

Intentional Transformation: AMIA Pathways Fellowship

The Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) seeks \$249,000 in funding for a 30-month Community Catalyst Project Grant from the IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program. The AMIA Pathways Fellowship (APF) will support paid internships in combination with mentorship and professional development training to forge pathways in the media preservation field for people from groups historically underrepresented in the profession.

The APF strengthens and expands the 2020 AMIA Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship Pilot Program (ADIFP) funded by the National Film Preservation Board (NFPB). Faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, AMIA successfully restructured the pilot program, increasing the number of fellows from four to six. The fellows engaged in professional development through webinar training; remote mentorships; office hours with specialists in the field; three onsite paid internships and will soon participate in an APF alumni program. IMLS funds would expand the program to eight fellows annually, further develop the alumni program, support the contributions of those providing professional development to the fellows, and expand paid internship opportunities to include regional and community-based organizations that house non-traditional media collections, who could not otherwise support paid internships.

Internship hosts Rhode Island Historical Society, California Revealed, and George Blood LLC have expressed their desire to continue as host sites. We are currently recruiting new hosts and have firm commitments from the Smithsonian NMAAHC and 'Ulu'Ulu: The Henry Ku'ualoha Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai'i.

Statement of Broad Need: In 2019, the NFPB funded a study examining diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the moving image archives field. Qualitative and quantitative data revealed the chronic lack of cultural equity and inclusion in the profession. Among its findings, the study determined that those working in media archives are 17% non-White. For those that identified as Senior Management, only 12.5% are people of color. This lack of diversity has broad and persistent negative impacts on the communities that media archives serve and are part of, and on the collections mandates of both public and private archives and hinders the profession's ability to attract and retain talented new collaborators. While 70% of respondents held a master's degree such as an MLIS or specialized MA in media archiving, and 45% currently work for academic institutions or university libraries, archives, or museums, many reported challenges in receiving adequate training in basic skills related to media preservation. The forthcoming NFPB DEI report to the Library of Congress recommends: advocating for dedicated scholarship funding for students from underrepresented backgrounds; developing a field-wide paid internship program that is inclusive of trainees of different ages, levels of experience and backgrounds; and supporting underrepresented individuals along their career pathways. AMIA's Pathways Fellowship program directly addresses these key recommendations.

Project Design: The APF identifies sixteen committed individuals, over two cohorts, from underrepresented groups and provides paid internships (30hrs/week for 10 weeks) to support them financially as they expand their field knowledge and fosters their career networks at a pivotal stage of professional development. At least half of these Fellows will intern in regional or community archives. Fellows will receive hands-on training with analog and digital audiovisual materials, encompassing core competencies such as format identification, cataloging, digital asset management, digital preservation, and access. APF supports the Fellows and the host sites through one-on-one mentorship, weekly webinars on specific skill sets, cohort-building activities, and the support of a larger network of specialists from the AMIA community. APF directly and positively impacts the Fellows and the host sites, creating working partnerships that will endure long beyond the term of this project.

In order to effectively design and carry out the program, the APF team will consist of a Project Manager (PM), Mentorship Program Coordinator (MPC), Curriculum Coordinator (CC) and a five-member Advisory Board. Individuals currently in these roles are interested in continuing. The Advisory Board members will represent a

broad range of constituencies. The Board will guide the development of inclusive selection criteria for the Fellows and host sites. Prospective sites must demonstrate a commitment to APF goals and prioritize interns' learning and professional advancement.

The PM will ensure that the APF achieves its objectives while staying on time and within budget and manage the Fellows recruitment and selection process, including targeted outreach to Tribal Universities, HBCUs, community colleges, and schools with diverse student bodies. The MPC will work under the direction of the PM to engage a group of mentors who have shared intersectional cultural identities with the selected Fellows. They will further develop the Mentorship Handbook, provide leadership, training, and guidance for the program's mentors and mentees, and lead the development of an Alumni Program. Finally, the CC will develop the webinar schedule, and organize pre-fellowship training for mentors and host sites on topics such as effective mentorship, inclusive leadership, hiring practices, and cultural competency.

Diversity Plan: The 2019 NFPB DEI study that informs this project examined a broad range of diversity factors. Our proposal is driven by the crucially important goal of growing diversity at all levels of the media archiving profession and expanding the profession's impact to underserved communities. Our Advisory Board will guide our selection criteria for fellows, mentors and instructors, ensuring we remain focused on our objective.

Broad Impact: The APF boldly asks what can people accomplish when: They have generous funding for professional development early on in their careers? They have supportive mentors and a framework for continuous learning? They are actively recruited to the field? The long-standing barriers to their entry and advancement are systematically addressed? The undeniable weight of being "first" or "only" is shared with a robust cohort and growing community? How can emerging professionals contribute to the work of established and non-traditional media collections?

The 2020 ADIFP Pilot year insights are significant: engaging a diverse cohort of fellows not only jumpstarts careers but brings new voices and new perspectives for the field. Through extending the project over multiple years, increasing the cohort size, and developing an alumni program, we can effect significant change in making the field more reflective of the communities whose histories it seeks to preserve.

Media collections are not unique to traditional institutions (libraries, museums, government agencies, etc). They exist in communities of all types, in all areas of the country, documenting their histories, aspirations, struggles and triumphs. How, to what end, and by whom these media collections are (or are not) preserved shouldn't be left to chance. IMLS funding will enable AMIA to move our early diversity initiatives to a sustainable model whose APFs will help establish a more diverse and representative pool of archivists prepared to steward our collective media heritage, and to share those lessons and materials with the broader LAM community.

Budget: More than half of the project budget (\$143K of \$249K), will go directly to interns in the form of wages and funding for conference attendance and professional development. Project staff costs are allocated for a PM, MC and CC (\$64K) and administrative manager (\$10K). Mentors for each intern will be eligible to receive a stipend (\$16K). Webinar instructors will develop curriculum content aimed at building core competencies (\$8K), and speakers who host bi-weekly virtual office hour sessions will also receive honoraria (\$3K). The remainder of the structural costs provide a stipend for an independent interviewer to conduct final interviews with fellows and mentors. We have also allocated \$16K (approximately \$1K per fellow) for project accessibility funds in our preliminary program budget.