select Advisor Letters of Support). The state and national advisors will be there at every step of the project providing their knowledge, feedback, and connections to a variety of library and emergency response groups across the state and the U.S. See detailed descriptions of Year One and Year Two activities below for further information on state and national advisors' roles and Supporting Document 1: State and National Advisors for the specific connections that each advisor will bring to the project. Confirmed state and national advisors include:

State Advisors	
1. Association of School Library Educators (AISLE) *Mary Jo Matousek, President*	2. Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) *Robert Evans, Acting Division Chief, Bureau of Preparedness and Grants Administration*
3. Illinois Library Association (ILA)	4. Illinois State Library

[17] Powell, J. Menendian, S., & Ake, W. (2022). 'Targeted universalism: policy & practice.' *Othering & Belonging Institute at the University of California Berkeley.*

[18] Flanagan, B., et al. (2011). 'A social vulnerability index for disaster management.' *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 8(1). doi: 10.2202/1547-7355.1792.

[19] Ashoori, A., and Burns, C. (2013). 'Team cognitive work analysis: structure and control tasks.' *Journal of Cognitive Engineering and Decision Making*, 7(2), pp. 123-140. doi: 10.1177/1555343412445577

[20] Hajdukiewicz J., et al. (2001). 'Modeling a medical environment: an ontology for integrated medical informatics design.' *International Journal of Medical Information*, 62(1), pp. 79-99.

[21] Durugbo, C. (2012). 'Work domain analysis for enhancing collaborations: a study of the management of microsystems design.' *Ergonomics*, 55(6), pp. 603-620.

[22] Naikar N., Moylan A., & Pearce B. (2006). 'Analyzing activity in complex systems with cognitive work analysis: concepts, guidelines, and case study for control task analysis.' *Theoretical Issues in Ergonomics Science*, 7(4), pp. 371-394.

[23] Cattermole-Terzic, V., & Horberry, T. (2019). 'Improving traffic incident management using team cognitive work analysis.' *Journal of Cognitive Engineering and Decision Making*, 14(2), pp. 152-173.

Cyndi Robinson, Executive Director	*Greg McCormick, Director*
5. Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) *Julie Pryde, Administrator*	6. Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) *Ronny J. Wickenhauser, Chief Administrative Officer and CFO*
7. Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) *Leslie Bednar, Executive Director*	8. Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) *Monica Harris, Executive Director*
9. Chicago Public Library System *Chris Brown, Commissioner*	10. Special Library Association (SLA) Illinois Community *Kristin Stutzman, Immediate Past President*
11. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Division of Public Safety *Brian Brauer, Executive Director of Emergency Management and EMS Coordinator*	12. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) *Jim Keiken, Director*
13. Carle Foundation Hospital *Steve Peters, EMS System Coordinator, Carle Regional EMS, Illinois State EMS Advisory Council*	
National Advisors	
1. American Library Association (ALA) *Michael Dowling, Director, International and Chapter Relations Office*	2. Association of Research Libraries (ARL) *Mary Lee Kennedy, Executive Director*
3. Florida Virtual Campus Library Services (FLVC) *Elijah Scott, Executive Director*	4. Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC) *Alexandra Rivera, Vice President (REFORMA), Board of Directors*
5. Orbis Cascade Alliance *Kim Armstrong, Executive Director*	6. Public Library Association (PLA) *Mary Davis Fournier, Executive Director*
7. Special Library Association (SLA) *Monica Evans-Lombe, Director/VP of Communities and Programming*	8. Moody College of Communication, School of Journalism and Media, University of Texas at Austin *Sharon Strover, Director, Philip G. Warner Regents Professor of Communication*
9. National Library of Medicine (NLM), National Institutes of Health (NIH) *Dianne Babski, Associate Director for Library Operations*	

To accomplish the project activities and goals, *Libraries as Partners* will adhere to the following budget: Salaries and Wages: $37,343; Fringe Benefits: $17,947; Travel: $0; Supplies, Materials, and Equipment: $0; Subawards and Contracts: $30,624; Student Support: $27,982; Total Direct Costs: $113,896; Indirect Costs: $36,104; Total Project Costs: $150,000.

Year One, August 1, 2023 – July 31, 2024: Illinois Case Study Survey. Year One will center around the development and design, implementation and dissemination, analysis, and deliverables creation and dissemination of an online survey which will generate a fundamental understanding of the emergencies that libraries respond to, the scope and nature of library partnerships with community partners, and the role of libraries in these partnerships. The survey results will provide the first level of results needed to delve deeper into library-community partnerships in Year Two. The survey's target population is the multi-type libraries of Illinois and their community partners. Illinois libraries and communities are diverse and well representative of the national stage. Illinois libraries include 158 academic, 639 public, 788 school, and 224 special libraries. 22% of Illinois public libraries serve an area with 2,500 or less, while 64.5% serve populations that range between 2,500 and 50,000. 6.1% of Illinois public libraries serve areas with a population between 50,000 and 250,000, while only 0.2% serve areas with population of 1,000,000 or more[24]. The Chicago Public Library is the fifth largest library service area in the U.S., serving 2.7 million[25]. Illinois' academic libraries range in size, type, and location,

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[24] Institute of Museum and Library Services. (2019). 'Public libraries survey.' Available at: https://www.imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey.
[25] American Library Association. (2023). *Library statistics and figures: the nation's largest public libraries.* Available at: https://libguides.ala.org/librarystatistics/largest-public-libs (Accessed: 24 February 2023).

including community colleges, and private and public universities. Due to the number of Illinois libraries and library types and the diversity of the communities that they serve in both urban and rural areas, Illinois will serve as a case study and microcosm of the greater national library-community partner situation, and the survey results will be representative at the national level. Survey findings will provide a starting point for national level conversations through the two Community Engagement Roundtable discussions in Year Two, which will build upon the common trends and challenges in library-community partnerships uncovered in the survey. Year One survey activities will include the following:

1) *Project Set Up and Advisor Coordination, Aug.-Sep. 2023.* Due to the project's extensive list of confirmed state (13) and national (9) advisors (see above and Supporting Document 1: State and National Advisors), **work plans and data management plans will be established in collaboration with both groups of advisors** to ensure the project's efficiency and effectiveness, and that all advisors are able to easily access and interpret high-quality data collected during the project. A schedule for **quarterly meetings between the project team and the advisors** will be established, and advisors will be provided details on the activity timeline and the tasks that will be going on during each stage of the project as well as what their role during each stage will be (ex. State advisors will distribute surveys to the Illinois target population in Year One; national advisors will guide the creation of the survey questionnaire to ensure results will be nationally relevant in Year One; state and national advisors will recommend and select CERs panelists in Year Two; etc.). **A co-chair from the State Advisory Committee and a co-chair from the National Advisory Board will be chosen** to serve as a leader during advisor meetings and as a first point of contact between the project team and the advisors. While work and data stewardship plans are being developed, a **project website will be created** to keep the public informed about the project's progress and activities, and to make available the deliverables which will be created during the project. This website will be hosted and maintained by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and one graduate student will be hired from UIUC to assist with website creation, in addition to other related project activities.

2) *Survey Development and Design, Aug.-Oct. 2023.* The project team and the state and national advisors will collaborate to create a web-based survey. Input from state advisors will guide the survey's relevancy to and utility by the Illinois target population, and input from national advisors will ensure that survey results will be relevant to the national library community. **The survey instrument will be created using the survey software Qualtrics** which is available to the project team through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). The survey questionnaire, developed in close collaboration with all advisors, will be composed of **multiple-choice and open-ended questions related to the project's three key areas** of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership. **Participatory Design (PD)** will be used to develop the survey with the survey's target populations, composed of multi-type libraries and libraries serving different communities including the historically underserved and marginalized communities. PD is an approach which involves all stakeholders in a design process to better meet their needs; this method complements TeamCWA and Targeted Universalism's approach to working in a complex system of partnership. PD will be applied through state advisors' work with the Illinois target population. State advisors will bring their knowledge of and connections to the communities which they represent to the survey design process, helping the survey to be as relevant and understandable as possible to survey respondents once the survey is released. Through the state advisor's professional connections which the project team does not have access to (ex. Organization membership email lists, organization social media pages), **a sample pilot survey** will be released to a small number of respondents both to receive their feedback on the survey through a short, end-of-questionnaire feedback section, and to ensure that the survey will reach the target population including small, rural libraries and libraries serving historically underserved and marginalized communities. National advisors will participate in survey design by ensuring that questions are not too specific to Illinois and will address the concerns of the larger library community across the nation to ensure useful and national scale results. As the survey is developed, the project team will seek **UIUC Institutional Review Board approval** to guarantee that the survey adheres to ethical research standards and that the protection of the rights and welfare of survey respondents is maintained. Before the survey is released, the project team will conduct **at least two live virtual information sessions to promote the study** at both state and national events. Information session venues may include such events as the Illinois Library Association Annual Conference, American Library Association LibLearnX, Illinois Firefighter's

Association Annual Conference, National Emergency Management Association Forums, and IFSI Facebook Page or other relevant venues as opportunities for informational presentations arise.

3) Survey Implementation and Dissemination, Nov. 2023-Feb. 2024. **The survey will be disseminated to the target population through the connections of the state advisors to their target population** from the organization that they represent. The project team does not have access to state advisors' organization membership email lists or social media pages to share the survey, and the connections of state advisors to these resources for survey dissemination will be key to reaching out to the Illinois target population. The survey may be sent to library and partner communities through email, social media, via website posts, or other methods. The project team may also disseminate the survey through their institutional connections. Four months will be allotted for the collection of survey data using the survey software Qualtrics. This survey software will allow survey responses to be viewable directly by the project team. During this time, the project team and advisors will continue to **promote the event online or at events** as opportunities arise. Anticipated survey response rates across participants are 15% to 30%.

4) Survey Analysis, Mar.-May 2024. Following the end of the survey, the survey data will be analyzed by the project team with specific focus on data which will uncover findings related to the project's three key areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership. **SPSS and R will be used to conduct quantitative analysis, and Taguette will be used to conduct qualitative and thematic analysis** and to identify the gaps and convergences of emerging themes. **TeamCWA** will be applied to these themes to analyze the common needs, task distributions, and shared goals in collaboration between libraries and community partners during a crisis. The results of the TeamCWA will suggest opportunities for redesigning emergency response workflows or information structures to support cooperative planning. Raw and summarized data will be shared with both groups of advisors using a secure UIUC platform (UIUC Box) to which they will have access. As survey data and analysis is made available to advisors, their discussion, at meetings or through emails, on the results will be key to interpreting partnership themes evaluating the survey findings for relevancy to a national level conversation.

5) Survey Deliverables, Jun.-Jul. 2024. When survey analysis is complete, deliverables will be prepared for the general public through the project website. Survey deliverables include a **survey findings report and aggregated data which will be created and made available to the general public.** State and national advisors and members of the project team will be encouraged to share the results through their community networks.

6) Transition to Year Two: Survey to Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs), Jun.-Jul. 2025. The initial findings gained from the survey will lay the groundwork understanding necessary to discuss and begin a further investigation on library-community emergency response partnerships. Currently, little systematic research exists on the scope and nature of partnership, the role of libraries in partnership, or how emergency type effects library-community partnerships during emergencies. Survey findings will provide a baseline understanding of these key areas. However, further understanding of findings in these areas is needed through conversations. To further understand these three areas, the development of the Year Two CERs can begin.

Year Two, August 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025: Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs). Year Two will center around the development and design, implementation, analysis, and deliverables creation and dissemination of two two-day Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs). The CERs will be held virtually on Zoom and will consist of 20-25 panelists and at least 100 participants from libraries and community emergency response organizations across the United States who will join full- and small-group discussions on findings uncovered during the Year One survey. Both CERs will include the same panelists and participants, to continue to build upon discussions held during CER I. Through the CERs' discussions, the survey findings related to the project's three key areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership will be investigated further to identify themes and gaps in library-community partnerships during emergencies, and to begin to provide initial recommendations on library-community partnerships during emergencies as well as direction towards areas of further exploration. CER I will focus on identifying

gaps in library-community partnership based on survey findings, and CER II will focus on initial successes in library-community partnerships and ideas for collaborative strategies. Year Two activities will include the following:

1) CERs Development and Design, Aug.-Dec. 2024. In collaborative discussions with the state and national advisors, **major common themes uncovered from the survey in the areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership will be identified for discussion during the CERs.** These common themes will guide the creation of discussion topics, questions, and activities using online tools (such as Padlet, Google Sheets, etc.) for the CERs by the facilitator, project team, and advisors. A CERs panelist application form will be developed to help recruit **20-25 experienced and knowledgeable panelists** from across the country to participate in the discussion. State and national advisors may also recommend panelists to be invited to apply and will be encouraged to participate as panelists themselves. Panelists will be selected by state and national advisors. A CER participant registration form will be developed to help recruit **100 participants** from across multi-type libraries and community emergency response partners. Panelists and participants will be targeted with **specific recruitment by both groups of advisors that will include personnel in partner agencies serving underrepresented populations** (those whose access to formal agency-level social capital networks and data engagement may be limited). A CER feedback form for participants will be developed prior to the CERs to gain insight into the participants' thoughts on what is discussed for distribution to them following the CERs. The project website will be updated with more specific information on the CERs' topics following the identification of survey themes, the names of the confirmed CERs panelists, and the dates, times, and online participant registration form for the CERs participants. The advisors and the project team will promote the CERs through their institutional connections (emails, social media, website posts, etc.).

2) CERs I and II Implementation, Jan.-Feb. 2025. **Two two-day Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs),** conducted on Zoom, will consist of the same group of 20-25 panelists and 100 participants for each event engaged in guided full-group and small-group discussions related to the project's three key areas. **CER I will focus on identifying gaps in library-community partnership based on survey findings, and CER II will focus on initial successes in library-community partnerships and ideas for collaborative strategies**. Each will use an iterative process in which each activity builds on the previous. Discussions will be captured using online tools that can be viewed by the full group (e.g., Padlet, Google sheets, etc.). Online polls will also be conducted to assess levels of agreement with key points, findings, and strategies identified during the CERs activities. **See Supporting Document 3: Community Engagement Roundtables Outline for a detailed description of the proposed CERs discussions and activities**. Following each CER, the facilitator and project team will create a CER findings report on what was discussed and discovered during the CER and make them available on the project website.

*5) CERs Analysis, Feb.-Apr. 2025.*CERs data analysis will be conducted on the CERs' findings in the project's three key areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership. Analysis will be conducted using data from the CERs Zoom recordings, participant registration and feedback forms (what kind of library they work in or community partner organization they are from, their experience with library-community partnerships during emergencies in the past, etc.) online activities (e.g. using Padlet, Google Sheets, etc.), and online polls of level of agreement reactions. The **analysis will focus on initial recommendations for library-community partnerships during emergencies to reveal the underlying framework which will further inform paths of future deep investigations on these relationships.**

6) CERs Deliverables, May-Jul. 2025. Deliverables from the CERs will be made available on the project website and will include the **two CERs' recordings, the CERs findings reports from each of the CERs, and a findings report which combines the results received from analysis of both of the CERs**. The deliverables will be promoted through the institutional networks of the state and national advisors and the project team (emails, social media, website posts, etc.). The Year One survey will have uncovered the initial information related to the scope and nature of partnerships, the role libraries in partnerships, and how these are affected by different kinds of emergencies. The conversations held during the Year Two CERs, based on survey findings and analyzed in the

CERs' deliverables, will have the result of laying the foundation for understanding the partnerships between libraries and community partners during crises, opening new paths of inquiry and future research.

Project Wrap-Up, Final Deliverables, Future Steps, May-Jul. 2025. Following the completion of the CERs' activities, a **comprehensive white paper** which will be available on the project website and promoted by advisors and the project team will be prepared. The white paper will report on the project's findings related to the three key areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership, areas of investigation related to library-community partnerships during emergencies that have not been systematically studied before. In addition to a report on the new findings on these partnerships, a list of initial recommendations for multi-type libraries across the country will be provided, based primarily on discussions from the CERs, for libraries to follow when seeking to initiate or strengthen their relationships with community emergency response groups and take their place as equal providers in preparation and response to public emergencies. Finally, the white paper will present discussion areas and themes uncovered during the project that require further research to develop a greater understanding of them and to provide more recommendations for successful library-community partnerships. These areas of future research are the ultimate goal of this planning level grant, as they will be the starting point for the future, in-depth research projects that will not be possible until the baseline understanding of library-community partnerships which will be uncovered during the two years of *Libraries as Partners* are found. In addition to the white paper, the project, its findings, and planned future work will be presented at major state and national library and non-library conferences as opportunities arise and/or webinars will be developed and held on Zoom, and papers will be prepared and submitted to relevant library or emergency response and management journals and newsletters to promote project findings and make both libraries and community partners aware of how libraries can play a role in emergency preparedness and response.

DIVERSITY PLAN. Throughout this planning grant, historically marginalized and underserved communities will be targeted throughout the project. During the Year One survey, pilot survey testing will be conducted to ensure that diverse communities will be represented in the survey results, and the project team will work with state advisors, who will be disseminating the survey and know the communities represented by their organizations, to adjust the survey until Illinois' diversity is represented in its results and especially those libraries serving marginalized communities. The Year Two Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs) will specifically target and recruit diverse panelists and participants, and panelists and participants who work with marginalized and underserved communities. While the survey will lay the baseline understanding of library partnerships and only begin to touch on library-community partnership concerns related to serving diverse communities during emergencies, the CERs will provide the platform for libraries and community partners to discuss emergency services for diverse and marginalized communities that they have provided in the past, challenges to equity in services to underserved groups, and common goals to achieve shared equitable outcomes. These initial findings and discussions on equity and inclusion to emergency services partnerships between libraries and community emergency response groups will be critical to further in-depth investigations which are specifically focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The work of *Libraries as Partners* will be conducted with the knowledge that libraries are critical to providing services for underserved and marginalized groups. Members of a racial or ethnic minority, women, parents of minor children, and seniors are more likely to say that closing their public library would have a major impact on their community than on others[26]. And, while anyone can be affected by emergencies, through use of the social vulnerability index we can see that members of a community who are members of a marginalized community, are experiencing poverty, are children or seniors, are disabled, or are homeless or living in certain homes (e.g. mobile or group homes) will be more affected by public disasters[27]. Widespread disasters are unpredictable, chaotic, and undeniably traumatizing for those who live through them. However, we know that those in underserved communities are increasingly more at-risk of being greatly affected by public crises than those who are members of privileged groups who are already visible and whose voices and

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[26] Horrigan, J. (2015). 'Chapter 1: who uses libraries and what they do at their libraries.' *Libraries at the Crossroads*, Pew Research Center.

[27] Flanagan, B., et al. (2011). 'A social vulnerability index for disaster management.' *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 8(1). doi: 10.2202/1547-7355.1792

needs are already heard and responded to. In addition to these communities that have been shown to be more affected by public crises, *Libraries as Partners* may further reveal the invisible, underserved communities who are not reflected in current data. By working now to develop a baseline understanding and framework on partnerships between libraries and community emergency response partners, this project will begin to reveal the different needs of diverse populations during emergencies, and allow future research to focus specifically on partnership to support diversity, equity, and inclusion in library-partner emergency planning, during emergencies, and to aide recovery across all communities.

PROJECT RESULTS. The initial planning investigation conducted during *Libraries as Partners* through the Year One Illinois case study survey and the Year Two national level Community Engagement Roundtables will have the overall result of uncovering findings related to the scope and nature of partnerships, libraries' role in partnerships, and the effect of emergency type on library-community partnerships, as little systematic research has been conducted on library-community partnerships during crises. The project's intended results directly correspond to the project's three key areas:

Area 1: Emergencies	*Identification of the types of emergencies that libraries have responded to in the past, are currently responding to, or have created plans to respond to.* This result will inform understanding of the scope and extent of library-community partnerships, as partnerships may vary depending on the specific challenges and needs related to emergency type.
Area 2: Scope and Nature of Partnership	*Clarification of the scope and extent of library-community partnership during emergencies*. This result will inform understanding of if or if not library-community partnerships during emergencies exist; if not, why they do not exist, and if so, what is the nature of the partnerships, and how have they been developed and maintained?
Area 3: Role of Libraries in Partnership	*Description of the past, current, and future role that libraries play in partnerships with community partners during emergencies, and suggestions for the future role of libraries in partnership during emergencies*. This result will inform both libraries and community partners of how libraries can play an equal part in emergency preparation, response, and recovery, help to develop initial recommendations for libraries to follow for successful partnerships, and provide further paths of future exploration on libraries' role as emergency partners.

Deliverables created to showcase these project results and project activities (project website, survey findings report, CERs findings reports, white paper, presentations and papers as relevant opportunities become available) will be readily available on the project website for the general public. The website will be created and maintained indefinitely by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. These deliverables will be made adaptable, generalizable, and useable by multi-type libraries across the nation through the project's work with a large and diverse body of state and national advisors. Advisors will ensure that 1) a large number and wide variety of libraries participate in the Illinois survey and two CERs, which will reflect the diversity of the nation's libraries and the communities that they serve; 2) survey questions, CERs discussion topics, and analysis of the survey and CERs will not be hyper-specific to the Illinois library community and can be generalizable to libraries in other states, and; 3) the initial guidelines or framework for establishing community partnerships and working with community partners are laid out clearly and in a way that will be replicable to other libraries and communities.

The completion of *Libraries as Partners* and its project activities will provide a baseline understanding of library-community partnerships in the areas of 1) Emergencies, 2) Scope and Nature of Partnership, and 3) Role of Libraries in Partnership. This project will underscore the role of libraries as uniquely suited to serve and support their communities during public crises in ways that no other organization can, especially marginalized and underserved communities, and inspire libraries of all types to take their place as equal partners for emergency preparedness and response. As there is currently little to no comprehensive and systematic work on this topic, this planning grant and its results will fill this research gap and are a necessary first step on the path to future research. Following successful completion of the grant, application for an applied research grant will be prepared to investigate in-depth the themes and issues discovered during this planning grant. The results of this planning grant and the future research grants that will be made possible from *Libraries as Partners*' initial investigations will deepen the bond and strength of community networks, and ultimately increase libraries' capacity for constituency support during emergency preparation, response, and recovery.

Libraries as Partners for Emergency Preparedness and Response in Times of Crisis

Schedule of Completion

This project will begin on August 1, 2023 and last until July 31, 2025. Each of the activities below will take place within this time period and for the specified number of months. Year One will be focused on the creation, dissemination, analysis, and distribution of findings from a web-based survey. Year Two will be focused on the creation, panelist and participant recruitment, analysis, and distribution of findings from two two-day Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs). Each step of the project will be planned in coordination with both State and National advisors.

YEAR ONE (Aug. 1, 2023 to Jul. 31, 2024)

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Activity 1 *Project Set Up and Advisor Coordination: establish work and data management plans, create project website.*	███	███										
Activity Two *Survey Development and Design: create survey instrument using Qualtrics, develop survey questionnaire, seek IRB approval, test sample pilot survey, promote survey.*	███	███	███									
Activity Three *Survey Implementation and Dissemination: survey distributed through the connections of state advisors, survey data collected by project team using Qualtrics, continue promoting survey.*				███	███	███						
Activity Four *Survey Analysis: SPSS and R for quantitative analysis, Taguette for qualitative and thematic, conduct TeamCWA, share data with advisors.*							███	███	███			
Activity Five *Survey Deliverables: preparation of survey findings report and aggregated data, survey deliverables made available to public on project website.*										███	███	
Activity Six *Transition to Year Two: identify common themes and potential areas of discussion from survey results to being preparation for Year Two Community Engagement Roundtables.*											███	███

YEAR TWO (Aug. 1, 2024 to Jul. 31, 2025)

Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul

Activity One

CERs Development and Design: develop CERs discussions and activities from survey findings, create CERs panelists application form and participant registration form, recruit, invite, and confirm 20-25 panelists and at least 100 participants, develop CERs feedback form, update project website with CERs information and promote the CERs,

Activity Two

CER I: discuss survey findings and identify gaps and challenges to library-community partnerships, create and make available on website CER I findings report.

Activity Three

CER II: build on CER I discussions to discuss successful library-community partnerships and develop recommendations for successful partnerships, create and make available on website CER II findings report.

Activity Four

CERs Analysis: conduct analysis on CERs data and findings to develop initial recommendations for library-community partnerships and reveal the underlying framework which will inform paths of future research.

Activity Five

CERs Deliverables: create CERs overall findings report with results from both CERs.

Activity 6

Project Wrap-Up and Final Deliverables: Develop comprehensive white paper and make available on the project website. White paper will include the project's initial findings on library-community partnerships during emergencies and recommendations for developing successful partnerships. Presentations and publications will be prepared for major state and national library and non-library conferences to promote the project's findings. The project team will identify areas of further investigation to begin preparation of a research project which will investigate findings on library-community partnerships in emergencies in-depth.

Libraries as Partners for Emergency Preparedness and Response in Times of Crisis

Digital Products Plan

Type

This project will generate digitized and born-digital products created by the project team, members of both advisory boards, and from the Year-One survey and the Year-Two Community Engagement Roundtables (CERs). Digital products will include:

One project website which will be created and maintained by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Illinois Fire Service Institute Library. This website will include all project deliverables, findings and aggregated data, and other related project information.

Multiple documents in the form of Word, Excel, PDF and other formats as needed will be created and will include plans for major activities, meeting minutes, analysis of collected data, drafts and final revisions of survey and CERs findings reports, project white paper, and articles for publication.

Two Zoom meeting video recordings will be created from the two Community Engagement Roundtables, and these recordings will be accessed and stored at the UIUC Illinois Media Space.

Multiple posts will be created on social media for the purposes of program promotion and findings dissemination, especially the IFSI Facebook page which has nearly 25,000 followers.

One test sample survey and one final survey for dissemination to the target group will be created using the web-based survey software Qualtrics (available through UIUC) and according to survey standard best practices. Quantitative survey data will be analyzed using SPSS and R, and qualitative survey data will be analyzed using Taguette (available through UUIC).

Availability

Aggregated data, results, and reports from both the survey and the CERs, the white paper, and other project information will be available to the public free of charge via the created project website which will be accessed using a standard web browser and maintained by UIUC.

The web-based survey will be made readily available to the target groups by disseminating the survey via the networks and connections of the members of the state advisory committee, which the project team does not have access, especially via email, social media, website posts, or other relevant methods. Anticipated survey response rate across participants is 15% to 30%.

The two Community Engagement Roundtables will take place via Zoom to allow all panelists and participants the ability to engage in discussions regardless of their location across the nation. The CERs will be promoted via IFSI's Facebook page and through the State and National Advisors' connections to library personnel and other community partners in their networks.

Deliverables including reports, articles, and the white paper will be made freely available on the project website as well as via the Illinois Digital Environment for Access to Learning and Scholarship (IDEALS) platform, a University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) online repository which collects, disseminates, and provides persistent access to the research and scholarship of UIUC faculty, staff, and students according to their policies for deposited items.

Access
Creators of the project works will retain copyright, understanding that IMLS reserves, for Federal Government purposes, a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work and authorize others to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work.

Full and free of charge access will be provided to digital products from *Libraries as Partners* via the created project website.

Privacy concerns will be addressed by removing identifying information such as names, job titles, and places of work from survey results. The reports created from the results of both Community Engagement Roundtables will also remove identifying information. Before the CERs take place, panelists and participants will be asked their permission to record the Zoom meeting.

Sustainability
Survey and CERs results and analysis will be saved and provided to project advisors using a UIUC secure platform to which they will be given access (UIUC Box). Preliminary analysis, drafts of papers, plans for future work, and completed analysis will be stored indefinitely by the Illinois Fire Service Institute.

The white paper and other published materials which will be produced from this project will be deposited into UIUC's IDEALS platform and stored according to their policies for deposited items: (https://wiki.illinois.edu/wiki/display/IDEALS/Digital+Preservation+Policy).

The created website and its resources will be maintained and made available for the foreseeable future by the UIUC Illinois Fire Service Institute Library.

Organizational Profile

IFSI (Illinois Fire Service Institute) Mission
Helping Firefighters do their Work through Training, Education, Information and Research

IFSI Governance Structure and Service Area
The Illinois Fire Service Institute is the statutory fire academy for the State of Illinois. It is operated as a continuing education and public service activity by the University of Illinois. (Reference PA 81-1147, Illinois Fire Service Institute Act, effective 7/1/1980). As the statutory fire academy for Illinois, the Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) serves firefighters throughout Illinois and the world. World-class instructors deliver more than 14,000 class hours to students online, on campus and at regional training centers throughout the state, including serving over 900 fire departments in all 102 Illinois counties. The Champaign campus includes 28 acres of real-life training props and features one of the few locations in the U.S. that still uses live-fire structural burn training. The site includes training and educational props for hazardous materials, collapsed buildings, high-rise buildings, trench and vehicle rescue. A streetscape structure mimics a real city block with a variety of store fronts and an area is dedicated to agricultural training. The 21,000 square foot Learning Resource and Research Center houses the Firefighter Life Safety Research Center. IFSI's research is carried out by experienced scientists who conduct applied research that addresses real-world health and safety challenges facing first responders. The Center's research is enhanced by its affiliation with one of the premier research universities in the U.S. at the University of Illinois.

IFSI Library Mission
The Illinois Fire Service Institute Library provides fire/emergency library and information assistance and services to the Institute's instructional staff, students, Illinois fire departments and firefighters, and other fire/emergency-related users in the successful and effective performance of their jobs. The Library selects, acquires, organizes, maintains, utilizes and disseminates fire/emergency literature and media resources internally and externally, with the objective of furnishing accurate, up-to-date, timely, complete and relevant information assistance on the optimum usage of the facilities.

IFSI Library History
Founded in 1990 by Dr. Lian Ruan, the IFSI Library is the only fire emergency dedicated library in the state serving 42,000 firefighters statewide (75% volunteers from over 1000 fire departments), and one of the three top fire academy libraries in the nation. The IFSI Library became a member of the Lincoln Trail Libraries System (LTLS) in 1998 and made interlibrary loan services with public libraries part of its daily operations. Guided by the IFSI Library Advisory Committee, consisting of first responder members from more than sixteen fire and industry organizations from throughout Illinois, the IFSI Library launched the Outreach Program in 1999 to provide no-cost fire emergency library and information assistance and services to both Illinois fire service personnel and Illinois citizens. Following the inception of the Outreach Program, the IFSI Library experienced transformational changes aided by a series of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant awards, totaling more than $250,000, funded by the Illinois State Library, a Division of the Office of Secretary of State. Beginning in 2006, the IFSI Library staff answered more than 4,000 reference requests annually, a drastic change when compared to 836 in 1999. In 2011, the 9 million dollars Learning Resource and Research Center was dedicated with a permanent home to the library. From 2015 to 2017, three years in a row, the IFSI Library has been named the finalist for the IMLS National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Dr. Lian Ruan has also been recognized by both library and fire emergency communities.