

Queens Borough Public Library Community of Practice Project

Introduction

Queens Public Library (QPL) envisions a future where all public libraries are empowered to engage effectively with their communities in preserving local history. QPL's Queens Memory Project (QMP) seeks a \$248,839, two-year NLG-L Implementation Grant to develop a resource guide with case studies for public libraries to enhance their community archiving capacity. The goal of this project is to leverage national resources to improve local practice and share local outcomes with our national community of practice. This local/global approach keeps learnings grounded and connected to larger theoretical conversations. The team working on this project will audit Queens Memory's ongoing local collaborations to find areas for expansion and improvement using techniques and strategies put forth by our national community of best practice. The idea is to gain perspective from outside expertise that will permanently improve local practice in Queens and give useful examples for the case studies we will publish along with a helpful resource guide for others engaged in this work. Along with more methodological improvements, this project will produce significant enhancements to the online upload and publication tools we offer members of the public wishing to add their own contributions to the archives. The Data Specialist, a grant-funded staff person, will lead the design and configuration of these improved tools with the input of advisors and community partners.

The team will aggregate an extensive collection of published toolkits and other resources for community-led archiving and to develop a set of case studies wherein strategies from these existing toolkits augment five of QPL's existing archival partnerships with community groups. These case studies will illustrate practical applications of the different types of community archiving toolkits currently available; contextualize information by demonstrating its relevance and applicability in different environments and types of projects; show how theoretical concepts and guidelines can be adapted and implemented in diverse settings; highlight best practices through detailed analysis and documentation, as well as pitfalls encountered during the implementation of specific projects and program, enabling project staff to make informed decisions and avoid common mistakes when utilizing the resources in the guide; and address diverse needs culled from different sectors and geographical locations. The case studies will provide concrete examples, practical insights and valuable lessons that enhance the understanding, engagement and application of the information provided. It will guide archivists towards successful implementation and outcomes. The resource guide with case studies, once published and disseminated, will provide public libraries of various sizes and settings with the necessary resources and helpful examples to enhance their engagement with their communities around preserving local history.

The team will work with outside advisors, who are national leaders in community-led archival practice, to audit a selection of Queens Memory's existing community partnerships. Their goal will be to find opportunities for enhancements to strengthen their practices and relationships with these partners. They will do this by comparing QMP's methods and systems to accepted best practices found in the field's scholarly literature and practitioner guides. A Data Specialist hired as part of the project will engage in these collaborative discussions to identify design needs for the upload and online publication tools the Library provides its community partners for their digital archives materials. The Data Specialist will revise existing tools used for these purposes and test them with partners working on this project. The effectiveness of all these enhancements will be assessed by QPL community partners, the Queens Memory team, and the advisors in the case studies they publish together.

Project Justification

This project aligns with Goal 3 of the NLG-L program, which is to “Improve the ability of libraries and archives to provide broad access to and use of information and collections.” It addresses Objective 3.2, which is to “Support innovative approaches to digital collection management. These may include... community archives.”

Community-led archiving initiatives enable public libraries to engage local residents and groups actively in the process of preserving local history and heritage. They are a power sharing strategy that respects the agency of those who are inadequately represented in historic collections and contemporary collecting efforts. However, only 45.5% of suburban libraries and 35.9% of rural libraries¹ have someone dedicated to local history or archival collections as part of their job description, indicating that there are not enough public library workers who possess theoretical grounding in community and post-custodial archiving and are fully trained in the methodology of archiving. And even libraries like QPL that engage frequently in community-led projects are too busy doing the work itself to engage in the scholarly debate about the best ways to do that work. This project is an opportunity for the Queens Memory Project team to look up from their ongoing projects with local partners and engage seriously in critical discourse and methodologies published by colleagues across the nation, and then use that information to reflect and audit their current praxis. With the guidance of project advisors from a West Coast Public Library (Anna Trammell), a Southern University (Chaitra Powell) and a community-based archiving organization, the Highlander Research and Education Center (Ashby Combahee), and in partnership with community organizations engaged in ongoing collaborations, the Queens Memory team will audit current projects and modify them to experiment with the use of methods, systems and approaches recommended in the overwhelming body of helpful toolkits available, but under-utilized by those working in the field.

While there are currently dozens of toolkits and other published resources freely available and intended for use by professional librarians and community organizers, these resources are typically published as standalone websites—usually tied to grant-funded initiatives so they are not continuously updated or in conversation with one another. There is an incentive for organizations seeking grant funding to support their community-engaged archival work to imagine the guide they would create does not exist, or that there are gaps in the literature that should be filled with toolkits (created with grant funding) and made freely available for reuse. Based on our conversations with the creators of these toolkits, the unfortunate truth is that practitioners are infrequently making use of these existing resources and even less frequently approaching them with the intention of critical inquiry and rigorous testing and improvement through use in different environments. Some of the excellent resources available to guide community-driven archiving work include the Tacoma Public Library’s Community Archives Toolkit², the UCLA Community Archives Lab Toolkit³, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Community Archiving Toolkit⁴ and the Community Archiving Workshop Handbook⁵.

Yet, even with all these resources, there remains a need for more direct peer mentoring in cultural heritage preservation. The Queens Memory Project team co-founded the monthly Community Archiving Happy Hour⁶ with colleagues from across the country with the intention to create community amongst workers in this sector and to create opportunities for informal resource sharing and peer learning. The Queens Memory team is particularly interested in supporting and celebrating other public libraries doing community-led archival work. Public libraries may face challenges in terms of available expertise, capacity, or funding to dedicate staff with the specialized skills needed to collect, appraise, digitize, or catalog local history archives, not to mention the organizing and communications skills needed for effective partnership building with local individuals and organizations whose histories are represented in those records. This project is an opportunity to dig deeper into how we define excellence in these practices and to connect with peers across the nation to share that information.

Founded in 2010, QMP has established itself as an influential program due to its expertise in community-engaged, post-custodial archiving practices and digital preservation. For more than a decade, QMP has been working within communities to collect personal histories, photographs, and other records of contemporary life in Queens, New York. Queens Memory currently has 83 active collaborations with organizations and individuals that its team has carefully nurtured over the program's 14 years of development. These partnerships are the community that leads the priorities of the program's collecting and programming. Current initiatives focused on culinary heritage, environmental history impacted by climate change, gentrification, and jazz history are just some examples of topics community partners have led us to explore with them. The work intended for this grant will strengthen and nurture those vital partnerships and bring the latest scholarship and methods into dialog with our existing practices.

The library maintains extensive archives which contain a rich repository of Queens' history. This archive continues to grow, and the digitized artifacts make it easily accessible to the public. It has one of the largest collections of primary and secondary resources about the region. It consists of approximately 36,000 books and volumes of serials, approximately 2,000 cubic feet of manuscripts, 4,000 maps and broad slides, 105,000 photographs, 422 feet of vertical files, and 9,000 reels of microfilm. The Archives has subscriptions to 49 journals and 28 newspapers. Formats include photographs, maps, audio recordings, musical scores, newspapers, ephemera, and manuscript collection materials (personal correspondence, business records, etc.). Local organizations, which have historically valuable records, but do not have the infrastructure to preserve them digitally, can leverage these resources for their preservation and public access needs.

Queens Public Library has also worked with medium and small sized archives, museums, and libraries as part of our IMLS-funded "50 Years of Hip Hop" project in 2023. We collaborated with 40 institutions across the nation including the Roosevelt Public Library on Long Island, the Trap Museum in Atlanta, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Black Women's Writers Project and the Great Plains Black History Museum in Omaha, Nebraska.

Project Work Plan

1. Year 1: Environmental scan and aggregation/review of resources.
2. Year 1: Critical review of current QMP community partnerships through lens of these resources.
3. Year 1&2: Advisor-supported continuance of partnerships with clear, mutual goals and assessment.
4. Year 2: Publication of resource guide with case studies based on partnerships from this project.
5. Year 2: Dissemination of findings with partners via online and in-person outreach

QPL's Queens Memory team, led by Interim Director Meral Agish, will shepherd the activities of this proposed project. Agish will lead projects with our existing local partners, taking responsibility for oral history training, outreach, contracting, volunteer mobilization, and public programming activities. She will schedule and convene advisors and community partners selected for this initiative. She will monitor the schedule of deliverables and create quarterly reports updating the team on their progress meeting the project's deadlines. She will coordinate closely with the project's Data Specialist to ensure the needs and priorities of community partners are addressed in the new upload and display tools created during the project. The Data Specialist will report to Digital Archives Manager Dacia Metes who oversees all digitization and digital archives processing activities for the library. Metes, along with Digitization Manager Grace de Sagun and the project's Data Specialist, will lead the digitization, processing and publication efforts for the archival materials created and accessioned during this project. They will provide best practices guidance around archival processing, descriptive metadata, and digitization

recommendations. QMP Curator Jiefei Yuan will provide recommendations around the production of curated content such as podcasts, exhibitions and social media campaigns and support with social media outreach. The QMP team will engage regularly with project advisors to share status updates and seek guidance.

QPL will establish a three-person project Advisory Committee whose members will comprise experts knowledgeable in community archiving, digital preservation, library science, cultural heritage, and community engagement, bringing their perspectives and diverse experiences to ensure the project's relevance, effectiveness, and applicability beyond QPL's context. One advisor is Anna Trammell, who is Tacoma Public Library's Archives and Special Collections Manager. Anna leads the team that created Tacoma's Community Archives Toolkit, which was developed with support from an IMLS National Leadership Grant in 2021⁷. Another advisor is Chaitra Powell, the Curator of the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Chaitra leads the team that created the Charting New Courses in Community-Driven Archives toolkit⁸, which was developed with support from an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant during 2017-2021. The third advisor is Ashby Combahee, a librarian and archivist whose experience with memory projects includes the New York Public Library Community Oral History Project, Black Women's Blueprint Truth and Reconciliation Commission partnership with Threshold Collaborative, the Womanist Working Collective, and the Georgia Transgender Oral History Project.

Committee members will (a) review and augment QPL's preliminary collection of toolkits and other resources for community-based and community-driven archiving, and (b) participate in quarterly 90-minute work sessions online to review four of QPL's existing community partnerships and which resources can be employed and enhance each collaboration. An example might be to incorporate the use of an equipment kit available for long-term loan to volunteers affiliated with a community partner organization. Another example might be organizing a meeting that explores the relative positionality of project stakeholders and power dynamics present in the collaboration. This is an opportunity to become a laboratory for these and other tactics developed and recommended by scholars and colleagues working in community archiving spaces.

By combining work-ahead solo assignments with a structured agenda for time spent as a group, we hope to respect advisors' time by using it efficiently and create opportunities for thoughtful reflection and informed discussion while together. Advisors and community partners will travel with the Queens Memory team to various library conferences nationally to strategically disseminate findings from this project and share the resource guide with colleagues interested in conducting community-driven archiving projects.

At the outset of Year 1, the work plan provides QPL and its advisors the opportunity to audit existing QMP workflows and strategize enhancements based on recommendations from existing toolkits and other resources created to support work with community partners.

This work will augment ongoing local partnerships and inform the case studies published and disseminated at the end of the project. During Year 1, QPL will hire a full-time grant-funded Data Specialist who will be responsible for the planning and execution of digital asset management system (DAMS) and public access enhancements for QPL's community-driven collections. This includes the configuration of public access portals built for community partners so that their collections are in one, distinct place online. It also involves the design and build-out of user generated content portals connected to QPL's DAMS to streamline and simplify contributions of metadata and archival assets from the public. The Data Specialist will be an important part of the team figuring out ways to improve and augment

partnership activities. The Data Specialist will also be responsible for overseeing the digitization and archival processing workflow for these partners' materials. This will ensure completion of these tasks during the grant-funded period and put the Data Specialist in a unique vantage point to observe a complete project lifecycle and be able to identify areas where that process could improve. Together, the team will engage with selected QMP community partners to build skills, engage in strategic planning, digitize, and describe their archival collections including the Haitian Times, Zion Episcopal Church, the Ridgewood Historical Society, the Queens Historical Society, and The People's Riisearch Group. We have budgeted funding to support special projects with each of these partners. These grant funds will support the production of a speaker series, a pop-up exhibit, an oral history project, and artist commissions to produce works inspired by collections.

Queens Memory's community partners selected for this project have distinct goals that will create informative case studies demonstrating the need for flexibility in institutions engaging in these types of partnerships. For example, Zion Episcopal Church is interested in continuing a reconciliation and community building effort with area residents. This work of story-sharing, deep listening and reparative action grows from a desire to reckon with the church founders' enslavement of Africans and a history with the indigenous Matinecock people who were both part of the church and excluded from it. That reckoning has also pointed to contemporary forms of hierarchy and exclusion that need to be challenged. The team is seeking to foster a more equitable and connected neighborhood by bringing this history into public discussion with the increasingly diverse population that lives around the church. The team is committed to opening church records not previously available online for research. This involves safely digitizing the oldest hand-written records of congregation history from the mid-1800s such as births, baptisms, marriage, funeral, and burial details, which are the most relevant and fragile and require the use of the library's digitization technology. In this project, the Queens Memory team and Zion Church representatives would look back to assess a recent series of public discussion programs organized as part of this collaboration, and work with advisors to build on previous success and address challenges. The biggest challenge identified so far in this work is around achieving broad public engagement, so one idea the team intends to explore is what role an artist could play by creating large public art using archival source material such as historical photographs from the library's collections.

Another community partnership is with the People's Riisearch Group, a community-based collective focused on developing a public archive of queer and transgender history of the People's Beach at Jacob Riis Park in Queens, is gathering oral histories from community members and beachgoers about their memories and experiences at the beach. The public repository of the materials will be explicitly developed to encourage and strengthen the organizing and community-building efforts among queer and transgender beachgoers that better protect each other and this crucial gathering site from various evolving threats. A key part of the oral history work is a "Queer Riis Beach Oral History Community Guidelines" zine. This resource will decentralize the oral history collection process by guiding community members through the process of interviewing each other for the collection. The zine will be distributed on the beach this summer alongside story gathering circles and events that connect community members with each other and with their histories. People's Riisearch Group will also be intentionally conducting oral histories with elders and those who can share memories of the beach before 1990, providing deeper historical perspectives. IMLS funding will support the creation (design, art, and printing) of the zine as well as stipends for the elders' interviews.

QPL will disseminate its findings through a variety of channels including:

Culminating Webinar: Community partners, Advisors, and QPL staff will co-design and facilitate an online seminar open to all public libraries to share the final resource guide and case study findings. A recording of this session will be available on the Queens Memory website⁹ and the Library's YouTube channel¹⁰.

Media Outreach: we will target local media and specialized media in the library, museum, and community archiving world. We will highlight key findings, achievements, and the impact of the project.

Social Media Campaigns: We will utilize the full reach of the library's social media campaigns and that of our partners (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and Instagram) to share project updates, milestones, and success stories. We will also use infographics and testimonials to reach a wider audience and encourage sharing across community archiving groups.

Blogs, Articles, Publications and Professional Talks: the Queens Memory team have published¹¹ and presented extensively over the project's 14-year history, averaging nine regional, national, or international talks per year during that period. Their articles have appeared in numerous publications including those by the Oral History Association, the American Library Association and Urban Library Journal. They also have experience in compiling project results into comprehensive reports, whitepapers, and research publications. They will use this experience to share the results of this project through national channels, such as academic journals, research repositories, government websites and professional association annual meetings and speaker series.

Community Partners also play an active role in the dissemination of information around the case studies and resource guide that will be developed as part of this project. This includes organizing and hosting training sessions where community members can learn about the tools developed and the importance of case studies and how to contribute to the community resource guide.

Community partners will also collaborate with the library and other community partners, museums, schools, and other institutions to spread the word about the project through newsletters, social media, and community events. They will also share through their own multimedia channels (i.e., podcasts, and websites) to engage a wider audience and highlight the importance of preserving community history.

QPL also recognizes that our local partners are connected to other associations where they can share and promote the guide and speak on the role they played in the development of case studies with like organizations, such as smaller news outlets focusing on indigenous communities.

Diversity Plan

The program's nature is to encourage archival and special collections management of materials from underrepresented and/or historically marginalized groups. This includes organizations that document the history of new immigrants, high-poverty neighborhoods, and the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and LGBTQIA Communities. By looking at the range of diversity, we can expand the scope of a community's issues by linking inter-sectional stories that provide a greater depth of understanding (i.e., the Caribbean LGBTQIA Community, asylum seekers from Sudan, and homeless veterans).

To this end, QPL will utilize lessons learned from previous community-engaged projects that navigated controversial diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. For example, QPL learned to hire community members to serve in key planning roles on previous seasons of the Queens Memory podcast, ensuring open lines of communication to community members represented in the project. The Advisors represent diverse geographic, institutional, and professional perspectives. They will provide insights into the

specific challenges and opportunities faced by libraries of many sizes in different regions, enabling the resource guide to meet the needs of a broad audience.

The five community partners (Haitian Times, the Queens Historical Society, the Ridgewood Historical Society, Zion Episcopal Church, and The People’s Riisearch Group) were selected for this project based on the diversity of their characteristics:

Characteristic	Haitian Times	Queens Historical Society	Ridgewood Historical Society	Zion Church	People’s Riisearch Group
<i>Org Type</i>	Commercial newspaper	Non-profit, county-wide, historic house	Nonprofit, neighborhood, historic house	Religious institution	Activist collective
<i>Materials</i>	Regional, ethnic newspaper	19 th / 20 th century photos	Property maps, street indices	Birth, baptismal, marriage, burial records	Contemporary oral histories & photos
<i>Team</i>	Founding publisher (journalist)	Staff historian	Volunteer historian	Church leaders & residents	Organizers / community archivists
<i>Proposed Project</i>	Speaker series	Digitization & expert metadata	Map-based, pop-up exhibit	Conversation series / art installation	Oral history
<i>Neighborhood</i>	Jamaica	Flushing	Ridgewood	Douglaston	Far Rockaway
<i>Subject</i>	Haitian diaspora in Queens & Brooklyn	Descendents of colonial and free POC settlements, Quaker history	Industrial revolution immigrants, esp. German & Polish	English/Dutch Colonial, enslaved, and indigenous congregants & their immediate neighbors	20 th /21 st century LGBTQIA beach/outdoor community

At the conclusion of the planning period with community partners and at the conclusion of the projects we undertake with them, QPL will actively seek feedback from members of the community through surveys, interviews, and other feedback mechanisms. We will make sure these channels are accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds and languages (i.e., use of mobile devices, printed materials, voice activation responses, accommodation for individuals with disabilities, and program information in the top languages spoken in Queens). The reviewers of the survey questions will reflect the diversity of the target population.

We will also look at engagement metrics to assess the participation and involvement of diverse community members (i.e., website traffic, attendance at programs, survey participation, and feedback on project outcomes).

QPL is also attuned keenly to the importance of Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in all aspects of its work. In 2020, QPL also embarked on an assessment of ADEI within the organization, to

ensure it is part of the library's DNA. There are five committees that look at Marketing and Outreach, Programs and Services, Learning and Growth, Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion and Collections. As part of the library's goals to incorporate Diversity into the fabric of QPL programs, services, and resources, we have developed tools (audit forms, customer surveys, program analysis, and community/customer demographics) that we continue to refine to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our community, delivering programs, and assessing with an ADEI lens.

The Resource Guide and case studies must be tied to ADEI to ensure its usefulness to the field of community archiving. It ensures that community initiatives are inclusive, equitable, innovative, and empowering, contributing to the community's overall well-being and prosperity.

Project Results

The project intends to develop a guide to national best practices around community-led archiving. QPL will ensure that the guide it produces is adaptable, generalizable, and usable by public libraries of assorted sizes and from diverse communities by incorporating feedback from advisors, partners and best practices and lessons learned throughout the two years of the project. The resource guide and case studies will have a permanent home on the Queens Memory website¹². The team will also pursue publication and dissemination opportunities such as the Society of American Archivists' Research Forum¹³.

We anticipate the following outcomes from our project:

- Our case studies will integrate best practices for working with a variety of material types and creating a range of project outcomes, from new oral history recordings, to live events and detailed, restorative metadata for digitized historical collections that have previously lacked context.
- Due to the differing missions, organizational structures, and sizes of our selected community partners, we know that our case studies will reflect relatable details for people working in a variety of settings. Public libraries that use the resource guide and case studies will strengthen local partnerships. Staff at these libraries will gain knowledge on how to engage local groups found in many communities such as journalists, houses of worship, nonprofit groups, and activist collectives.
- In addition to the methods exploration of our case studies, local projects will produce outcomes with research value due to the content itself having broad historical value. Many researchers from around the country utilize archival collections from New York City because it has been a point of entry for immigrants and an important site of cultural heritage for indigenous Americans. The exhibition, speaker series, and online collections generated as part of this project will contain historical evidence relevant to a national audience.
- Through the Community Archiving Happy Hour, professional associations, and personal networks of the team working on this project, this project will be widely disseminated and discussed. A broader objective that this grant contributes to is cultivating a collegial community of practice that helps its members achieve excellence in their work over the long term. In this moment, tensions exist between different approaches to this area of archival practice. Sharp divisions sometimes exist between "community-led" and "community-based" groups doing this work. It is a rich and charged moment of genuine debate and transformation that this project team endeavors to engage with openness and curiosity.

Queens Borough Public Library – Schedule of Completion

Schedule of Completion												
August 2024 - July 2025												
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Begin audit of Queens Memory’s community-driven archiving practices with support from national advisors and local partners already engaged in collaborative projects.	█	█	█									
Hold planning meetings with community partners, integrating advisor input and strategies suggested in accumulated resources reviewed.				█	█	█	█	█				
Implement community partner projects informed by enhanced practices. Proposed work includes creation of a pop-up exhibit, production of speaker series, and engagement with visual artist to create large-scale public work using archival images.									█	█	█	█

Queens Borough Public Library – Schedule of Completion

August 2025 - July 2026												
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Aggregate resource guide and write case studies about each of the existing community partnerships exploring how new strategies enhanced current practice.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Implement community partner projects informed by enhanced practices. Proposed work includes creation of a pop-up exhibit, production of speaker series, and engagement with visual artist to create large-scale public work using archival images.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Begin dissemination of Community-Driven Archiving Resource Guide and Case Studies, including speaking at national and regional conferences.						■	■	■	■	■	■	
Final reporting activities												■



DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to digital products that are created using federal funds. This includes (1) digitized and born-digital content, resources, or assets; (2) software; and (3) research data (see below for more specific examples). Excluded are preliminary analyses, drafts of papers, plans for future research, peer-review assessments, and communications with colleagues.

The digital products you create with IMLS funding require effective stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and reuse by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

INSTRUCTIONS

If you propose to create digital products in the course of your IMLS-funded project, you must first provide answers to the questions in **SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS**. Then consider which of the following types of digital products you will create in your project, and complete each section of the form that is applicable.

SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

Complete this section if your project will create digital content, resources, or assets. These include both digitized and born-digital products created by individuals, project teams, or through community gatherings during your project. Examples include, but are not limited to, still images, audio files, moving images, microfilm, object inventories, object catalogs, artworks, books, posters, curricula, field books, maps, notebooks, scientific labels, metadata schema, charts, tables, drawings, workflows, and teacher toolkits. Your project may involve making these materials available through public or access-controlled websites, kiosks, or live or recorded programs.

SECTION III: SOFTWARE

Complete this section if your project will create software, including any source code, algorithms, applications, and digital tools plus the accompanying documentation created by you during your project.

Not applicable

SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

Complete this section if your project will create research data, including recorded factual information and supporting documentation, commonly accepted as relevant to validating research findings and to supporting scholarly publications.

Not applicable

SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS

A.1 We expect applicants seeking federal funds for developing or creating digital products to release these files under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, or assets; software; research data) you intend to create? What ownership rights will your organization assert over the files you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on their access and use? Who will hold the copyright(s)? Explain and justify your licensing selections. Identify and explain the license under which you will release the files (e.g., a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, Creative Commons licenses; RightsStatements.org statements). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.

Our proposed project will generate three types of digital products. First, a resource guide pointing to the community archiving guides and scholarship identified by this project team. The project partners will share them in appropriate professional outreach channels under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC-BY-NC-SA) 4.0 International license.

The second type of work product will be the digital assets donated by community members and organizations participating in community-driven archiving projects in Queens. Queens Public Library will serve as the long term preservation repository for these assets and the licensing of these assets will be dependent upon each donor's wishes. We will recommend the use of a creative commons license when possible. When obtaining licensing wishes from a donor is not possible, QPL will apply the appropriate RightsStatements.org statement in the metadata.

The third type of work product will be the metadata captured and preserved for the digital assets. This metadata will be published freely on the QPL online repositories for collection materials. Since the metadata is created by QPL staff as work for hire, QPL will hold copyright.

A.2 What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.

Documentation and digital assets generated by the Community of Practice project will generally be given a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International license, allowing libraries, archives, and other downstream users to adapt and reuse content non-commercially. Partners will request the same license from archival donors sharing their oral histories, photographs and other historical materials for archival preservation. However, in respect to the rights of individual donors to the collections, we will allow for exceptions in cases where individuals would like to retain more rights and control over reuse than a CC-BY-NC-SA license permits. For example, if a professional photographer shares her photos for preservation and researcher access, but wishes to be contacted directly to negotiate commercial reproduction requests, this would be noted in a deed of gift and communicated in a rights statement when the images are published by partner libraries as part of their digital collections.

A.3 If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.

All participants in the Community of Practice project will be made aware of the types of personally identifiable information (PII) collected as part of the program, as well as privacy policies germane to the use of the device and any application used during the course of the program. Participant data collection will be in accordance with each partner organization's privacy policies. This includes considerations around the privacy of public program attendees (virtual or in-person) as well as website visitors.

Privacy considerations for contributors of photographs, oral histories and other archival content will be handled on a case by case basis. It is the policy of the Queens Memory Project to delete any content from donated interviews or other testimony that participants wish to remove from their own records. No embargos or dark archives are available. Full PID, however, is not published online. PID and biographical information collected in documents like our pre-interview survey are kept on QPL preservation servers, but not published online. Voluntary demographic questions are part of the standard upload form for new oral history recordings submitted for preservation to the Queens Memory Project (<https://airtable.com/app2nJA7E17W6dJCw/shr74pdm4vkPhVK8O>). This information is anonymized before publication and used to identify absences of community representation in the collections.

SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

A.1 Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.

Oral history recordings, digitized moving image and audio, written testimonies, photographic images and digitized ephemera and manuscript content may all be added to the Queens Public Library's archives through the work of this project. The Library will be responsible for long term preservation and ongoing public access to the materials generated by the community partners working on this project. Other outputs will be digitized audio visual materials, ephemera and other documents.

A.2 List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the digital content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.

Queens Public Library will use Zoom and Streamyard to record remote video oral history interviews and Rev to produce automated transcripts from the recordings. Participants may use whatever recording tools they wish to generate audio and video recordings they submit to the Library's collections. The Library will use Epson flatbed scanners, Silverfast and Photoshop software and publicly accessible multi-function machines available in branch libraries for digitization activities of photos, ephemera and documents contributed by the public. The Library will accept donated images, audio, video, and writing through established submission forms built in Air Table. Digital assets and accompanying metadata are stored in the Library's digital asset management system, VITAL, and backed up by the library's Information Technology Department on preservation servers and on backup media stored at Iron Mountain. For public

access, QPL publishes audio/visual content to the library's digital archives website, its Aviary account, QueensMemory.org, and in edited streaming programs on Youtube. Visual content is available on the library's digital archives website, Urban Archive, and in posts shared on Instagram, Facebook and X.

A.3 List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG, OBJ, DOC, PDF) you plan to use. If digitizing content, describe the quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, pixel dimensions) you will use for the files you will create.

When project participants submit files, QPL keeps the original files and creates preservation masters and access copies of them. QPL produces WAV audio files, PDF document files, MP4 video files, and TIFF image files as preservation masters. For access copies, we produce MP3 for audio, JPG for images, PDF for documents and MP4 for video.

For visual materials scanned by QPL staff, digitization resolutions for prints and photographs is 400 ppi, photographic transparencies larger than 4x5 inches is 1500 ppi and transparencies for 35mm to 4x5 inches is 3000 ppi.

For audio recordings QPL captures with library recording equipment, we create WAV files with a 44.1 kHz sampling rate and 16 bit resolution. The Library owns a small number of Zoom H1 and H2 audio recorders that it loans to interviewers as needed. Most interviewers, however, use their own equipment (typically their smartphones) and the Queens Memory team provides guides for how to set up free audio recording apps on iOS and Android devices with settings that will capture high quality WAV files.

For video captured during remote interview sessions, QPL staff use Streamyard and Zoom to record interview sessions and save the resulting MP4 files for preservation and access.

Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

QPL Metadata Services has implemented a processing workflow that begins in Air Table where public submissions arrive along with metadata from the submitter. A librarian reviews each submission and marks it "clean" meaning it is complete and ready for publication on the Urban Archive platform (if it's photographic or written material) and ready for ingest into the library's preservation server. A clerical staff member then moves digital assets and their accompanying metadata to internal tracking spreadsheets and storage, staged for further cataloging. This staffer is responsible for working with donors and fellow staff to track down any missing metadata or submission package elements like consent forms as well as ensuring file format issues are resolved with individuals who submitted the materials. Next, a librarian creates VRA Core records for all audio/visual materials and ingests them into the library's digital asset management system, VITAL. From there, selected content is published on Aviary, Urban Archive, the library's own digital archives website, and on the Queens Memory Project social media channels (Instagram, Facebook and X).

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period. Your plan should address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

The digital assets generated during the funded period will follow established processing workflows and preservation protocols for all new accessions. QPL's preservation infrastructure for archival materials is visualized in Figure 1. Records are stored on preservation backup drives accessible to select Metadata Services staff at QPL. The materials are organized by donor name and will remain on these drives before, during and after the materials have been fully processed and uploaded to the library's digital asset management system, VITAL.

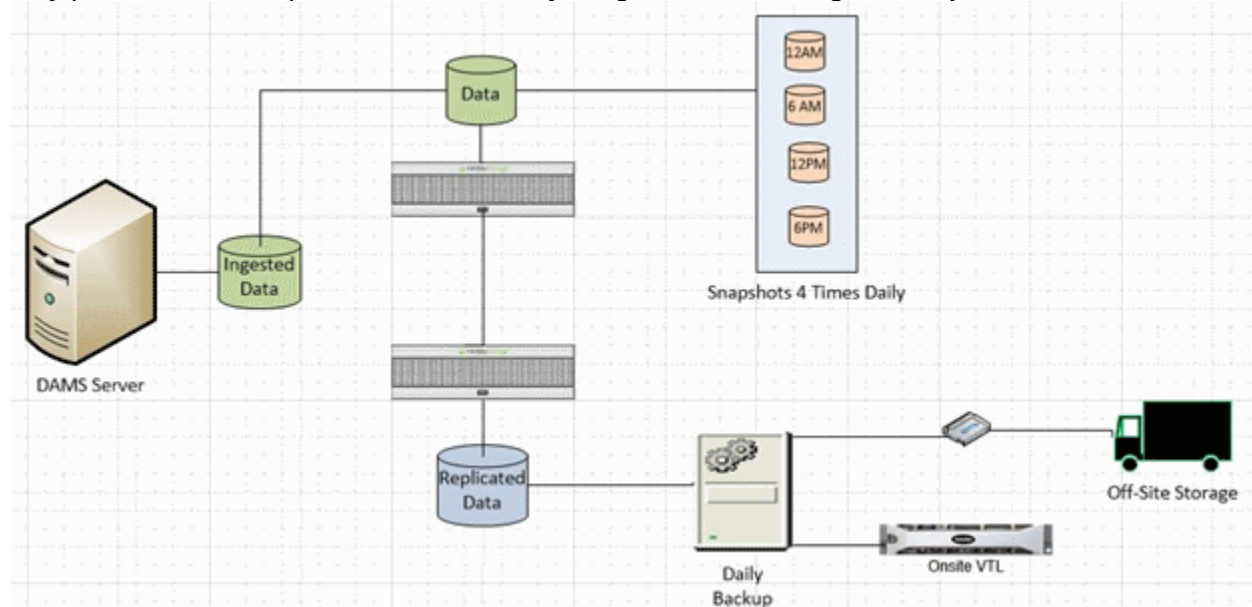


Figure 1: Queens Library Preservation Protocol for Archival Donations. NAS: network-attached storage; DR Replication Site: disaster recovery replication site; VTL: virtual tape library.

The Queens Library Information Technology Department infrastructure team has established the following system for preservation storage:

1. Ingestion of data to Network-Attached Storage (NAS) with Data Deduplication
2. NAS replication to Disaster Recovery (DR) site
3. Backup of data to both physical and virtual tape media
4. Shipment of physical media to a secured third-party site

Note: Physical media is set to infinity, thus not expiring. Not shown in Figure 1 is physical media kept in-house for archival purposes.

Metadata

C.1 Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata or linked data. Specify which standards or data models you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., RDF, BIBFRAME, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description,

PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

At QPL, our public online submission forms capture metadata we use to create VRA Core records for oral histories and audio/visual materials. For full archival collections, we create EAD records for the finding aids produced by QPL processing archivists. We use the Art and Architecture thesaurus, Library of Congress subject and name authority headings. We will indicate that donated materials were generated as part of each particular ambassador's project in each item's metadata.

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

At QPL, we store metadata in our digital asset management system, VITAL. Spreadsheets we use to generate and normalize metadata are stored in shared drives maintained by the IT Department under the library's digital preservation protocols. Archival submissions generated by community partners will be part of this regular processing workflow.

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

By publishing archival content in the aggregated platforms Aviary, Urban Archive, and the DPLA; QPL makes the records more widely available than they would be on the library's own platforms. The library's outreach team also pushes curated content on the QueensMemory.org website and actively uses Instagram, Facebook and X to push archival materials out to the public in our active feeds on those platforms. The library has shared over 15,000 items on the Digital Public Library of America, and over 200 oral history interviews on Aviary and over 500 images on Urban Archive.

Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content, delivery enabled by IIIF specifications).

At QPL, researchers can access nearly all processed content freely online. Exceptions include materials in copyright, which are either available in-person at the Archives reading room, or available on our online platforms in a limited file size and with a rights statement stipulating reuse terms.

D.2. Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Universal Resource Locator), DOI (Digital Object Identifier), or other persistent identifier for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.

Our project reports are published on the Queens Memory Project website:
<https://queensmemory.org/projects/>

Our forms and guides for interviewers and other volunteers are available on the Queens Memory Project website for free download: <https://queensmemory.org/resources-for-interviewers/>

We use Aviary for publishing audio and moving image content:
<https://queenslibrary.aviaryplatform.com/>

Urban Archive for publishing image and text-based content, sometimes as curated “stories” or project pages that allow crowd-sourced contributions: <https://www.urbanarchive.org/qplnyc>

Digital Archives website for all QPL archival content: <http://digitalarchives.queenslibrary.org/>

Finding aids for the QPL Archival photographic and manuscript collections are available on the library’s main website:
https://queenslibrary.org/search/research?searchField=* &category=research&searchFilter=sm_format:research.manuscripts_photos

Queens Memory Instagram feed: <https://www.instagram.com/queensmemory/>

Queens Memory Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/queensmemory/>

Queens Memory X: <https://twitter.com/queensmemory?lang=en>

Digital Public Library:
<https://dp.la/search?provider=%22Queens%20Borough%20Public%20Library%22>

SECTION III: SOFTWARE

General Information

A.1 Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same or similar functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, frameworks, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

B.3 Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

B.4 Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

B.5 Provide the name(s), URL(s), and/or code repository locations for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

Access and Use

C.1 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users.

C.2 Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

As part of the federal government's commitment to increase access to federally funded research data, Section IV represents the Data Management Plan (DMP) for research proposals and should reflect data management, dissemination, and preservation best practices in the applicant's area of research appropriate to the data that the project will generate.

A.1 Identify the type(s) of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use(s) to which you expect them to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use, the proposed scope and scale, and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate data.

A.2 Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?

A.3 Will you collect any sensitive information? This may include personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information. If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect the information while you prepare it for public release (e.g., anonymizing individual identifiers, data aggregation). If the data will not be released publicly, explain why the data cannot be shared due to the protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements.

A.4 What technical (hardware and/or software) requirements or dependencies would be necessary for understanding retrieving, displaying, processing, or otherwise reusing the data?

A.5 What documentation (e.g., consent agreements, data documentation, codebooks, metadata, and analytical and procedural information) will you capture or create along with the data? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the data it describes to enable future reuse?

A.6 What is your plan for managing, disseminating, and preserving data after the completion of the award-funded project?

A.7 Identify where you will deposit the data:

Name of repository:

URL:

A.8 When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?