

**Project Title:** Kuhi Nō Ka Lima: (Re)connecting Indigenous Practitioners with Cultural Heritage Materials to Strengthen Community Wellbeing

**Project Summary:** The University of Hawai'i's (UH) Library and Information Science (LIS) graduate program requests \$148,212 from the IMLS National Leadership Grant Program for Libraries (IMLS NLG-L) to support this proposal for a 1-year Planning Grant. *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* directly addresses IMLS NLG-L **Program Goal 2** (build the capacity of libraries and archives to lead and contribute to efforts that improve community well-being and strengthen civic engagement) and associated **Objective 2.2** (develop or enhance collaborations between libraries and stakeholders, and leverage opportunities to address community needs). Indigenous communities often feel excluded and unwelcomed in libraries and archives, especially when they don't see themselves (re)presented in those spaces in appropriate and uplifting ways. And, yet, library and archival collections can be critical to improving and enhancing ideas of Indigenous traditions, languages, origins, and futures. *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* will endeavor to better understand how to improve the relationships and collaborations between 1) Indigenous communities and 2) libraries and archives with Indigenous collections, with a particular focus on Indigenous dance practitioners and Indigenous dance collections. Ultimately, we will leverage the findings of these investigations towards the co-creation of a strategic plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - to increase and improve library, archive, and information services for Indigenous dance practitioners.

## 1. Project Justification

*Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* will directly address the National Leadership Grants for Libraries **Program Goal 2** (build the capacity of libraries and archives to lead and contribute to efforts that improve community well-being and strengthen civic engagement) and associated **Objective 2.2** (develop or enhance collaborations between libraries and stakeholders, and leverage opportunities to address community needs).

### 1.1 PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE: THE STATE OF EQUITY, HEALTH, AND WELLBEING FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN COMMUNITIES IN HAWAI'I AND IN THE DIASPORA IS IN NEED OF SIGNIFICANT SUPPORTS

*Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* targets under-represented and under-supported communities, like Native Hawaiian communities, who are in need of significant supports to realize their goals of equity, health, and wellbeing. Since the arrival of Western foreigners to Hawai'i two centuries ago, the health and wellbeing of Native Hawaiian communities has been in decline. Native Hawaiian communities experienced a traumatic depopulation, with today's Native Hawaiian population estimated to be less than 10% of the Native Hawaiian population in 1778 (the year that James Cook arrived in Hawai'i).<sup>1</sup> Other statistics are similarly grim:

- The percentage of Native Hawaiian families in Hawai'i living below the United States (U.S.) poverty level is 9.8%, compared to 8% for all families in Hawai'i<sup>2</sup>
- Native Hawaiians make up 28.3% of the participants in the houseless outreach program in Hawai'i, even though Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders make up just 10.4% of the total population in Hawai'i.<sup>4</sup>
- The percentage of Native Hawaiian adults in Hawai'i who are obese is 40%, compared to 24.5% for all adults in Hawai'i<sup>5</sup>
- The percentage of Native Hawaiian adults in Hawai'i who report having depressive disorders is 15.1%, compared to 12.7% for all adults in Hawai'i<sup>6</sup>

In short, Native Hawaiians are overrepresented in categories like poverty, homelessness, obesity, and mental health disorders. According to Dr. Kamana'opono Crabbe, a Native Hawaiian psychologist and respected leader in Native Hawaiian communities, the historical trauma, psychological distress, and associated issues resulting from loss, oppression, and cultural disruption for Native Hawaiians has led to a collective community sadness, moral outrage, and broken spirit.<sup>7</sup> The data is clear: the physical, mental, emotional, and environmental health and wellbeing of Native Hawaiian communities requires serious attention.

What's more, these experiences are exacerbated for Native Hawaiian communities in the diaspora. Hawai'i is in a housing crisis, with the median price of a single-family home on O'ahu (the most populated island in Hawai'i) being \$1.15 million

USD.<sup>8</sup> Given the astronomical housing costs, Hawai'i has seen a negative net migration rate, and there are now more Native Hawaiians living in the continental U.S. than in Hawai'i.<sup>9</sup> High populations of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders can be found from coast to coast, in states like California (337,617 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders residents), Washington (114,189), Texas (77,196), Utah (59,247), Nevada (52,532), Florida (44,454), and New York (40,578).<sup>10</sup>

These diasporic Native Hawaiian communities experience the same health and wellbeing disparities as Native Hawaiian communities in Hawai'i, while shouldering the additional struggle of the severance of direct, physical, intimate connection to their ancestral homeland. Dr. Kēhaulani Vaughn, a Native Hawaiian assistant professor at the University of Utah, expounds on the effects of this severance in terms of cultural identity and belonging:

Those who have been displaced are often seen as "no longer Native," due to the centrality of 'āina, or land, to the identity of Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous communities. Much of the scholarship within Hawaiian studies has yet to include populations in the diaspora. This gap within the field reproduces ideas of authenticity that contribute to a logic of Native dismemberment.<sup>11</sup>

Ideas of cultural authenticity, identity, and belonging for Native peoples, especially those in the diaspora, are complicated by histories of exploitation. For many around the world, imageries of Hawai'i include white, sandy beaches, glistening blue water, palm trees swaying in the breeze, and - of course - the "little brown gal," the hula girl. These imageries have been promoted by the entertainment industry for decades with films like *Blue Hawai'i* (1961) and *Lilo & Stitch* (2002). But, as Associate Professor of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Dr. Lia Keawe points out, this entertainment lens of Hawai'i "masks and conceals the colonial structures that lie hidden in plain sight."<sup>12</sup> Dr. Keawe explains,

Much of what became known to the world about hula and the hula girl was established through storytelling and image making by non-Kānaka Maoli [Native Hawaiians] in power. Later these stories and images became "factual events" and were published as "history." The stories which claimed the history of our people and culture became an imposed reality of our identity. For non-indigenous cultures, hula is understood as a commodity, an identity that can be purchased, or worn like an accessory to an outfit.<sup>13</sup>

And, yet, the value of hula (the traditional and customary dance of Native Hawaiians) - in its authentic form - is priceless. Hula remembers and (re)presents all facets of customary Native Hawaiian life: genealogies, place names, events, customs, and the Native language of Native Hawaiian people. Like the traditional dances, songs, chants, and games of all Indigenous cultures, hula connects today's communities with the brilliance and ingenuity of their ancestors, inspiring bold visions for thriving futures.

Like many Indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians have a holistic worldview, inclusive of physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual domains. Underlying this worldview is an emphasis on relationality, with each individual a unique embodiment of all their relations. **The key, then, to improving equity, health, and wellbeing for Native and Indigenous peoples is strengthening connections to community and ancestral knowledge.**<sup>14</sup>

Artifacts of ancestral knowledge created by, and belonging to, Indigenous communities are found around the world. For Native Hawaiian communities, specifically, their clothing, musical instruments, regalia, legal agreements, etc. can be found in cultural heritage institutions like the Library of Congress (U.S.), the Smithsonian Institution (U.S.), the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Aotearoa New Zealand), and the British Museum (United Kingdom). Hula materials are housed in these institutions and others like the Heard Museum (Arizona, U.S.), the Ohio State University Archives (Ohio, U.S.), the Museum of Performance + Design (California, U.S.), and the Chicago Film Archives (Illinois, U.S.).

Even with the prevalence of hula materials across the U.S., these materials remain largely inaccessible to hula practitioners. As there is yet no professionally-accepted thesaurus available for hula terms, especially those terms in the Native Hawaiian language, intellectual access to these materials is prohibited by the lack of accurate, relevant descriptions for these items. Additionally, it is currently unclear to what extent collection managers in, say, Ohio and Illinois are

familiar with hula materials and their cultural significance. This lack of understanding adds to the overall ambiguity surrounding the relationship between hula practitioners and hula collections.

To reiterate, *Kūhi Nō Ka Lima* targets under-represented and under-supported communities, like Native Hawaiian communities, who are in need of significant supports to realize their goals of equity, health, and wellbeing. Decades of oppression and current trends of forced displacement from their ancestral homelands have led to poor physical, mental, emotional, and environmental health and wellbeing of Native Hawaiian communities. Compounding these issues is an eroded sense of cultural authenticity, identity, and belonging, especially for those Native Hawaiian communities in the U.S. diaspora. Attempts to (re)connect with ancestral knowledge, such as that found in cultural heritage institutions like libraries and archives, are prohibited by an unclear capacity for appropriate terminology and relevant expertise on behalf of said institutions. *Kūhi Nō Ka Lima* will endeavor to improve equity, health, and wellbeing for Native Hawaiian communities by **investigating** the priority research support needs for hula (the traditional and customary dance of Native Hawaiians) practitioners and **documenting** the current state of collection management, description, and community engagement practices for hula collections, in order to better understand how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.

## 1.2 TARGET GROUPS

There are two target groups for *Kūhi Nō Ka Lima*: 1) hula practitioners across the U.S.; 2) cultural heritage institutions with hula collections across the U.S.. Exact numbers of members of each target group are unknown at this time, as there is no directory, census, or other formal sampling frame for either target group. The National Endowment for the Arts noted that 3.6 million people in the U.S. participated in traditional arts performances, including hula.<sup>15</sup> As for the number of cultural heritage institutions with hula materials, this project aims to begin a directory of such institutions. Currently, the project team is aware of more than 24 cultural heritage institutions with hula materials across the U.S.. This planning grant will directly engage two specific groups of hula practitioners and two specific groups of collection managers of hula materials, for a total of 16 participants. We anticipate that project activities and outcomes will be widely disseminated to the networks of participants, advisory board members, and project staff.

## 1.3 BENEFICIARIES

Ultimately, the beneficiaries of this project are intended to be under-represented and under-supported communities, like Native Hawaiian communities, who are in need of significant supports to realize their goals of equity, health, and wellbeing. Beyond the target groups, the overarching group of intended beneficiaries includes: Indigenous traditional dance practitioners and their communities; Indigenous peoples living in diaspora; scholars and researchers interested in preserving and documenting the cultural significance of Indigenous traditional dance practices. While it is difficult to estimate the exact number of individuals who will benefit from this project in the long term, we anticipate that project activities and outcomes will be widely disseminated among the target communities, advisory board members, intended beneficiaries, and other interested stakeholders.

## 1.4 ADVANCING CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

This proposed project builds upon and advances previous research and scholarship on hula by focusing specifically on the information practices of hula practitioners across the U.S., as well as the professional practices of collection managers of hula collections. There is a significant knowledge gap about these practices. Indeed, there has been extensive research into hula as a cultural practice and performance-based storytelling method. Several of these studies have been funded by organizations like the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the National Endowment for the Humanities. However, these studies largely focus on collection development, digitization, programming, and/or historical analysis of critical events and protocols related to hula. Additionally, while a significant body of research exists about the information practices of communities like performing arts practitioners and knowledge holders of traditional practices like weaving, there has not yet been a published investigation into the information practices of hula practitioners. *Kūhi Nō Ka Lima* will address this gap in the research by surveying hula practitioners about their information practices.

There is a similar gap in knowledge about the professional practices (e.g. collection management, description, and community engagement practices) of managers of hula collections. Of course, considerable research has been conducted about the knowledge organization practices of Native Hawaiian communities, as seen in projects like *Lau Ā Lau Ka 'Ike: Knowledge Overflowing* (IMLS NG-04-18-0218-18) and *Ka Wai Hāpai: Co-Creating Controlled Vocabularies for Social Justice* (IMLS LG-250076-OLS-21). *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* PI Keahiahi Long served as a Co-PI on both of these projects. Key outcomes from this work include the co-creation of 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Native Hawaiian language) controlled vocabularies, as well as a co-creation framework for engaging Native Hawaiian communities.

The framework and methodology developed in *Lau Ā Lau Ka 'Ike* and *Ka Wai Hāpai* will be used here in this project, *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima*. The methodology is inspired by a traditional Hawaiian chant, "He Mele No Kāne", which illuminates the many forms of water in a detailed account of a Hawaiian knowledge system. This "He Mele No Kāne" methodology is first and foremost a framework for equitable and culturally responsible co-creation work with Native and Indigenous communities, as it centers Native and Indigenous worldviews and includes multiple accountability checks with Native and Indigenous communities. The four phases of this framework will be described in more detail below.

## 2. Project Work Plan

### 2.1 VISION, MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

*Kuhi Nō Ka Lima*, the title of this project, is a well-known phrase used in hula, the traditional dance of Native Hawaiian people. The phrase suggests that where the hands point, there should follow the dancer's attention and focus. This imagery forms the **metaphorical frame** for this project, which seeks to point out: 1) the information practices of hula practitioners; and 2) the collection management, description, and community engagement practices of cultural heritage institutions with hula collections. To accomplish our **mission** of increasing equity for, and improving the wellbeing of, Indigenous communities - with a specific focus on Native Hawaiian communities - the **goals** and **objectives** of *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* are:

**Goal 1:** Improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections

**Objective 1:** Identify priority information needs and information support services of hula practitioners

**Objective 2:** Document the current state of collection management, description, and community engagement practices of cultural heritage institutions with hula collections

**Objective 3:** Leverage project findings in the co-creation of a strategic plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - to increase and improve library, archive, and information services for hula practitioners

**Goal 2:** Support Indigenous and other under-represented and under-supported communities in related work

**Objective 4:** Document and share activities, outcomes, and processes throughout the life of the project

### 2.2 PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES

Applying the workflow defined by the aforementioned IMLS-supported *Lau Ā Lau Ka 'Ike* and *Ka Wai Hāpai* projects, this project, *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima*, comprises 4 phases over 1 year (August 2024-July 2025): **Phase 1: He Ui, He Nīnau** (Project inspiration and intention); **Phase 2: He Waipuna** (A co-creation framework); **Phase 3: He Wai, E Inu** (The praxis of co-creation); **Phase 4: He Wai, E Mana** (Empowering our communities).

**Phase 1: He Ui, He Nīnau (Project inspiration and intention):** *August 2024-October 2024*. The phrase "He Ui, He Nīnau" can be understood as "A Query, a Question." The purpose for this phase, then, is to actualize the path forward to address the project's overall inspiration and intention. During this 2-month phase, the project will establish a strong foundation upon which all other project activities will build. At the completion of this phase, the project will be fully staffed and sufficiently supplied. Additionally, it is in this phase that we will initiate a directory of hula collections in the U.S.. The specific activities included in Phase 1 are:

1.1 Recruit and hire project staff and consultants; purchase project equipment and supplies

**Project staff** will include 1 Graduate Research Assistant and 1 website design contractor. **Consultants** will include 4 advisory board members and 16 focus group participants. The 16 focus group participants will be organized into 4 focus groups: 1) hula practitioners located in Hawai'i; 2) hula practitioners located in the continental U.S.; 3) collection managers of hula materials based in Hawai'i; 4) collection managers of hula materials based in the continental U.S..

#### 1.2 Initiate public research diary

This public research diary will document project activities in real-time. The public research diary will take the form of a web blog and will be located on the project's website, which will be hosted on the UH domain and servers. The public research diary will be maintained by project staff and consultants.

#### 1.3 Research hula stories, genealogies, protocols, practice

#### 1.4 Research hula collections, begin directory of hula collections

**Phase 2: He Waipuna (A co-creation framework):** *October 2024-January 2024.* The phrase "He Waipuna" can be understood as "A spring of water." In alignment with this, the purpose for this phase is to bring project stakeholders together around a metaphorical water hole, or spring, if you will, in an effort to share ideas and establish shared protocols for how we will all collectively engage in this work. This phase will see the initial convenings of both the focus groups and advisory board. Additionally, by the end of this phase, we will have co-created 2 exploratory surveys: one to investigate the information practices of hula practitioners, and one to study the collection management, description, and community engagement practices for managers of hula collections. The specific activities included in Phase 2 are:

#### 2.1 Host 1st round of focus groups (online)

The goals of this initial round of focus group meetings are: 1) review project design; 2) discuss the project's co-creation process; 3) discuss participants' experiences with information services and hula collections towards the co-creation of the 2 exploratory surveys

#### 2.2 Convene 1st online meeting of advisory board members

The goals of this initial meeting of the advisory board are: 1) review project design; 2) discuss the project's co-creation process; 3) review project progress; 4) clarify and refine upcoming project activities

#### 2.3 Co-create 2 exploratory surveys: 1 for hula practitioners, 1 for managers of hula collections

#### 2.4 Convene 2nd online meeting of advisory board members

The goal of this second meeting of the advisory board is to assess the drafts of the 2 exploratory surveys

#### 2.5 Continue to populate directory of hula collections

#### 2.6 Continue to populate public research diary

**Phase 3: He Wai, E Inu (The praxis of co-creation):** *February 2025-April 2025.* The phrase "He Wai, E Inu" can be understood as, "Here is water, drink." This phrase inspires the purpose of this third phase, which is to engage in the careful work of co-creation. At the completion of this phase, we will have collected and analyzed the responses to the 2 exploratory surveys (n=120 total). Additionally, each of the 4 focus groups will have gathered in-person for 3 half-days of meetings. As *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* embraces iterative process, the agenda of the focus groups will be determined by the responses to the 2 surveys. Focus groups will help to elucidate trends, themes, and surprising insights identified in the survey responses.

The focus group meetings will also include a collection visit, an in-person walk-through and research exercise at a cultural heritage institution with hula collections in its holdings. There will be 2 collection visits: 1 for the hula practitioners and managers of hula collections who are based in Hawai'i; and 1 for the hula practitioners and managers of hula collections who are based in the continental U.S..

By leveraging the strengths of both quantitative approaches (via the exploratory surveys) and qualitative approaches (via the focus groups), and by bringing together both collections workers and members from the communities that those collections provide service to, this project will provide invaluable insights to empower both target communities. The specific activities included in Phase 3 are:

3.1 Administer 2 exploratory surveys

3.2 Host 2nd round of focus groups

This round of focus groups includes an intensive stretch of 3 sequential half-days of meetings, during which collection visits will take place. Project Director Keahiahi Long has previous experience facilitating focus group meetings that explore information practices of Indigenous communities during projects like *Lau Ā Lau Ka 'Ike* and *Ka Wai Hāpai*.

3.3 Synthesize findings from surveys, focus groups, and collection visits

3.4 Continue to populate a directory of hula collections

3.5 Continue to populate public research diary

**Phase 4: He Wai, E Mana (Empowering our communities):** *May 2025-July 2025.* The phrase "He Wai, E Mana" can be understood as "Here is water, be powerful." The purpose, then, for this fourth and final project phase is to draw on the findings from the previous phases in the co-creation of a strategic plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - in order to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections. As with other phases, co-creation is embedded in this phase, as the project's 2 target groups will be directly involved in drafting and evaluating the strategic plan. The specific activities included in Phase 4 are:

4.1 Host 3rd round of focus groups

The goal of this final round of focus group meetings is to co-create a strategic plan addressing barriers and supports for strengthening the relationship between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions.

4.2 Convene 3rd online meeting of advisory board members

The goals of this final advisory board meeting are to: 1) review insights from exploratory surveys and focus group meetings; 2) assess draft of strategic plan; 3) refine project dissemination activities

4.3 Evaluate strategic plan drafts and incorporate feedback

4.4 Publish first edition of directory of hula collections

4.5 Publish final research findings and strategic plan

*Note about COVID-19 preparedness:* The project team plans to convene in-person for some activities (e.g. focus group meetings, project team meetings). Face-to-face, in-person communication is a core component of Native Hawaiian community engagement practices. However, the project team will prioritize the health and safety of all project personnel, and we are prepared to move in-person activities to distance and virtual environments if necessary.

## 2.3 PROJECT PERSONNEL: PROJECT TEAM

**Keahiahi Sharon Long, MLISc, Principal Investigator and Project Director** (12 months, 0.25 FTE). Ms. Long is an Assistant Professor in the Library and Information Science Program at the University of Hawai'i. As a Co-PI on the aforementioned IMLS-supported projects *Lau Ā Lau Ka 'Ike* and *Ka Wai Hāpai*, Ms. Long's research agenda focuses on the areas of Hawaiian librarianship, Indigenous knowledge organization systems, and co-creation methodologies with Indigenous communities. Ms. Long is also a hula practitioner with over 30 years of hula training and whose family has been stewarding their genealogical hula traditions for more than 8 generations. Furthermore, Ms. Long's experience studying information practices of Indigenous communities includes her work as a Co-Investigator of the *E Na 'auao Pū, E Noi 'i Pū, E Noelo Pū: Research Support for Hawaiian Studies* report (2018) and the Mellon Foundation -funded *State of Indigenous Librarianship* white paper (forthcoming). Ms. Long will be directly involved in all project activities and will supervise the administrative operations to ensure the project accomplishes its goals and objectives in a timely and fiscally responsible manner.

**To-Be-Identified, Graduate Research Assistant** (11 months, 0.5 FTE). The project will hire a Graduate Research Assistant to support project activities. The Graduate Research Assistant will have experience in community engagement with Indigenous communities, library and archival collections management, and/or Indigenous traditional dance practices. The Graduate Research Assistant will assist in conducting research about hula practices and hula collections.

Additionally, the Graduate Research Assistant will assist with data collection and analysis of the exploratory surveys and focus groups.

#### 2.4 PROJECT PERSONNEL: FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

As previously mentioned, the primary 2 target groups for this project are: 1) hula practitioners across the U.S.; 2) cultural heritage institutions with hula collections across the U.S.. These two target groups are represented by 16 consultants on this project: 10 hula practitioners (5 located in Hawai'i and 5 located in the continental U.S.) and 6 managers of hula collections (3 located in Hawai'i and 3 located in the continental U.S.).

As outlined above, we will convene 2 groups of hula practitioners, with each group consisting of 5 practitioners. One group of practitioners will be based in Hawai'i, as Hawai'i is the ancestral homeland of Native Hawaiian people and, therefore, is the birthplace and epicenter of hula. The second group of practitioners will be based on the U.S. continent, as there are currently more Native Hawaiian people living on the U.S. continent than in Hawai'i and hula schools have formed across the states. Criteria for focus group participants representing hula practitioners include: intermediate to advanced lived experience and training in hula; and/or demonstrated commitment to advancing and perpetuating the traditions of hula. At this time, we have confirmed commitment from 5 hula practitioners based in Hawai'i. These 5 hula practitioners are members of Ka Pā Hula o Kauanoē o Wa'ahila, a hula school established in 1997 that consists of more than 100 students of all ages and life stages led by Kumu Hula Maelia Loebenstein Carter. We are currently negotiating participation with 5 hula practitioners located in Seattle, Washington who are members of Hālau Hula Ka Lei Mokihana I Ka Ua Noe, a hula school established in 1995 under the leadership of Kumu Hula Mokihana Melendez. Both Project Director Keahiahi Long and Kumu Hula Maelia Loebenstein Carter have long-standing relationships with Kumu Hula Mokihana Melendez, and both kumu hula often collaborate on co-creating hula choreographies. Kumu Hula Mokihana Melendez often reaches out to Kumu Hula Maelia Loebenstein Carter, asking for advice about locating appropriate source materials related to hula. Given the collaborative nature of their relationship, including both Kumu Hula Maelia Loebenstein Carter and Kumu Hula Mokihana Melendez will lead to rich insights about the information practices of hula practitioners, as such insights might be inaccessible to researchers without existing or prior relationships.

This project will also convene 2 groups of managers of hula collections, with each group consisting of 3 collections staff. One group of collections staff will work at a collection located on O'ahu, Hawai'i, and one group of collections managers will be based on the U.S. continent at a collection for which the location is easily accessible to the U.S. continent-based Native Hawaiian traditional dance practitioner focus group. Criteria for focus group participants representing managers of hula collections include: current employment or other formal relationship with a repository or collection housing hula materials; experience managing Indigenous traditional dance materials; and/or experience engaging with communities interested in Indigenous traditional dance materials. To identify focus group participants of collections managers, we will prioritize the networks of project team members and advisory board members. In regards to participants who are collections managers located in Hawai'i, we are currently in negotiations with collections staff at the University of Hawai'i Hamilton Library Hawaiian and Pacific Collections. Project Director Keahiahi Long has collaborated with the Hawaiian and Pacific Collections staff over the past 15 years, and UH's Hamilton Library has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the information services for Native Hawaiian communities.

#### 2.5 PROJECT PERSONNEL: ADVISORY BOARD

We will convene an advisory board to guide *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* throughout its lifecycle. The advisory board will be responsible for: reviewing project activities for alignment with national need and national impact; testing project deliverables for cultural and professional rigor; communicating project findings to their national networks. The advisory board will consist of 4 members who will collectively represent the two aforementioned target groups (i.e. 1) hula practitioners across the U.S. and 2) cultural heritage institutions with hula collections across the U.S.). Criteria for advisory board members include: strong lived experience and training in Indigenous traditional dance; demonstrated commitment to advancing and perpetuating Indigenous traditional dances; experience managing Indigenous traditional dance materials; and/or experience engaging with communities interested in Indigenous traditional dance materials. We

will seek advisory board members whose expertise and experiences are nationally recognized and respected. Our priority list of advisory board members includes: Kawaikapuokalani Hewett (Kumu Hula of Kuhai Halau O Kawaikapuolani Pa Olapa Kahiko, based in Hawai'i); Maile Loo (Director of Hula Preservation Society and hula practitioner); Guha Shankar (Folklife Specialist at the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress); Libby Smigel (Dance Curator & Archivist, Music Division, Library of Congress). Project Director Keahiahi Long has previously collaborated with each of these respected experts.

## 2.6 EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The perspectives and contributions of the two aforementioned target groups (i.e. 1) hula practitioners across the U.S. and 2) cultural heritage institutions with hula collections across the U.S.) are built-in to the project. First, we will solicit broad input from the two target groups via the administration of 2 exploratory surveys. We anticipate collecting 120 responses to these surveys, and will utilize hula school networks and hula gatherings (e.g. conferences, workshops, festivals) to identify survey respondents. The findings of the surveys will inform subsequent project activities, such as the agendas of the focus group meetings. In this way, the project builds in an iterative, flexible, responsive design to closely align project activities and outcomes with the needs and motivations of the two target groups. Second, we will solicit more refined, intimate input from the two target groups by hosting 3 rounds of focus group meetings for each of the 4 focus groups representing the two target groups. The multiple, ongoing engagements with each focus group throughout the life of the project will make certain that project activities are accountable to the two target groups. Third, we will solicit constructive evaluation of the cultural and professional rigor of project outcomes from the project's advisory board. The advisory board will be composed of 4 members who represent the two target groups. The advisory board members will have nationally recognized and respected expertise and experiences, lending credibility and validation to project activities and outcomes.

To track our progress towards achieving intended results, we will confirm the following indicators of success:

### *Objective 1: Identify priority information needs and information support services of hula practitioners*

- **Indicator of success:** Published report on the information practices of Native Hawaiian traditional dance practitioners. This report will be included in the Strategic Plan addressing how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.
- **Data:** Descriptions of information practices of hula practitioners (e.g. hula practitioners' information needs, preferred information sources, barriers and supports for accessing and using relevant information)
- **Data sources:** 1) Exploratory survey about the information practices of hula practitioners; 2) Three rounds for each of 2 focus groups with hula practitioners
- **Data collection frequency:** 1) Survey administered once during Phase 3; 2) Focus groups convened three times, once each during Phases 2, 3, and 4.

### *Objective 2: Document the current state of collection management, description, and community engagement practices for cultural heritage institutions with hula collections*

- **Indicators of success:** 1) Published directory of hula collections in the U.S.; 2) Published report on the collection management practices for managers of hula collections. This report will be included in the Strategic Plan addressing how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.
- **Data:** 1) Names and contact information of hula collections in the U.S.; brief descriptions of the scope of individual hula collections in the U.S.; 2) Descriptions of collection management, description, and community engagement practices for managers of hula collections (e.g. managers' familiarity with hula collections, managers' attitudes towards collection management of hula collections, frequency of programming about hula collections).
- **Data sources:** 1) Exploratory survey about the management, description, and engagement practices of collection managers of hula collections; 2) Three rounds for each of (2) focus groups with collection managers of hula collections.



- Data collection frequency: 1) Survey administered once during Phase 3; 2) Focus groups convened three times, once each during Phases 2, 3, and 4.

*Objective 3: Leverage project findings in the co-creation of a strategic plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - addressing how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.*

- Indicator of success: Published Strategic Plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - addressing how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.
- Data: Applied Research project plan (inclusive of partnerships, activities, budget, etc.).
- Data sources: 1) Report on the information practices of hula practitioners; 2) Report on the collection management practices for managers of hula collections; 3) Directory of hula collections.
- Data collection frequency: Throughout the life of the project, with a majority of the data sources collected during Phase 3.

Objective 4: Document and share activities, outcomes, and processes throughout the life of the project

- Indicator of success: Robust project website updated regularly with project activities and documentation.
- Data: Project documentation (e.g. project research diary entries; project reports; final project Strategic Plan)
- Data sources: Project team research; focus group meetings; exploratory surveys
- Data collection frequency: Throughout the life of the project, with a majority of the data sources collected during Phase 3.

## 2.6 DISSEMINATION OF PROJECT FINDINGS

The design of *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* features a deep commitment to the open, transparent documentation and sharing of project activities, outcomes, and processes at all stages. Throughout the life of the project, the Project Director and Graduate Research Assistant will maintain a public research diary that will take the form of a blog. This blog will be available on the project website. Monthly blog entries will include preliminary findings, highlights of project activities, and reflections from project findings. This research diary will be particularly useful for the 2 aforementioned target groups (i.e. hula practitioners and managers of hula collections). Hula practitioners will gain insight to collections and research strategies that will support the development of their cultural practice. Meanwhile, managers of hula collections will learn more about the priorities and research support needs for communities with interests in their collections. Important to note, too, is that this public research diary will serve as another accountability tool, as any interested stakeholder will be able to review project activities as they are taking place. Announcements with highlights of the public research diary will be made periodically throughout the life of the project (as appropriate) to national professional, academic, and community-based listservs, like the Hawai'i Library Association listserv (which regularly includes discussion of Hawai'i-related collections and research topics) and the American Folklore Society Women's Section listserv (where ideas and comments about women in folklore work are regularly exchanged).

At the conclusion of *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima*, all project outputs and findings will be publicly available on the project website. Final project reports will also be deposited on the University of Hawai'i's open access digital institutional repository. Additionally, final project outputs and findings will be announced to national professional, academic, and community-based listservs and related print publications like the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' Ka Wai Ola newsletter. We anticipate that project findings will be of interest to hula practitioners across the U.S., and we will mail print materials (e.g. the directory of Native Hawaiian traditional dance collections) to practitioners that request them. We will identify interested community groups by prioritizing the networks of project team members, focus group participants, and advisory board members.

### 3. Diversity Plan

Both the processes and outcomes of *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* are a shared commitment and responsibility with under-represented and under-supported communities, namely Indigenous communities of practice, aligning *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* with IMLS' stated interest "to maximize its public value" with a focus on "underserved populations." This project's design prioritizes direct and sustained collaboration with these under-represented and under-supported communities. Focus group participants and advisory board members will include members from Indigenous communities of practice and managers of Indigenous traditional dance collections. Focus group participants and advisory board members will also reflect geographic and, therefore, cultural diversity, as they will be based both in Hawai'i, the ancestral homeland of Native Hawaiian people, and the continental U.S., where there are growing diaspora communities of Native Hawaiian people.

### 4. Project Results

#### 4.1 INTENDED RESULTS

As a planning grant, we endeavor to expand and solidify relationships with target groups and pilot strategies for increasing collaborations between hula practitioners and managers of hula collections. Ultimately, we hope to scale these relationships and strategies in an Applied Research project, which would engage a much larger number of stakeholders. Even as a 1-year planning grant, we anticipate that this project will have national impact for the target groups and beyond. First, findings from the investigations of the information practices of hula practitioners will point to priority support areas for their research practices. Second, findings from the investigations of the collection management, description, and outreach/engagement practices of collection managers of hula collections will point to priority professional development needs for our profession, as a whole. Third, the Directory of Hula Collections across the U.S. will serve both target groups, as well as any interested researcher of hula, Native Hawaiian peoples, and Indigenous traditional practices. Combined, these findings will illuminate opportunities for hula practitioners and managers of hula collections to work together to address the needs of both groups. To our knowledge, these research strategies have never been undertaken with these communities. And, yet, it is exactly this kind of research that is critical if we are to build stronger, more intimate relationships between Indigenous practitioners, their communities, and their ancestral knowledge, in turn supporting community efforts to restore and reclaim cultural identity, which will ultimately improve their health and wellbeing.

#### 4.2 ADAPTABILITY

*Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* is designed to pilot test research methods for increasing and strengthening collaborations between cultural heritage institutions and the communities they serve and are embedded in. By engaging relevant stakeholders from the target communities, we will be able to use evidence to identify where the greatest alignment of priorities exists. Based on the Project Director's previous research and experience, we anticipate that priorities will include: improving descriptive metadata for hula materials; creating interventions and opportunities to improve the information literacy skills of hula practitioners; creating programming materials and exhibits for cultural heritage institutions with hula collections.

As such, the ultimate purpose of this project is to scale, adapt, and generalize project findings towards an Applied Research project proposal that will target high-impact and sustainable services and that will include participation from a much larger number of communities, institutions, and stakeholders. Key to supporting the scalability of project findings is *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima's* advisory board, which will be composed of members whose expertise and experiences are nationally recognized and respected.

Finally, this research can have wide impact beyond libraries, informing initiatives that seek to increase collaborations between Indigenous communities and managers of Indigenous collections. Such initiatives that seek to support community connection and identity affirmation by increasing and improving access to ancestral knowledge include Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous natural resource management programs.

Pages in excess of the limit specified in  
the Notice of Funding Opportunity  
have been removed by IMLS staff.



## 1. Type

*Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* will create the following types and quantities of digital content and resources:

1. Project website
  - a. The *Kuhi Nō Ka Lima* project website will be hosted on the University of Hawai'i (UH) domain and servers. The likely URL of the project website will be [www.hawaii.edu/centerforhularesearch](http://www.hawaii.edu/centerforhularesearch). The project website will host all project documentation, including project reports, survey data, project library of project-generated resources (e.g. focus group agenda templates), public research diary (in the form of a blog), and a directory of hula collections in the U.S.. As a UH-hosted website, the project website will be hosted and publicly accessible in perpetuity. Additionally, the project website will be ADA-compliant. All UH domain websites are made in the WordPress platform.
2. Public research diary
  - a. The project will create and maintain a public research diary throughout the life of the project. This research diary will take the form of a blog, which will be located on the project website. The project team anticipates monthly updates to the blog, resulting in 12 blog entries that will include text and images (.png or .jpg, as supported by the website platform). The images included in the blog entries will be sourced from public domain sources and/or will be captured and created by project team members.
3. Survey and survey respondent data
  - a. The project team will co-create and administer 2 exploratory surveys, one for hula practitioners and one for collections staff of hula materials. These surveys will be administered online using a survey software like Google Form or Qualtrics. A .pdf copy of the survey questions will be available on the project website. Raw survey data will be available to project team members only, for up to 2 years following the end of the period of performance for this project. Synthesized survey data will be presented in a compiled .pdf document that will be available on the project website.
4. Directory of hula collections
  - a. The project team will create a directory of hula collections located in the U.S. (though we may also include international collections, as relevant to the scope of project activities and as allowable given project resources). This directory will include the following metadata for each collection, as available: Name, Location, Website, Other Contact Information, Public Access Hours, Description of Scope (number of items, format of items, creation dates of items) of Holdings of Hula Materials. The form of this directory is inspired by the Directory of Historical Records Repositories in Hawai'i (6th Edition, 2022, compiled and revised by the Association of Hawai'i Archivists). This directory will be available as a .pdf document on the project website and UH's institutional repository (ScholarSpace).
5. Strategic Plan
  - a. The project team will co-create a Strategic Plan - inclusive of an Applied Research project plan - addressing how to improve the relationships between hula practitioners and cultural heritage institutions with hula collections. This Strategic Plan will identify priority needs of information practices and services of hula practitioners, as well as priority needs of collection management practices of collections staff who manage hula materials. These insights will be gained through the analysis of data collected from the exploratory surveys, focus groups, and advisory board meetings. This Strategic Plan will be presented in the form of a .pdf document that will be available on the project website and UH's institutional repository (ScholarSpace).

## 2. Availability

The 5 project digital products outlined above will be openly available online on the project website. The project website will be accessible via standard web browsers, and will be ADA-compliant. The project website will be hosted on the UH domain and servers, and will be created in the UH's instance of the WordPress platform. Two of the digital products listed above - i.e. the Directory of Hula Collections and Strategic Plan - will also be available via the UH's institutional repository, named ScholarSpace and built on the DSpace software.

Announcements of project digital products will be made widely via local and professional listservs (e.g. Hawai'i Library Association listserv, Folklife listserv). These digital products will also be announced in newsletters and trade publications of interest to the two target groups, e.g. the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' Ka Wai Ola Newsletter.

## 3. Access

We plan to make our digital products as widely available, accessible, and usable as possible. We will not assert any ownership rights over the digital products, unless our consultants wish to do so in the form of a Creative Commons license.

We are aware that some of the discussions we will have with our consultants may involve culturally-sensitive matters. We will abide by their wishes as to how much of their contribution they feel comfortable sharing openly and in what format e.g. videos, photos, transcripts, or abstracts. We will not put information our consultants do not want shared outside of these discussions in our publicly shared project content, so that we may respect their wishes, while providing the most free use of our resources.

We are also aware that some cultural heritage materials that the consultants engage with throughout the project (and especially during the collection visits) may be culturally sensitive, even if they aren't labeled or noted as such by the responsible institution. Again, we will not put information our consultants do not want shared outside of the project team in our publicly shared project content. Also, we will intentionally discuss cultural sensitivity - and related religious, customary, linguistic, economic aspects - as relates to cultural heritage materials throughout the life of the project.

These discussions will be preceded by Community Agreements that will be co-created with consultants at the beginning of the project. By foregrounding the discussion of sensitivities, expectations, and relational responsibilities, our resulting documentation will maintain both technical and cultural integrity and rigor.

## 4. Sustainability

Two of the project's digital products - i.e. the Directory of Hula Collections and Strategic Plan - will be housed in perpetuity on the UH's institutional repository (ScholarSpace). Review of the maintenance and management of these two products will be conducted every 5 years by the Project Director. After the Project Director separates from the University, the ScholarSpace administrators will assess the maintenance and management of the two digital products.

The project website, inclusive of the project public research diary and survey data, will be hosted and archived on the UH domain and servers for up to 1 year following the separation of the Project Director from the University.

These sustainability timelines are subject to change as guided by Project Consultants.