

In Frame: Centering Representation in Moving Image Archives

Summary: Driven by a shared commitment to change the way film institutions work with materials by and about underrepresented communities, the Academy Foundation/Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, on behalf of a consortium of the Academy Film Archive, American Film Institute, Black Film Center & Archive at Indiana University, Library of Congress, National Film Preservation Board, and UCLA Film & Television Archive, respectfully submits a \$600,000 three-year implementation grant request to support the consortium project *In Frame: Centering Representation in Moving Image Archives*.

The goal of the *In Frame* project is to **reassess and change how underrepresented films and filmmakers are identified in the nation's film collections—located in public, private, and academic libraries and archives across the country**. Led by the Academy Film Archive, the consortium will use the implementation phase to develop, test, launch, and promote a **free open access database and data sharing platform**. These search tools use secondary sources, such as scholarly texts, film festival catalogs, and websites, to identify films and filmmakers from marginalized communities related to disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, and other social and cultural identities. The project dataset currently comprises 22,450 citations from 65 secondary sources and will continue to grow during the implementation phase and beyond.

Ultimately, end users will be able to search across tens of thousands of individual names and film titles—including studio and independent features, documentaries, animated films, and short films. Access points will include secondary source quotations and a controlled vocabulary of identity terms and related concepts. Film titles range from early depictions of people with disabilities in the silent film *The Miracle Man* (1919), to representations of African American, Korean, and Puerto Rican communities in *Do the Right Thing* (1989), to descriptions of gay life during Castro-era Cuba in *Before Night Falls* (2000).

When publicly launched, the *In Frame* project will make a significant impact on the field of libraries and archives by:

- Accelerating research and discovery of individuals and films that are underrepresented or excluded from the American film canon across 130 years of film history
- Identifying and addressing gaps in film representation, collecting, description, and access across intersections of underrepresented communities.

As its long-term impact, it is hoped that national institutions and organizations will use the dataset alongside their Content Management Systems to identify holdings and gaps in their collections, contribute new metadata to the dataset, and collaboratively strategize on new acquisitions, preservation projects, and curating film programs that highlight underrepresented archival collections.

Project advisors include metadata specialists Melissa Adler, Western University, Rahul Bhargava, Northeastern University, and Raymond Drewry, principal scientist at MovieLabs; cultural and social scholars Frances Gateward, Howard University, Maryam Kashani, University of Illinois, and Safiya Umoja Noble, UCLA; archivist Catherine H. Phan, University of Wisconsin-Madison; filmmakers Edward James Olmos and Yvonne Welbon; and director and president, Academy Museum of Motion Pictures Jacqueline Stewart. During the implementation phase, the contribution of 40-50 paid community consultants will ensure that a diversity of perspectives help to shape the final project.

The consortium has met regularly since 2019 and continues to develop the project with considerable momentum and enthusiasm. The project addresses NLGL Goal 3.2 and received an IMLS NLGL planning grant in 2021 to develop its working prototype and launch its paid community consultant focus groups. The *In Frame* search tool is scheduled to be publicly available in late spring/early summer of 2026.

Project Justification: Historically, available information on films and related individuals from underrepresented communities has been limited in scope across the nation's film archives. During the past century, subjective decisions made by film archives to prioritize the acquisition and preservation of certain titles over others have dramatically impacted available research material and the historical understanding of American cinema. In her 2011 article, "Discovering Black Film History: Tracing the Tyler, Texas Black Film Collection," University of Chicago professor and now Academy Museum director and president Jacqueline Stewart examines how questions of race can be used to

investigate film histories that have largely been ignored or remain invisible.¹ This exclusionary past has significantly affected the scope of American film culture and has shaped the dominant understanding of the nation's film history. Dr. Stewart calls for scholars and archivists **to collaboratively produce more effective searches and to work through larger questions of why certain materials in the nation's film collections continue to be underrecognized in significant ways.**

At the same time, archival staff at the Academy Film Archive (AFA) and its consortium peers saw a need to respond with more detail and nuance to an increasing number of research inquiries about films and filmmakers of interest to specific underrepresented communities. In 2018, the AFA conceptualized the project's initial dataset, and in 2019, it began to hire part-time researchers and graduate students with specific subject specializations to gather data from credible secondary sources across ten broad focus areas, known as **Focus Categories**. These have been preliminarily defined as 1) Asian/Asian Diaspora, 2) Black/African Diaspora, 3) Indigenous Peoples, 4) LGBTQIA+, 5) Latina/e/o/x, 6) Middle Eastern or North African/MENA Diaspora, 7) Multiracial, 8) Pacific Islander/PI Diaspora, 9) People with disabilities and those who are d/Deaf and/or hard of hearing, and 10) Women.

Individual names and film titles are gathered from secondary sources that include essay collections (*Chicanos and Film: Essays on Chicano Representation and Resistance* edited by Chon A. Noriega, 1992); scholarly texts (*New Queer Cinema: The Director's Cut* by B. Ruby Rich, 2013; *Liberating Hollywood: Women Directors and the Feminist Reform of 1970s American Cinema* by Maya Montañez Smukler, 2019), film festival catalogs (Superfest International Disability Film Festival), and more. Each text is analyzed, and dataset records are created for every relevant individual and film title, independent from consortium partner collection holdings. A **quoted source excerpt** explains each individual or film title's connection to underrepresented communities. The project's growing bibliography of source texts is included as a work sample, and the process for source selection is described below.

The project's **primary audience** comprises scholars, researchers, archivists, curators, programmers, cultural producers, educators and students. Its **secondary audience** is an institutional audience of peer film institutions, including film archives and film information institutions, along with libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage organizations who hold moving images in their collections.

Planning phase outcomes and dataset examples: The *In Frame* project has been further developed with an [NLGL planning grant](#) that ends in July 2023, and the consortium is perfectly positioned to begin the implementation phase in August 2023. The primary planning phase outcome is a **completed proof-of-concept** dataset search tool in Airtable that uses a data subset of 1,700 individual names and film titles across eight of the ten preliminary focus categories. The prototype was user tested by consortium partners and advisors. A 90-second video demonstration and links to the working prototype are available in the Supporting Documents.

Other planning phase outcomes include:

- Incorporated copyright advice from the project's pro bono legal consultant for open access to the dataset and its secondary source quotations.
- Development of a controlled vocabulary that reflects and responds to evolving community language.
- Launch of paid community consultant focus groups, comprising cultural and activist leaders, who provide feedback on the use of descriptive language with consideration of cultural nuances and the lived experiences of people represented in the dataset.
- Refinement of an inclusive metadata schema design and enhanced search and browse functionality through the work of a consulting taxonomist specializing in metadata related to underrepresented communities.
- Continued investigation into authority control, universal identifiers, and linked data strategies to facilitate data interoperability among archives. This includes:
 - Matching dataset records with universal name identifiers through the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF), under the guidance of consortium partner Library of Congress
 - Matching dataset records to film title EIDR identifiers. The Entertainment Identifier Registry (EIDR) is an open database of industry-standard universal identifiers that publicly registers audiovisual objects. During the planning phase, unique EIDR identifications and identifying film information, such as production country and

¹ Stewart, Jacqueline. "Discovering Black Film History: Tracing the Tyler, Texas Black Film Collection." *Film History*, 23.2 (2011), 147–73.

language, are being ingested into the dataset. This allows for more thorough data-matching to peer archival data holdings beyond the metadata currently captured in the *In Frame* methodology. As an example, Chicana documentary filmmaker Lourdes Portillo's *Las Madres: The Mothers Of Plaza De Mayo* (1985) has a permanent unique EIDR ID (10.5240/5212-2197-A4D3-A1D7-B04E-I). This identifier will also reference the film titles *Las Madres De La Plaza De Mayo*, *Las Madres—The Mothers Of Plaza De Mayo*, *Las Madres De La Plaza De Mayo*, *Las Madres De Plaza De Mayo*, and *Mothers Of Plaza De Mayo*.

- Preliminary clean-up of the project's legacy dataset to standardize existing entries and consolidate duplicate records.
- Expansion of secondary sources to include websites, film festival and distributor catalogs.
- Next steps to migrate the Airtable dataset into a permanent database.

Dataset examples: As an example, the first screenshot in the Supporting Documents illustrates search results for *Duel in the Sun* (1946), a major studio Western known for its portrayal of an interracial love triangle. A dataset search produces results focused on intersecting representations of Latina/e/o/x communities, Indigenous Peoples, and People with Disabilities. A researcher may discover that the female lead character was played by a white actor, pointing to a historical lack of opportunities for Latina actors to play Latina roles. Additional external research on the film and its main female protagonist may lead to discussions about the confluence of Latina/e/o/x and Indigenous identities. Researchers can also look further into the dataset to explore other films from the 1940s, which in turn may access other names and film titles and indicate other potential frameworks for research.

As a second example, the evolution of language about identity can be researched through three different sources for *A Florida Enchantment* (1914), a silent film displaying gender nonconformity. The title is described in 1981 as “a sex reversal comedy” with “male impersonations,”² then in 2003 as the “change [of] a woman into a man and a man into a woman,”³ and again in 2016 as an exploration of “cross-dressing” and the “long tradition of gender-disguise romantic comedies.”⁴ By visually bringing together different scholarly works on the same film, the dataset reveals how language is constantly evolving into more inclusive terminology, as well as demonstrating the reclamation of historical terms by subsequent generations.

Relationship to other works: Several recent projects aim to address these inequities in historical moving image collection and preservation processes by focusing on specific communities, time frames, and needs. They include consortium partner AFI's *Women They Talk About* survey on gender-parity in feature films; the LGBTQ Digital Archives Project by the Smithsonian and the ONE Archives Foundation, the largest repository of LGBTQ materials in the world; and consortium partner UCLA Film & Television Archives' *L.A. Rebellion* project, highlighting the contributions of two decades of Black film students. Other projects include the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) Treasures Database of silent films at member institutions highlighting several early pioneers in underrepresented communities, the Mujeres Latinas Project at the Iowa Women's Archives, and an online tool created by The Iris Center at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education and Human Development that catalogs the representation of People with Disabilities in motion pictures. **However, no single project brings together the nation's film institutions to collaboratively address complex issues of identity and representation.**

Project Work Plan: With input from an advisory panel, all major decision-making will continue to be the responsibility of a steering committee comprising 1-2 representatives from each consortium partner and a six-person AFA core staff team that provides daily project management and administration. Many consortium members participate in one or more working groups, as described below. The consortium will continue to meet twice each year during the implementation phase to share working group progress, review initiatives, and re-assess workflow. Advisors will continue to meet individually with the AFA core team, particularly to discuss methods of authority control. Consortium partners and advisors will gather for their first in-person meeting in May 2023, hosted by the Academy Film Archive and the Academy Museum in Los Angeles.

² Russo, Vito. *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies*. Harper & Row, 1981, 11.

³ Daniel, Lisa, and Claire Jackson. *The Bent Lens: A World Guide to Gay and Lesbian Film*. Alyson Publications, 2003, 164.

⁴ Horak, Laura. *Girls Will be Boys: Cross-Dressed Women, Lesbians, and American Cinema, 1908-1934*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2016, 93-95.

Implementation phase activities over three years will include:

- Hiring a temporary project manager
- Data migration into a permanent database, the design and development of a publicly accessible search tool, creation of a long-term sustainability plan, and expanded community consultant network, all overseen by the project manager, AFA core staff team and a staff metadata specialist, and consortium working groups as described below
- User testing by community consultant focus groups and target audience members
- Establishing a linked data strategy using the expertise of all consortium partners
- Launch the public search tool in May-July 2026
- Present findings and outcomes, begin ongoing maintenance, continue community consultant involvement, source text selection, and data entry managed by AFA staff and all consortium partners.

A. Hiring a temporary project manager: The proposed implementation phase will begin with hiring a dedicated project manager to oversee the successful launch of the *In Frame* search tool and shared data platform. This temporary three-year position will report directly to executive vice president, library, archive, and Sci-Tech Council Randy Haberkamp and will work closely with the AFA core team, consortium partners, and advisors. Candidates will have three to five years of archival DEAI project management experience and will be recruited through avenues such as the We Here BIPOC library and information science community job board; Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) listserv; consortium, advisor, and community consultant networks; and alumni from programs such as the AMIA Pathways Fellowship, which helps to create moving image archival career pathways for people from groups historically underrepresented in the profession. The hiring process will be managed by the Academy HR department and AFA staff with final approval of the consortium steering committee.

The project manager will:

- Organize and oversee the daily operations of the *In Frame* project; determine priorities; set deadlines and objectives; delegate tasks to the AFA core team, working groups, project researchers, and dataset entry reviewers.
- Work with the AFA project specialist to ensure clear communication with the consortium, advisors, and community consultants, as well as monitor the budget, manage contracts with consultants, and track expenses.
- Work with the AFA metadata specialist to hire and manage a web developer and designer using the project's proof-of-concept prototype to build the public search tool and data sharing platform.
- Help to organize the progress of the AFA core team, researchers, and working groups to refine cataloging methodology, ongoing controlled vocabulary development, source selection, and public outreach.
- Serve as the primary contact with the pro bono legal consultant to ensure open access to the dataset and its secondary source quotations.
- Create the project's evaluation and sustainability plan at the start of the implementation phase.
- Hold biannual check-in meetings with individual members of the project's advisory panel.
- Ensure the project's progress, direction, and sustainability through quarterly group meetings with the AFA core team, consortium partners, advisors, consultants, researchers, and dataset reviewers.

B. Data migration, search tool development, sustainability, community consultants network expansion: The implementation phase will begin with a kick-off virtual consortium and advisory meeting in October 2023 to establish quarterly milestones over the next three years. This will keep the project on track and confirm a timely public launch. This initial meeting will be followed by four activities:

Data migration: The dataset will be migrated out of Airtable, led by AFA staff metadata specialist Sydney Henry and under the guidance of the Academy Digital Management Services team. Activities will:

- Standardize and update documentation of cataloging methodology and project workflows.
- Implement an initial phase of data cleanup in accordance with future metadata hierarchy needs.
- Establish a consortium-wide authority control strategy, including LCNAF, EIDR, and consortium partner unique identifiers, such as AFI catalog numbers.
- Research and determine a permanent backend system that supports the needs of the project.
- Restructure and reformat metadata to meet migration requirements and begin phased legacy data migration into the new backend system.

- User test with consortium partners and advisors to ensure that data migration was successful and that searching, exporting, and importing operates as expected.
- Establish and implement improved quality assurance and backup procedures to secure data integrity with the new backend system.
- Continue to assign project researchers to enter new citation records directly into the permanent backend system and provide quality assurance review for newly created entries.

Search tool development: A web developer will be hired to use the project's proof-of-concept prototype to build the public search tool and data sharing platform. Activities will be led by metadata specialist Sydney Henry and project specialist Margaret Mertz with oversight from Academy Digital Management Services team. This will:

- Write and distribute a Request for Proposal for the web developer and designer using the Academy's supplier diversity best practices.
- Refine the interface mockup to emphasize user experience (how the user engages with the database interface), information architecture (how the information is structured within the interface), and accessibility (ease of use for searching and navigating) through the Accessibility Working Group described below. Consortium partners and community consultants will provide feedback on the refined user interface.
- Work with the web developer and designer to create and launch the final user interface.

The Academy, and particularly the Academy Museum, has a long history of working closely with consulting web developers to design and launch complex, engaging, and user-friendly digital initiatives. As an example, the Academy Museum's online [Academy Awards timeline](#) received three w3 Gold awards in 2021 for technical achievement, use of emerging technology, and general websites-cultural institutions.

To accommodate database users who are Blind/low-vision, the final design will incorporate the best practices of the Academy Museum website. The Academy is committed to meeting accessibility guidelines as outlined by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and will update its digital platforms in response to the ongoing evolution of accessibility tools, techniques, needs, and requirements recommended by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

Sustainability: As increased accessibility to films by and about underrepresented communities remains a priority for film archives and film institutions, *In Frame* is envisioned as an extensible standards-based platform and is expected to have a long and impactful life cycle. To support this, project sustainability will be considered from the beginning of the implementation phase. The project manager will work with the AFA core team and with the advice of the Academy IT and DMS teams to create a sustainability plan that focuses on long-term maintenance and technology upgrades of the public search tool and shared data platform. The sustainability plan will specifically address maintaining and improving the project's infrastructure, addition of new dataset records from additional source texts and materials, how to best incorporate ongoing feedback from future cycles of community consultants, and other critical topics.

Community Consultants: Launched during the planning phase, paid community consultants provide feedback on the use of descriptive language—ensuring that controlled vocabulary considers cultural nuances and the lived experiences of people represented by the dataset's films and filmmakers—and advise on public search tool needs. Each community consultant has lived experiences within the communities represented in one or more of the ten Focus Categories.

Current consultants represent a range of backgrounds and include professors of film studies, media studies, and history; curators and film programmers; filmmakers and artists; activists, non-profit founders, and social workers; and established and emerging professionals from the fields of libraries, museum collections, digital asset management, and controlled vocabulary development. Consultants were recommended through the consortium and advisors or recruited through outreach to community organizations such as the Disability Justice Project as well as listserv posts including to Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia, the Queer Metadata Collective, and SCMS. The project's current group of 21 community consultants will grow to 40-50 consultants during the implementation phase. A list of current consultant bios is included in the Supporting Documents.

During the implementation phase, consultants for each Focus Category will meet four times over the course of six months to review proposed controlled vocabulary terms and advise on user needs for the public search tool. The pilot group met during the planning phase in January 2023 with an initial meeting that introduced the cohort to the project and each other. Second meetings were held in February and March 2023 in subject-specific focus groups that discussed adding historical

context to the scope notes of descriptive terms that highlight cultural practices, diasporic identities, and positive qualities of disability, as examples. Third meetings are currently being held to discuss controlled vocabulary terms by subject area (Black/African Diaspora, Latina/e/o/x, LGBTQIA+, and People with Disabilities and those who are d/Deaf and/or hard of hearing), and a final meeting in May 2023 will discuss how to document and provide access to derogatory terms used in source text examples. Focus groups meet virtually and are led by Academy Museum and AFA staff facilitators J. Raúl Guzmán, Jessi Jones, Shani Miller, and Kenya Queen, who received dedicated facilitation training through the Academy's Office of Representation, Equity, and Inclusion.

C. User testing: During the implementation phase, the public search tool will be user tested using two phases of two focus groups. Each focus group will comprise eight people total: two community consultants, four members from the project's primary audience of scholars, researchers, archivists, curators, programmers, cultural producers, educators and students; and two people from the project's secondary audience of peer libraries, archives, and film institutions. Participants will be recommended by the consortium, advisors, and their networks, along with Margaret Herrick Library patrons. The Academy Museum's curatorial, film programs, film education, and oral history projects team will also recommend curatorial peers and education partners and will participate as user testers themselves. Search tool testing will comprise pre-written search questions and user-initiated searches. The AFA core team will work with the web developer to incorporate all testing feedback.

Ongoing community feedback will be incorporated through hiring and engaging a rolling cycle of consultants who will continue to advise on methodology, controlled vocabulary, sources, and methods of user engagement. User suggestions through the database's feedback loops of a dedicated email address and pop-up or post-visit email surveys will allow the incorporation of new source recommendations as well as user suggestions of evolving community language. User analytics will be provided to the consortium steering committee in quarterly reports.

D. Establish a linked data strategy: Activities with longer and overlapping timelines include establishing a strategy to link data to consortium collection holdings. The resulting strategy will build on the planning phase outcomes of matching dataset records to universal identifiers for names and film title information, working directly with consortium and project advisors with metadata expertise. The strategy will be tested by consortium collection managers then offered to peer archives through conferences and papers described below. The linked data strategy will be primarily created by metadata specialist Sydney Henry, working with consortium members and advisors with extensive metadata experience, including EIDR co-founder Raymond Drewry, and community consultants with related metadata experience, under the guidance of the Academy DMS team.

E. Launch the public search tool in May-July 2026. The *In Frame* project will be launched through a coordinated announcement from all consortium partners through dedicated or reposted social messaging and on listservs from SCMS, AMIA, FIAF, and the Society of American Archivists, among others. Listserv posts will include a link to a short video demonstration created by AFA staff. External communications, including possible media releases, will be guided by the Academy's communications team in collaboration with all consortium partners. As of March 2023, the Academy has over 14.8 million followers through its digital media presence.

F. Present findings and outcomes, begin ongoing maintenance, and continue database expansion. During the implementation phase, consortium members will continue to share the project through existing peer relationships and meetings such as the Society of California Archivists, AMIA, FIAF, and SCMS conferences. Once launched, the database and shared data platform will be communicated with peer archives through conference papers and a planned symposium with the project's primary and secondary audiences to be held in 2026-27 at the Academy Museum in Los Angeles. The open access database will also be promoted within additional preservation-focused groups such as L.A. as Subject and inclusive description initiatives such as the Queer Metadata Collective.

Additionally, the Academy Museum education team will use the open access portal as part of its series of standards-based film guides and curriculum, inviting high school students to search for and discover a broad representation of works, such as short films by Black and Latinx filmmakers. The museum's oral history projects team will also use the project's controlled vocabulary to inform its own indexing needs.

After the database's public launch, the AFA core team metadata specialist will begin ongoing maintenance and updates. Maintenance checks will be performed on the interface and database, regularly backing up both systems, and updating the

underlying frameworks when necessary. The consortium will continue to expand and evaluate new source texts to keep up to date with recently published scholarly works, annual film festivals, and current institutional programming. The AFA will also forge new relationships with Focus Category specific film festivals and programmers, such as ReelAbilities and Outfest, to receive annual updates on their catalogs. The AFA will continue to hire part-time researchers to add new film title and filmmaker entries from secondary source texts. By the end of the implementation phase, the dataset is anticipated to double in size to 50,000 citations from 120 sources.

Who will carry out the project plan: Since its formation in 2019, the consortium has successfully used small working groups to complete project activities. Reporting to the consortium steering committee, each working group comprises four to nine people total, representing four to five consortium partners, and is managed by at least one person from the AFA core team. Working group descriptions are as follows:

Cataloging and Index Development Working Group: Under the regular oversight of AFA cataloging manager Mike Brostoff and metadata specialist Sydney Henry, this working group has made significant progress during the planning phase. The group meets twice yearly and comprises AFA and Margaret Herrick Library, Library of Congress, Black Film Center & Archive, AFI, and UCLA consortium members and advisors who are full-time catalogers, metadata specialists, and taxonomists with extensive authority control experience. The group's primary activity during the implementation phase will be the continued development and implementation of the taxonomy and authority control strategies. Universal identifiers of names and titles (such as EIDR, LCNAF, and Virtual International Authority File) will facilitate cross-referencing and linking among multiple film catalogs and databases, as well as all consortium partner catalogs.

Community Network Working Group: Under the regular oversight of AFA senior manager, public access Taylor Morales and senior film archivist Kate Dollenmayer, this working group comprises AFA and National Film Preservation Board partners, advisors including Yvonne Welbon and Maryam Kashani. They will continue to manage the project's expanding network of 40-50 scholars and community leaders across Focus Categories. During the implementation phase, this working group will continue to meet bi-annually to review the community network phases, update and circulate consultant role profiles, coordinate the continuation and expansion of the network to address all Focus Categories, and plan for sustainable relationships beyond the grant period.

Source Selection Working Group: Under the regular oversight of AFA senior cataloger Jessica DePrest, this working group comprises AFA staff, AFI and UCLA consortium members, and advisors, and receives critical input from community consultants. During the implementation phase, this group will continue to meet quarterly to expand and evaluate the source list, which includes scholarly texts, film festival catalogs, distributor catalogs, and film lists generated by institutions and individuals, such as AFI catalog lists and the UCLA program "Through Indian Eyes: Native American Cinema," among others.

Legal Working Group: This working group comprises film archivist Kate Dollenmayer, executive vice president Randy Haberkamp, Academy Museum associate legal counsel Lena Wong, Library of Congress and UCLA consortium partners, and advisors. They will continue to meet bi-annually and as needed with the project's pro bono legal representation Arnold & Porter to discuss legal recommendations, guidelines, and best practices for citing and publishing source text, providing open dataset access, and updating user terms and services agreements.

Four new Working Groups will report to the consortium steering committee during the implementation phase.

Accessibility Working Group: Under the regular oversight of project specialist Margaret Mertz and project researcher Hannah Garibaldi, this new working group will meet bi-annually to develop inclusive practices and requirements to ensure that physical disabilities, situational disabilities, and socio-economic restrictions on bandwidth and speed are not barriers to access the *In Frame* dataset and user interface. Advisor Raymond Drewry will be regularly involved with this working group. Hannah's project researcher position is funded by a grant from the Ruderman Family Foundation, which advocates for and advances the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout society.

Interface Design Working Group: Under the oversight of project specialist Margaret Mertz, this new working group comprises AFA and Black Film Center & Archive consortium partners. They will meet quarterly to user-test and provide feedback on the design of the user interface information architecture, graphics, and interactions.

Data Protection Working Group: Managed by metadata specialist Sydney Henry and overseen by executive vice president Randy Haberkamp, this new working group comprises members of AFA staff, consulting with the Library of Congress and UCLA. They will meet bi-annually to develop data privacy and protection policies and procedures to ensure the sustainability and safety of the dataset, front-end interface, and back-end portal. The Legal Working Group will be consulted as issues or concerns arise.

Data Cleanup Working Group: This new working group is internal to the AFA core team and is led by metadata specialist Sydney Henry. This five-person group will meet quarterly to manage the project's legacy dataset, initially created by the AFA in 2019. The group is composed of project researchers and AFA cataloging staff and ensures data integrity by establishing procedures to fix or standardize incorrectly formatted, duplicate, or incomplete data, consistent with the current cataloging methodology.

Academy Staff: Key Academy Foundation staff includes executive vice president Randy Haberkamp, who provides overall leadership for the project, and Academy Film Archive director Michael Pogorzelski who oversees all film archive initiatives. Both have been involved since the project's inception. Academy Museum director and president Jacqueline Stewart also serves as an internal advisor. During the implementation phase, she will continue to contribute her academic expertise, as well as a museum perspective to the project's development. The six-person AFA core team comprises senior film archivist Kate Dollenmayer and senior manager, public access Taylor Morales, who provide daily project management and manage the community consultant networks; cultural equity and inclusion project specialist Margaret Mertz, who oversees the work plan, consortium partner and advisor meetings, and communications; manager, cataloging Mike Brostoff who oversees the project's cataloging and index development; senior moving image cataloger Jessica DePrest, who manages all source texts; and metadata specialist Sydney Henry, whose position is fully dedicated to the *In Frame* project and oversees metadata and database management, data migration, and supervises project researchers. Estimated contributed hours and additional Academy Foundation staff are listed in the Budget Justification.

Consortium partners: All consortium partners participate in the decision-making process, with additional insight from project advisors. Lead consortium representatives include AFI Catalog manager Sarah Clothier and archivist Emily Wittenberg, American Film Institute; acting director Rachel Stoeltje and archivist Amber Bertin, Black Film Center & Archive, Indiana University; chief, NAVCC–Packard Campus Gregory Lukow and head, Moving Image Processing Unit , and Andrea Leigh, Library of Congress; and director, UCLA Film & Television Archive May Hong HaDuong and Smithsonian Institution media conservation and digitization specialist CK Ming, both representing the National Film Preservation Board. UCLA Film & Television Archive consortium members include May Hong HaDuong; head of cataloging and metadata Annette Doss; motion picture curator Todd Wiener; and head of the UCLA Film & Television Archive Research and Study Center Maya Montañez Smuckler.

Advisors: During the implementation phase, the *In Frame* project's nine-person advisory panel will continue to regularly participate in consortium meetings, individually consult with the AFA core team, connect the project with community consultants, and continue to provide ongoing project feedback. Advisor bios are included in the Supporting Documents.

Time, financial, personnel, and other resources: As outlined in the Budget Justification, requested funds will support consortium costs of a temporary three-year project manager, web development, advisor and community consultant fees; advisor and consortium meeting travel; external and internal conference costs; and Academy Foundation administrative, educational, and metadata staff support. The Academy Foundation will contribute an equal cost share of general funds and additional grant funding through to-be-submitted renewal requests for all remaining staff salaries, including daily project oversight, working group management, and metadata, user portal, and shared data platform development; server costs; marketing and promotion; and part-time researcher positions and data entry reviewers.

Target groups external input and evaluation: The perspectives and contributions of the target groups—a primary audience residing within film scholarship and education and a secondary institutional audience— are incorporated into the work plan through the project's network of community consultants. During the implementation phase, community consultants will continue to provide external input, validate, build consensus, and evaluate dataset content through the project's cataloging methodology, quality control, and source text selection as follows:

Cataloging methodology overview: The cataloging methodology was developed to create records for each relevant individual and film referenced within each text. Individuals include directors, writers, actors, producers, editors,

cinematographers, costume designers, production designers, composers, and more. Film titles include studio and independent feature releases, documentary films, animated films, short films, and more. As documented in screenshots in the Supporting Documents, each record includes:

- Focus Category - Each record is assigned one or more broad areas of focus within social, gender, racial, ethnic, ability, sexual orientation, and cultural identities. In creating the dataset, the decision was made to analyze sources across all Focus Categories at once, rather than one category at a time, to encourage a more holistic and intersectional approach to identity and description.
- Index Terms - Key words and phrases capture specific terminology each source uses to describe, represent, or relate to a more specific group or individual name. Index Terms may describe the identity or identities of an individual or group within a Focus Category (e.g. *Black, Asian American*), geographic locations relevant to a Focus Category (e.g. *South America, India*), relevant medical conditions (e.g. *Paralysis, Artificial hand, HIV/AIDS*), relevant film genres and forms (e.g. *Experimental, Blaxploitation*), stereotypes (e.g. *Femme fatale, Disabled villain*), or associated subjects relevant to a specific Focus Category's culture and scholarship (e.g. *Immigration, Cross-dressing*).

Outdated and derogatory terms are entered verbatim from sources. These are noted broadly and encompass anything questionable, such as offensive terms, negative stereotypes, and slurs. Researchers check a Derogatory Term box that allows terms to be filtered. Community consultants and advisors continue to guide the project on how to best provide access to these terms.

- Controlled Vocabulary Terms – Controlled vocabulary development is managed internally by metadata specialist Sydney Henry and taxonomist Marielle Smith. The *In Frame* controlled vocabulary comprises terms from sources such as WikiData and Homosorous, among others.
- Public Notes - This field contains a quoted excerpt from each source that explains the relevance of an individual or work to a Focus Category and that includes one or more Index Terms.
- Bibliography - Identifying source information, including publisher and publication year.

Quality Control: Each record is reviewed for content by AFA and Margaret Herrick Library primary reviewers, with an audit of sample records by AFA and MHL secondary reviewers. The Cataloging Working Group serves as the final decision maker if a record or issue remains in discussion. Review status is noted in dedicated drop-down fields in each record.

Nature and importance of sources: Secondary sources provide the essential information that forms the *In Frame* dataset. For this reason, the selection of sources is a crucial and ongoing element, reflecting ever-evolving scholarly and community discourses about identity. Potential sources are reviewed and discussed by the Source Selection Working Group using criteria developed for the project, including publisher information, number of scholarly citations, text structure (e.g. survey, series of case studies), publication date, and the author's relationship to their subject. Other types of sources, such as film festival and distributor catalogs, expand the dataset beyond films and filmmakers referenced by published texts. The Margaret Herrick Library maintains comprehensive files on film festivals that include hard-to-find catalogs and assists in gathering resources. Sources will continue to be suggested by community consultants, consortium members and advisors, project researchers, and internal Academy staff. A bibliographic database tracks selected and potential future secondary sources and now contains 479 records. This source list will be made publicly accessible through the user portal. A current and select future source listing is included in the Supporting Documents.

Evaluation: As noted in the Performance Management Plan, project progress will be tracked through quarterly goals to be established in the implementation phase's first consortium meeting. Evaluation metrics will include user analytics, open-ended and demographic pop-up survey results, citations in scholarly journals and articles, and quantity and quality of media coverage. The project's ultimate success will be measured through the feedback from peer film institutions who will be able to provide more nuanced and detailed collection information for researcher inquiries and an increased number of collaborative film preservation projects focused on the work of underrepresented film titles and filmmakers.

Diversity plan: The *In Frame* project has been defined since its beginnings by a diversity of perspectives. This ranges from the in-depth source text selection across a century of film history to target audiences who will be encouraged to provide critical feedback on the public search tool. Most importantly, the people involved in the *In Frame* project—advisors, community consultants, consortium partners, along with AFA, Academy Museum, and Margaret Herrick Library staff—are also part of the project themselves. They represent various orientations across ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, disability and other social and cultural identities, along with backgrounds that include filmmaking, art, activism, academics, and the professional metadata and archival fields.

During the implementation phase and beyond, the project’s evolving group of community consultants will continue to shape the dataset’s descriptive language so that it remains inclusive of changes in the language around identity. After the project’s launch, it is hoped that users will add to the dataset with new source recommendations and contribute direct input on controlled vocabulary terms through interactive web elements and a dedicated feedback page. As its ultimate goal, the *In Frame* project works toward collaboratively changing the moving image field—improving the ability of archives to provide access to a broad range of materials that will collectively redefine the scope of American film history.

Project results: The consortium will ensure the open access database and shared data platform can be adapted and used by other institutions by continuing to solicit and incorporate feedback on the project’s index model and authority control strategy from community consultants and peer archivists and researchers. Project results will be disseminated through conference papers and presentations, press releases, targeted social media campaigns, and other communications to be determined during the implementation phase. The shared data platform will be disseminated to peer libraries, archives, and museums through professional organizations and networks, as well as future conference presentations and papers. The consortium will continue to work together to identify and consider evolving vocabularies, technologies, tools, and standards so the dataset remains accessible and relevant to a range of communities, users, and organizations.

As part of its consortium contribution, and to ensure the project remains sustainable, the Academy will maintain the final dataset within its secure hosting infrastructure and will continue to hire project researchers to increase and enrich the dataset. The Academy’s history of developing and maintaining digital resources includes:

- Academy Collections, a free [online resource](#) that was launched in 2018 and provides access to metadata and select digitized images from the Academy Foundation’s vast permanent collection of more than 12 million film-related items (1638-present).
- Academy Software Collection: Developed by the Academy Science and Technology Council and hosted by the Linux Foundation, the [Academy Software Foundation](#) was formed in 2018 to increase the quality and quantity of the content creation industry’s opensource software base.

Advancing knowledge and benefit to society: When launched, users will be able to freely access the database to explore secondary source materials—and the intersections among them—to help generate new scholarship on the individuals and motion pictures that have been historically marginalized or excluded from the American film canon. Through the resulting journal articles, educational curricula, public programs, and museum exhibitions, this work can be used to both identify disparities in representation in existing film content and to increase the visibility of underrepresented filmmakers and films. It is hoped that the *In Frame* project will enable national institutions and organizations to collaboratively share metadata or unique holdings—then individually or collectively strategize on new material acquisitions and film restorations—significantly contributing to the ongoing systemic equity and inclusion efforts that continue to take place throughout the country’s archival, library, and museum fields.

Academy Foundation Consortium Project
In Frame: Centering Representation in Moving Image Archives

Current / Main Work Task	2025					2026						
Ongoing / Maintenance Task	Implementation Phase											
Updating / As Needed Task	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J
Consortium Meetings												
Bi-Annual Consortium Meetings				Virtual						Virtual		
Issue RFP and hire web developer to design and develop database user portal and shared data platform												
Community Consultant Network												
Pilot Phase with 5-6 consultants per each of the 4 initial Focus Categories (Black/African Diaspora, Latina/o/x, People with Disabilities, and LGBTQIA+).												
Second Phase with 5-6 consultants per each of the 4 additional Focus Categories: (Asian/Asian Diaspora, Middle Eastern/North African/MENA Diaspora, Indigenous Peoples, Pacific Islander/PI Diaspora).												
Third Phase with 5-6 consultants per each of the 2 final focus categories: (Women, Multiracial).												
Fully launched community network will continue reviewing the InFrame project, data, and workflows with cycling consultants from all focus categories.												
Data Migration from Airtable to permanent back-end system												
Determine the permanent backend system and implement initial phase of data cleanup.												
Phased migration of the legacy data to the new backend system.												
Interface Design and Development												
Final interface design, accessibility and information architecture circulated for feedback.												
Develop custom interface.												
Create shared back-end portal for consortium partners.												
Launch of In Frame open access database												
Establish a Linked Data Strategy												
Confirm strategy to link data to consortium holdings.												
Design and develop shared data platform with web developer.												
Ongoing Project Management, Maintenance, and Sustainability												
Source Management: Continue expanding and evaluating source database.												
Data Entry & Metadata Management: Continue working with project researchers and reviewers to expand dataset.												
Community Engagement Management: Continue to hire and engage rolling cycle of community consultants from across all Focus Categories.												
Continued Long-Term improvement of user interface.												

Digital products: The *In Frame* project will create a freely accessible relational database of individuals and film titles gathered from credible secondary sources. Created in 2018 and as of February 24, 2023, the dataset currently comprises 23,099 citations, 9,820 content (films) records, and 3,267 individual (people) records from 69 secondary sources and will continue to grow. A separate bibliographic database tracks secondary sources with 547 records. These datasets and all related documentation, including the cataloging methodology, policies and procedures, style guides, and project timeline will also be made freely accessible to project users.

The dataset's lifecycle began in Excel, followed by FileMaker Pro. The dataset was subsequently migrated into Airtable in 2020 to enhance functionality and to allow Academy Film Archive (AFA) project researchers to work remotely during the pandemic. Permanent back-end system options include a cloud-based relational system that allows the AFA core team and consortium partners to collaborate in creating, reviewing, and editing records in real time. The *In Frame* project will use DOCX, XLSX, CSV, and PDF files for documentation. File formats such as XML may come into use in the later implementation stage to facilitate metadata sharing with union catalogs and partner institutions.

The *In Frame* project will not create software at this stage. It is possible that the final design will result in a need to build software for the database and/or shared digital platform, potentially including Linked Data applications. However, it is most likely that existing software will be used for these purposes. The project's final development will be managed by AFA metadata specialist with the guidance of the Academy's IT and Digital Management Services departments.

Availability: When launched, the *In Frame* database will be available online through the Academy Film Archive's webpages and through possible consortium partner links. The underlying software platform and infrastructure will be determined during the implementation phase and will build upon the final index model determined at the end of the planning phase. User testing is anticipated to be performed by all consortium partners, advisors, community consultants, and peer archives, scholars, and researchers. The project will be promoted within preservation-focused groups and through conference presentations. A communications plan to generate awareness for the dataset among film scholars and researchers will be developed and launched during the implementation phase.

For each secondary source text, the project collects three categories of metadata to capture: 1) unique identifications of an individual or film, 2) critical cataloging elements, and 3) data management. In addition to basic information entered by project researchers, such as year of birth or date of release, the dataset will use EIDR and LCNAF universal identifiers for related data holdings so that individuals and film titles can be easily disambiguated. The metadata specialist will serve as the database manager and will subsequently perform an additional layer of review to ensure that all metadata adheres to stringent authority control and standards set early in the implementation phase.

Data collection and its development into an open access database does not require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board. The project will not collect personally identifiable, confidential, or proprietary information. The technical requirements necessary for understanding and reusing the data will be determined based on the index model selected during the final planning phase.

Access: The *In Frame* database will be made freely accessible as a public research resource. A pro bono legal consultant has been secured to offer best practice recommendations to make both citations and quotes publicly accessible. Ownership rights of each individual quote will remain with each published text. The license under which the database will be released will be determined per the legal consultant's guidance. An Academy Film Archive email address will be provided within the online description and terms of use and will be continuously monitored for questions and unforeseen issues. Records falling outside of the legal consultant's recommendations will be removed by AFA staff. The Academy

Foundation will only assert ownership rights over the infrastructure of the new database, not the database content. Terms of access, conditions of use, and how to best notify users about relevant terms or conditions are currently being determined with the expertise of the pro bono legal consultant.

Aggregated names, film titles, and quotes are gathered from published secondary sources, including books, peer-reviewed journals, and websites and should not raise privacy concerns. Future records that may involve privacy concerns or permissions, such as those from unique archival holdings not described in published sources, will be flagged and addressed on an individual basis following legal consultant guidance. Outdated and derogatory terms are entered in the Index Term field verbatim from secondary sources. These are noted broadly and encompass anything questionable, such as offensive terms, negative stereotypes, and slurs. Researchers use a Derogatory Term check box that allows terms to be filtered. A decision on how to provide access to these terms will be made during the implementation phase with guidance from community consultants and advisors.

Sustainability: The *In Frame* project is envisioned to have a long and impactful life cycle. The Academy will manage all technical aspects of the final database and shared data platform within its secure hosting infrastructure as part of its consortium contribution and to ensure the project remains viable. Descriptive and critical cataloging metadata will continue to be researched and entered by paid part-time AFA project researchers with specific areas of study or interest that directly relate to the project Focus Categories. Primary and secondary reviewers then confirm entries align with project methodology and metadata standards, before linking relevant Controlled Vocabulary terms and administrative data which helps to track the overall process.

To help facilitate widescale industry useability, universal identifiers for individual and film title records from LCNAF and EIDR are being ingested into the dataset. The project's Controlled Vocabularies are based on existing industry standards such as those provided by the Library of Congress, Getty Vocabularies, Homosaurus, and Wikidata, and are reviewed and amended based on feedback from community consultants and advisors. If Linked Open Data is identified as a viable project option for the shared data platform, RDF standards will come into use.

Metadata is currently stored in Airtable. All metadata management, including storage and preservation decisions for the project's implementation phase and beyond, will be the responsibility of the AFA core team with guidance from the Academy Digital Management Services and IT teams. The data management plan will be reviewed annually at a designated consortium partner meeting. Its implementation will be monitored by the AFA and reviewed by the consortium partners.

To facilitate widespread discovery and use of dataset content, the project's long-term goal is to make the dataset available on the shared digital platform that will link to related holdings in libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions. It is hoped that national institutions will share metadata on unique holdings and strategize on new material acquisitions, especially of films and filmmakers that have been historically excluded from archival collections.

Mission: The mission of the **Academy Foundation** is to organize and oversee the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' education, cultural, and preservation programs. This includes the Margaret Herrick Library, Academy Film Archive, Academy Gold Rising internship and mentorship program, Student Academy Awards, Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting, and the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures which opened in Los Angeles in September 2021. The Academy Foundation's mission statement has not changed since its founding in 1944. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' mission is to recognize and uphold excellence in the motion picture arts and sciences, inspire imagination and connect the world through the medium of motion pictures.

Governance structure: The Academy Foundation was established in 1944 as a California nonprofit corporation and obtained federal tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status in 1949. Its Board of Trustees comprises nine members appointed from the Academy's Board of Governors. The Academy Museum has a separate Board of Trustees and currently comprises 28 community leaders and Academy representatives, as well as one honorary Trustee.

The Academy Foundation also oversees the Academy's vast permanent collection, which documents film history from the filmmakers' perspective. The collection (1638-present) includes nearly 232,000 film elements representing more than 107,000 titles, 80,000 screenplays, 100,000 original drawings (storyboards, set and costume designs, animation cels), 60,000 film posters, 38,000 sound recordings, 5,000 home movie reels, 2,500 objects, 1,200 oral history interviews, and 12 million photographs, among others.

Service area: The Academy Foundation serves a broad local, national, and international audience of the general public. The Margaret Herrick Library and Academy Film Archive serve a primary audience of scholars, researchers, archivists, curators, programmers, educators and students. The library is open to the public four days a week, and the film archive is open to researchers by appointment. In its first year of operations, the Academy Museum sold more than 700,000 tickets to the general public, presented 535 individual film screenings, and hosted 137 education and public programs. Half of the Academy Museum's first-year visitors were under the age of 40 and half identified as belonging to underrepresented ethnic and racial communities.

History of the organization: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded in 1927 to benefit the burgeoning filmmaking community by 36 influential filmmakers of the time, including Mary Pickford and Cecil B. DeMille. Today the Academy is an honorary membership organization of more than 10,000 film professionals. It is overseen by a Board of Governors comprising equal representation from its 17 branches, including directors, writers, actors, cinematographers, production designers, and editors, among others. Filmmaking excellence is honored across creative and craft branches with the annual Academy Awards. Notable technology advances are recognized with the annual Scientific and Technical Awards. In June 2020, the Academy announced its Aperture 2025 initiative, furthering goals that will continue to markedly improve diversity in its professional membership. As of March 2023, thirty four percent (34%) of Academy members identify as women, 19% of Academy members are from underrepresented races and ethnicities, and 23% are international filmmakers, artists, and executives.

The Academy began collecting film-related materials in 1929 and established the **Academy Film Archive** in 1995. The film archive is home to one of the most diverse and extensive motion picture collections in the world, including a number of Pathé Kok 28mm films, which are the only known copy of films made between 1912 and 1922 and the preprint safety elements for the majority of the films of Charlie Chaplin, including *City Lights* (1931). The archive holds the personal collections of Tacita Dean, Cecil B. DeMille, Barbara Hammer, Alfred Hitchcock, James Wong Howe, Jim Jarmusch, Barbara Kopple, Penelope Spheeris, and Fred Zinnemann, among others, and the institutional collections of the Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival, and Women Make Movies, and more.

The film archive also works to preserve films across diverse genres and filmmaker backgrounds. Significant archival projects include preserving the works of Bengali filmmaker Satyajit Ray and *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1987). The film archive also received NEA grants to restore race films for the Academy Museum's national traveling exhibition *Regeneration: Black Cinema 1898-1971*. These included the first Black-cast musical western *Harlem on the Prairie* (1937) and social drama *Reform School* (1939). Other film restoration projects include *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez* (1982), funded by the NEA, and *El Norte* (1983), partially funded by the Getty Foundation. As part of its public access mission, the film archive regularly loans its restored prints to peer cultural organizations without archival fees.