

New York State Archives Partnership Trust (APT)

Laura Bush 21st Librarian Program Preliminary Proposal Narrative | Funding Category: Project Grant Project Category: Community Catalysts | Project Type: Continuing Education

Project Title - *Consider the Source New York: Providing Access to the Diverse Historical Record*

New York State Archives Partnership Trust (APT) in partnership with the Empire State Library Network (ESLN) is submitting this proposal for a statewide continuing education community-based learning model for cultural institutions, including libraries, museums, archives, and historical societies. The purpose is to educate librarians, archivists, historians, and cultural educators as Community Catalysts to become creators and providers of local, primary source-based resources that will connect K-12 Educators, school librarians and students with archives, libraries and museums and provide access to historical records representing the history of marginalized groups; including African American, Latino, Asian, LBGTQ+, and economically disadvantaged populations. The total requested funding is \$165,220.

Statement of Broad Need: “Increasing public access by digitizing collections, building online presence, and opening doors for visitors, users, students and scholars wherever they may be” is one of the main goals stated in the IMLS Strategic Plan. Both urban and rural organizations struggle to make their resources available to the most marginalized segments of their local populations. Interactions with librarians, archivists, and cultural educators show that they are actively seeking ways to make their collections representing marginalized groups available to students and teachers across multiple disciplines and levels of learning. The major barriers to student and teacher access are a lack of knowledge of the types of collections and resources that would be valuable to the target audience; the existence of a community network to facilitate communication and opportunities for information sharing; and the lack of resources and/or digital capabilities to provide online access to the valuable collections housed inside the libraries’ local history rooms, community archives, and other local repositories. The proposed project will build upon our newly developed online resource for teachers, [*Consider the Source New York*](#), and the [*New York Heritage*](#) online portal for digitized records to provide local librarians, archivists, and other repositories holding important community information a place to make their resources available. The collaboration enhances the network of community stakeholders currently in place to inform the types of information to make available and training to educate librarians and archivists in the ways they can tailor their resources for specific audiences like classroom educators, students, and the adult learning community.

Project Design: This IMLS grant would enable the APT and ESLN to identify collections and repositories addressing the history of diverse groups that are traditionally underrepresented in the historical record and to host the digitized collections on New York Heritage. In addition, the APT will coordinate the creation of teacher-created materials through our statewide network of classroom educators, university professors, and school librarians and host these materials on *Consider the Source New York*, an interactive online resource for educators featuring a repository of primary source documents and learning activities with the added ability for teachers to create, save and share their own lessons and assign those learning activities to their students. The grant would allow us to expand the resources to include primary source documents from libraries and archives throughout the state, making diverse community-based resources more readily available to teachers, students, and lifelong learners.

The Model: The APT and the New York Council for History Education (NYCHE) has in place a statewide network of teachers and school librarians ready to train educators in the use of primary sources and promote student-driven, inquiry-based instruction in the classroom. New York State has been divided into nine regions representing both the rural and urban populations of the state. These regions are: Long Island, Greater NYC, Mid-Hudson Valley, Capital Region, Northern NY, Central NY, Finger Lakes, Western New York, and the Southern Tier. Using this model, this project will expand the network to include stakeholders who represent the organizations holding primary source documents in local communities across the state, more specifically, those organizations holding historical records relevant to the history of underrepresented groups in New York State. With this grant, the Trust would partner with ESLN which would provide access to the collections and local repositories who hold the physical collections. Together, we would identify collections that meet the criteria of addressing underrepresented groups throughout New York State, digitize those collections and oversee the

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creation of educational materials by educators in each region. The Trust and partners will then develop workshops for librarians to learn about the types of resources most relevant to educators and for educators to learn how to access both the newly created resources and how to connect with librarian and repositories in their area to gain access to additional resources.

The process will be as follows and will take place in each of the 9 regions over a two-year period:

1. Identify at least one repository holding collections related to the history of diverse groups in each region.
2. Hire an information specialist to manage the copyright permissions, digitization, data collection, and training of staff to prepare the collection for online public access through New York Heritage.
3. Contract with an archival digitization service to have the collection digitized.
4. Hire and train a member of each repository to write the metadata for the collection.
5. Hire two school librarians in the region, one elementary and one secondary, to create educational materials for the newly digitized collections. These materials will be created and hosted within our new website, *Consider the Source New York*.
6. Once the materials are created, we will offer online workshops for librarians led by the project participants in each region on the connection between their holdings and educators meeting their learning standards and for educators on how to connect with their local and regional librarians to access these valuable resources. These workshops will be recorded and made available online for free for use for future librarian and educator trainings.

In review, the main goal is to create community networks of librarians, archivists and educators increasing access to repository holdings related to diverse groups throughout New York State history. A key component to achieving this goal is the training of librarians and other information specialists in the specific needs of educators using primary source materials and tools for bringing those materials into their classrooms. By working with the APT to identify collections relevant to K-12 education, participating librarians will learn through practice which primary sources to make accessible to educators. The subsequent online trainings will make this knowledge available to many more librarians beyond the initial participants in the project. As the collections are identified, the writing of metadata through a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion lens will also be valuable training for those participating in this project. The online workshops will also address the writing of metadata that is reflective of the multiple perspectives that exist within the historical record and addressing the issue of a dominant white privilege perspective in the existing metadata found in many repositories in the United States. In the end, this project design can be replicated in any state or community to create similar networks of key stakeholders.

Diversity Plan: This project will focus on libraries and archives located in the urban and rural communities with both culturally and economically diverse members from traditionally underrepresented populations. We will work closely with repositories that house primary source documents representative of diverse populations, and particularly those who have been marginalized and traditionally left out of history books. The building of community networks and subsequent training of librarians and archivists will also focus on those from diverse communities and identified as in need of access to libraries and archives.

Broad Impact: The success and experience we gain through this project will have significant national impact. The project will establish a model for other statewide agencies to develop a structure for finding and sharing the valuable resources representing marginalized groups held by community libraries and archives throughout the country. The creation of strategic collaborations, an online clearinghouse for primary source documents relevant to inquiry-based, student-driven learning, and a system for training librarians and archivists in meeting the needs of the teachers, students, and lifelong learners in their communities is transferrable to every state.

Budget: (2-Year Period) Items to include- Identification, Permissions and Digitization of Partner Primary Sources (\$90,000), Regional Project Managers (\$9,000), Regional Information Specialists to write metadata (\$10,000), Educators for Lesson Plan Development (\$10,800), Online Professional Development Workshops for both librarians and educators (\$5400), digital collection management, metadata training and upload, council membership fees, and outreach (\$25,000 to New York Heritage) and indirect costs (10%). Total of \$165,220.