

Project Title: Enhancing the Capacity of Public Libraries to Support the Health Information Needs of Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Summary: The University of Michigan School of Information (UMSI) requests \$416,995 for a three-year Early Career Research Development project to investigate how public libraries can work with community partners to meet the social determinant of health (SDOH)-related information needs and practices of individuals navigating reentry after experiencing incarceration. SDOH are factors within an environment that have a major impact on the health, well-being, and quality of life of people. Examples of SDOH include housing, employment, education, racism, discrimination, literacy skills, access to quality healthcare and nutritious food. The Project Director (PD), Dr. Megan Threats, will work in collaboration with staff of the Library of Michigan, the Library Network, community-based organizations across the state of Michigan, and the Michigan Department of Corrections Offender Success Program with the goal of enhancing the capacity of public libraries to work with community stakeholders to better support the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals. The proposed project works to develop: 1) an empirical model describing the institution-oriented (e.g., library, health, government) SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals; 2) evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities; 3) a reentry planning guide, and 4) evidence-based recommendations for library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Project Justification:

Libraries are community anchors that play a critical role in providing information, programming, and services to vulnerable populations in their communities¹. While there is empirical evidence that public library staff work to address the SDOH-related information needs of patrons, there is no research to our knowledge about the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals²⁻⁴. To enhance the capacity of public library staff to work with community partners to meet the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, it is necessary to first identify the specific needs and information practices of this community. Thus, the project addresses the following **research questions**:

RQ1: What are the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals?

- RQ1.1 How does *intersectional stigma* shape these needs and practices?
- RQ1.2 What *information systems* and *institutions* (human and information and communications technology) support the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals?
- RQ1.3 What are the *critical elements* of a reentry planning guide to support the SDOH of formerly incarcerated individuals?

RQ2: How have public libraries *previously* supported individuals in their communities navigate reentry after experiencing incarceration?

- RQ2.1 To what extent do public libraries *currently identify and reach out* to formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities?
- RQ2.2 To what extent do public libraries *collaborate with formerly incarcerated individuals and staff at community-based organizations and healthcare institutions* to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals?

RQ3: What are the *professional development* needs and experiences of public library staff and administrators providing services and programming for formerly incarcerated individuals?

- RQ3.1 What *training* have library administrators and staff received to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals?
- RQ3.2 What are the critical elements of a *training program and toolkit* for library administrators and staff to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals?

This project advances the PD’s research agenda on the health information needs and practices of marginalized populations and the development of programs, information tools, and policies to support their health and well-being. It has significant potential to have a nation-wide impact on library and information science (LIS) research, practice, and the development of programs, resources, and services for formerly incarcerated individuals. This project aligns with a major goal of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program: It enhances the training and professional development of the library workforce to meet the needs of their communities (**Goal 3**), in particular, (**Objective 3.2**) the creation of a training program that builds library “workforce skills and expertise in contributing to the well-being of communities.”

Need:

Annually, more than 600,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons in the United States (U.S.)⁵. These individuals are disproportionately Black and Latino, have a lower socioeconomic status, lower educational attainment, and a high burden of chronic illnesses and conditions^{6,7}. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, as of

December 2021, the state of Michigan had the 8th highest number of incarcerated people in the U.S.⁸ Each year, more than 160,000 people are booked into local jails across the state of Michigan, and between 2 and 3 million people living in the state have a criminal conviction.^{9,10} Racial disparities persist among incarcerated individuals in the state of Michigan. Despite making up only 14.1% of Michigan's population, Black Americans represent 37% of the jail population in the state, and 53% of incarcerated individuals in prison.⁸ According to the Michigan Department of Corrections, more than 8,000 people are released from prison in Michigan each year.¹¹ Upon release, individuals navigating reentry face structural barriers to housing, employment, literacy (e.g., health, digital, reading), healthcare, transportation, and are at a heightened risk of poor health outcomes. An estimated 80% of individuals returning to their community after incarceration have chronic health conditions, mental illness, or substance use disorders.¹²⁻¹⁵ In several studies, poor health status among formerly incarcerated individuals and structural barriers to economic stability, access to quality healthcare and education, limited access to neighborhoods and environments that promote health and safety, and lack of social and community support increased rates of recidivism (return-to-prison/incarceration).¹⁶⁻¹⁸ These are all social determinants of health. Given that Black and lower socioeconomic status individuals are overrepresented amongst incarcerated populations, disparities in negative outcomes during reentry may exist.

Building on and Scaling up Re-Entry Support in Michigan:

Limited re-entry resources, programs, and services have been noted as a challenge for formerly incarcerated individuals.⁵ In efforts to help individuals navigating re-entry and reduce recidivism across the state of Michigan, in 2004, the Michigan Department of Corrections launched the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative, now known as the Offender Success Program (OSP). The mission of the OSP is to “ensure that eligible individuals have the tools and supports necessary to be successful after exiting prison.” The Michigan Department of Corrections's goals for the OSP are to: “1) reduce crime and recidivism while promoting lifelong intrinsic change, 2) provide services and develop opportunities for each person who is served so they have the tools needed to succeed in the community as productive, self-sufficient citizens, and 3) maintain a system of collaboration that includes assessment, programming, planning, and integrated case management to promote individual success.”¹⁹ The Michigan Department of Corrections credits the efforts of the OSP with the recent decline of the state's recidivism rate¹. In 2022, the recidivism rate was 23.6%, down 3% (26.6%) from the previous year. Michigan's new recidivism rate places it among the top ten states in the U.S. with the lowest rates of recidivism.²⁰ Due to the declining population of incarcerated individuals, several prisons, including facilities dedicated to providing health treatment and reentry programming for soon-to-be released individuals (i.e., the Detroit Reentry Center), have been closed in the state of Michigan since 2020. It is unclear at present how the closure of prisons and re-entry centers across the state of Michigan will impact the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. The PD anticipates that the closure of these centers may lead to increased usage of public libraries by formerly incarcerated individuals, which could in turn place additional strain on their staff, who may feel unequipped to serve the SDOH-related information needs and practices of this community. Enhancing collaboration between public libraries and other key stakeholders could help ensure that staff at public libraries are not overly burdened, while also ensuring that the skills and expertise of libraries are leveraged to fill a critical need. Thus, this project will fill a critical knowledge gap that has significant potential for helping key stakeholders understand: a) what institutions, resources, programs, and services have been most helpful, b) what needs remain unfulfilled, c) which tools and platforms are most helpful for disseminating SDOH-related information, d) how the closure of reentry programs have impacted individuals navigating reentry after incarceration, and e) how collaboration between the Michigan Department of Corrections, public libraries, and community-based organizations might improve the quantity, quality and reach of critical re-entry resources, programs, and services related to SDOH for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Public libraries may be underutilized as key partners for supporting the SDOH-related information needs and practices of individuals navigating reentry after incarceration. According to data from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Public Library Survey, in FY 2019 nearly 97% of the U.S. population lived within a public library service area.²¹ An estimated 55% of Americans who lived within a public library service area visited public libraries 1.2 billion times in-person. Further, Black Americans, Latinos, and people with lower socioeconomic status, all of whom are disproportionately represented among formerly incarcerated populations, are more likely than other Americans to say that public libraries impact their lives and communities, and should embrace new programming/service opportunities.²² **In the PD's previous work developing and publishing reentry planning resources (e.g., Philadelphia FIGHT Reentry Planning Manual) and programming as a Public Services and Reference Librarian, she discovered that public libraries were noted as the most accessible local institutions for individuals newly released and navigating reentry in the city of Philadelphia based on data from user studies.**²³⁻²⁵ Further, user studies conducted by the PD indicated that the most utilized programming and resources among formerly incarcerated individuals were related to their SDOH-related information needs, specifically, adult learning opportunities and free GED classes, digital literacy classes, housing/shelter resources, job skills development classes, expungement clinics, and linkages to community health centers. Many of these programs and resources were developed and

¹ The recidivism rate measures the percentage of offenders who return to prison within three years of release.

offered in collaboration with community partners, which are relationships the PD worked to develop in her previous role to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in the community. The PD's findings are supported by previous research and professional discourse about the important roles that public libraries can play in supporting formerly incarcerated individuals within their communities and the SDOH-related information needs and practices of all their patrons.^{26,27}

Public Library Staff Skills Development

While public libraries are community anchors that provide a range of services, programming and resources for vulnerable populations, previous research suggest that public library staff feel that their professional training, or lack thereof, left them ill equipped to assist community members seeking help to address their SDOH-related information needs^{2,27,28} Despite the lack of training public library staff have reported in this area, public libraries have a rich history of serving as partners in health promotion in their communities^{29,30} This rich history demonstrates the utility of public libraries leveraging community collaboration to better meet the needs of their communities. A study conducted by Morgan et al. (2018) reported that public library staff who completed a training curriculum designed to “help library staff recognize, engage, and refer vulnerable patrons to appropriate resources” showed significant increases in “comfort, confidence, and preparedness” in assisting vulnerable populations seeking help to support their SDOH-related information needs including homelessness, mental health and substance use disorders.³¹ There is limited knowledge about how public library staff in the state of Michigan have supported the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals living in the state [RQ1,RQ2]; there is even less known about the training and professional development needs and experiences of public library staff in relation to providing resources, programs, and services that support the SDOH-related information needs and practices of individuals navigating reentry after incarceration[RQ3]. The intended results of the proposed project include: an empirical model describing the institution-oriented (e.g., library, health, government) SDOH-related information worlds and needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, evidence-based recommendations for public library staff collaboration across sectors with community partners to enhance programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals, and a statewide reentry planning guide. The intended results of the proposed project have potential to greatly benefit target groups including public library staff, formerly incarcerated individuals, staff at community-based and health organizations, and the Michigan Department of Corrections. For example, there is currently no statewide reentry planning guide for formerly incarcerated individuals. The collaborative creation of a reentry planning guide by the project team, public library staff, formerly incarcerated individuals, government, and community-based organizations (See Project Work Plan) helps to strengthen community engagement (IMLS Goal 2) and promote inclusive engagement across diverse audiences (Objective 2.1) and support community collaboration (Objective 2.2). There is no formal relationship that exists between the Michigan Department of Corrections OSP and public libraries across the state of Michigan. By bringing together these stakeholders as members of the community research advisory board (See Project Workplan) for the duration of the project, this will enhance the capacity of these institutions to build a partnership that can improve access to quality, re-entry resources, programming and services that can help meet the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals. Further, to ensure nation-wide impact, the project results including the methodology and empirical model, will be disseminated through peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings. The project results, including the reentry planning guide and evidence-based recommendations, will be presented at international/national professional and academic conferences, webinars, social media, on the project website, and in a final report to IMLS.

Advancing Research and Professional Practice Nation-Wide:

In recent years, there has been an uptick in the exploration of the role libraries play in providing services to formerly *and* currently incarcerated individuals.^{32,33} The New Jersey State Library's IMLS-funded National Leadership Grant project, “Reconnecting Returning Citizens with their Communities at Public Libraries” project, publicly advertised as the “Fresh Start @ Your Library,” was developed to help public libraries collaborate with government and nonprofit organizations in New Jersey to provide services to formerly incarcerated individuals.³⁴ As the program was set to be implemented in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic derailed the original project plans due to the closure of several libraries and the uncertainty of the extent to which libraries could offer programs and services in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, the San Francisco Public Library in collaboration with the American Library Association launched the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation- funded, “Expanding Information Access for Incarcerated People Initiative,” a project aimed at improving and expanding library services for incarcerated individuals by working with librarians working in juvenile detention centers, jails, and prisons.³⁵ These projects are evidence that libraries are well-positioned to be central partners in offering quality resources, programming and services for formerly incarcerated and currently incarcerated individuals within their communities.

The proposed project seeks to build on these past efforts by not only enhancing the training and professional development of public library staff to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals, but it will also fill a critical gap in research. **Past research and professional practice focused on improving services to formerly incarcerated individuals have not examined the**

SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals who utilize library services to while navigating reentry.³⁶ **This project begins with an empirical investigation of the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. To our knowledge, this will be the first research project to explore this phenomenon.** Centering the needs and practices of this vulnerable population is critical for the development of culturally responsive training materials that seek to enhance the capacity of public library staff to support the SDOH-related information needs and practices of individuals navigating re-entry after incarceration. Further, by employing a community-based participatory research design (See Project Work Plan), formerly incarcerated individuals will have the opportunity to collaborate with public library staff on the co-development of a reentry planning guide, and share their insights regarding effective practices for public libraries seeking to improve their outreach to formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and how to work with formerly incarcerated individuals on the development of library programs and services that help to meet their SDOH-related information needs. **This research will advance the PD’s long-term research agenda related to examining the health information needs and practices of marginalized populations and the development of programs, information tools, and policies to support their health and well-being.**^{37,38} The project findings can be adopted by researchers and practitioners nation-wide seeking to gain a better understanding of how to support the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. Public libraries in other states can adopt and implement the evidence-based recommendations derived from this project to improve the training of their staff; as well as the empirical model to inform the development of resources, programming, and services for formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities.

Project Work Plan: To address the gaps in research and professional practice, this project seeks to develop an understanding of how public libraries can work with community partners to meet the SDOH-related information needs and practices of individuals navigating reentry after experiencing incarceration.

Methodology: To answer the research questions (See Project Justification), the project will use a use a **methodological approach** developed by the PD (Threats, under review) that integrates intersectionality theory with principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR) and an information practices approach to provide a robust understanding of the information needs and practices of individuals, especially those who experience marginalization. This approach centers the knowledge and agency of individuals who experience intersecting stigmas rooted in the interconnectedness of their social status (e.g., ex-offender) and socially-constructed identities (e.g. race, sexual orientation, gender, class, etc.) and how these collectively shape their information needs and practices.³⁹⁻⁴² The SDOH-related information practices being investigated in this project include: information acquisition (i.e., seeking/receiving/incidental encountering), sharing, creation and use. These information practices are based on theoretical models of information behavior/practices which originated in the field of library and information science (LIS). Specifically, T.D. Wilson’s model of information behavior⁴³, Sandra Erdelez’s model of information encountering⁴⁴, Marcia Bates’ conceptualization of information creation⁴⁵, and J. Kari’s concepts of information use.⁴⁶ This project will implement a CBPR approach. CBPR involves a “cyclical and iterative process that includes building partnerships and community trust, community assessment, problem definition, development of research methodology, data collection and analysis, interpretation of data, determination of action and policy implications, dissemination of results, action, and plans for sustainability” (p. 38)⁴⁷ At the core of the approach is the intentional development of sustainable relationships between researchers, community members, and practitioners.⁴⁸ CBPR recognizes community as a unit of identity, and builds on the existing strengths, resources and relationships within the community.^{49,50} This project aims to embody this approach by 1) building relationships between the project team, formerly incarcerated individuals, public library staff, government officials, and stakeholders at community-based organizations, 2) promoting co-learning and resource development, 3) addressing the SDOH-related needs of formerly incarcerated individuals and identify the professional development and training needs of public library staff, and 4) building community trust by centering the needs and knowledge of formerly incarcerated individuals through the exploration of their SDOH-related information needs and practices, and incorporating that into the co-design of a reentry planning guide and the development of evidence-based recommendations for a toolkit and training materials to help enhance the capacity of public library staff to work with community stakeholders to meet the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals.

A CBPR approach was adopted from the onset of the conceptualization of this project. From August 2022-February 2023, the PD spoke with several members of the target groups (i.e., formerly incarcerated individuals, public library staff at various libraries across the state of Michigan, staff at community-based organizations and the Michigan Department of Corrections) via virtual group and one-on-one meetings to assess the need for this research, develop the research questions, discuss and develop the intended project results, and the potential impact of this project on professional practice and the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals. The PD discussed the Project Work Plan with these target groups to determine the appropriateness of the research approach/methods, including data collection, analysis, and dissemination of research results for the phenomenon being investigated; as well as the feasibility of completing the research activities during the three-year period of the grant. As such, the project work plan has been divided into five phases:

Phase 1: Relationship building and survey data collection and analysis (August 2023-February 2024: 6 months)**Phase 2: Sequential explanatory interview data collection and analysis (March 2024-October 2024: 7 months)****Phase 3: Interview data collection and analysis (November 2024-May 2025: 6 months)****Phase 4: Designing and refining resources (June 2025-December 2025: 6 months)****Phase 5: Dissemination of research and professional practice resources (January 2026-July 2026: 6 months)****Phase 1: Relationship building and survey data collection and analysis (August 2023-February 2024: 6 months)**

The first phase of the study will focus on building the research team, fostering relationships between community partners, and collecting data on the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. This is a critical stage in the research process as it lays the foundation for enhancing the capacity of public libraries to work with community partners and builds trust among the target groups through shared learning and transparent data collection practices, which are all central to the CBPR approach of this project. In this phase, the PD and Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA) will develop a survey instrument exploring the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals (ages 18+). The collection of survey data during the first phase of the study is critical for ensuring that the needs of formerly incarcerated individuals are identified prior to the development of programs, resources, and training mechanisms for public library staff seeking to enhance their capacity to serve formerly incarcerated individuals. The PI will share a draft of the survey instrument with the community advisory board and community partners for feedback. After the survey is revised based on that feedback, the PD, GSRA, community advisory board, and community partners will work to recruit survey participants through convenience and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling will be used with the intention of having a diverse sample of formerly incarcerated individuals living in urban, rural, and suburban areas across the state of various genders, sexual orientations, and race/ethnicities. The target sample size is 650 formerly incarcerated individuals living in the state of Michigan. Additional details regarding major activities that will be completed during Phase 1 include:

- **Obtain University of Michigan Institutional Review Board approval for the study**
- **Obtain a Certificate of Confidentiality (CoC) from the National Institutes of Health.** Given that formerly incarcerated individuals are a population that are vulnerable, the PD will obtain a CoC to protect the privacy of research participants which prohibits the disclosure of identifiable, sensitive research information to anyone not connected to the research except when the participant consents; this includes federal, state, or civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings. This may help to mitigate concerns from participants who are distrustful of researchers and institutions by ensuring them that the PD is taking all measures possible to minimize their risk of participating in this study and to ensure the privacy of participants.
- **Hire and onboard a GSRA** who will work with the PD over the three-year period of the grant. The GSRA will be a PhD student at UMSI with experience conducting CBPR, qualitative and quantitative research.
- **Hire and onboard a part-time research assistant (RA)** who will work with the PD over the three-year period of the grant. The RA will be a master's student at UMSI with experience in graphic design, data visualization and quantitative data analysis. The RA will create the study website that will include digital recruitment materials, information about the study, and a link to the survey. At the end of each phase, project updates will be shared on the website, so that scholars and practitioners nationwide can follow the progress of the proposed activities.
- **Convene community advisory board** for a 1.5-hour virtual meeting to begin cultivating relationships between community stakeholders including, but not limited to the Michigan Department of Corrections, Library of Michigan, The Library Network, and the Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration. Board members will discuss mutually beneficial skills and expertise, strategies for recruiting formerly incarcerated individuals and design of the survey instrument.
- **Design survey; recruit survey participants and disseminate survey among n=650 formerly incarcerated individuals** in the State of Michigan to gain insight into their SDOH-related information needs and practices. A recruitment plan will be developed in collaboration between the research team, community advisory board, and community partners. The PD will visit community partner organizations to recruit participants. Each organization will leverage their networks and relationships with the goal of recruiting formerly incarcerated individuals through convenience and purposive sampling techniques. These techniques include recruiting participants through a variety of venues such as community health centers, reentry centers, community-based organizations, libraries, shelters, religious institutions, barbershops, bars, clubs, listservs, social media, public postings, and a variety of other pathways to be determined by the community advisory board and community partners. Eligible criteria will include being over age 18, residing in the state of Michigan, being able to read, write, and speak English, and past confinement in a jail, state or federal prison. Informed consent will be obtained from all study participants. Given that the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals will be examined, the SDOH framework will inform the development of survey questions. Social determinants of health (SDOH) are factors within an

environment that have a major impact on the health, well-being, and quality of life of people. Examples of SDOH include: housing, employment, education, racism, discrimination, literacy skills, access to quality healthcare and nutritious food.⁵¹ Some of the survey questions will be adapted from the PD's previous research examining health information needs and practices³⁷, the National Cancer Institute's Health Information National Trends Survey⁵², and other published survey items on the information needs and practices of marginalized populations^{42,53}. Data collected using the survey will not only include SDOH-related information needs and practices, but also sociodemographic data, questions regarding attitudes and beliefs about public libraries and other community institutions, questions regarding technology ownership and use, barriers to information access, information source preferences, and social support measures. The survey will be available in print and web-based (mobile-friendly) and administered using Qualtrics software. Upon completion of the survey, participants will have the option to enter a drawing to receive one of seventy-five \$30 gift cards.

Content validity of the survey is present because it will be composed primarily of questions/measures which were verified in previous studies published in peer-reviewed journals and surveys that have questions that are well-established measures for assessing SDOH-related information.⁵²

- **Analyze survey data, summarize findings, and report back to the advisory board and community partners**
The PD and the RA will both separately conduct a descriptive analysis of survey data, and multivariate logistic regression analyses to determine potential correlates of SDOH-related information practices and accessibility. These analyses will be conducted using SPSS v29. The analyses of the PD and RA will then be compared to ensure that they have the same results to ensure inter-rater reliability. These findings will set the foundation for the development of the interview guide that will be used during Phase 2 of the study.

Phase 2: Sequential explanatory interview data collection and analysis (March 2024-October 2024: 7 months)

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted by the PD with n=20 of the survey respondents to help explain and elaborate on findings from the survey conducted during Phase 1 of the study; specifically, how and why formerly incarcerated individuals engage in certain SDOH-related information practices. This is a sequential, explanatory research design. A sequential explanatory design is when a research first collects and analyzes quantitative data and then collects qualitative data to elaborate on and clarify results from the quantitative data analysis.⁵⁴ This design was chosen to help enhance our understanding of the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals by providing them the opportunity to provide context that cannot be captured by quantitative survey data alone. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to adjust their questions based on the responses of interviewees, which can help the interviewer collect more comprehensive and rich data. The benefit of this method is that interviewers can have participants elaborate on their responses or clarify something that is unclear; creating new questions to reveal new data.⁵⁵ Semi-structured interviews were also selected as a method because it is useful for eliciting the attitudes, actions and experiences of participants by allowing them to respond in their own terms to open-ended questions. The semi-structured interviews will include a standard set of guiding questions that are informed by intersectionality theory and theoretical models of information behavior/seeking. Participants will be asked about their experiences of SDOH-related information acquisition (i.e., seeking/receiving/incidental encountering), sharing, creation and use. They will also be asked to discuss their perception of how their identities impact their access to information and services, and how they perceive their identities may shape their information practices. The analysis and triangulation of this data together with Phase 1 data will help our understanding of the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals, which is critical for the design of the re-entry planning guide and the development of evidence based recommendations for public libraries seeking to enhance their capacity to work with this population and other community partners to better address the needs and practices identified through analysis of data. Major activities include:

- **Convene the advisory board** for a virtual half-day meeting to report findings from Phase 1 of the study and to gather feedback on the preliminary interview guide. The PD will continue visits to community partner organizations.
- **Conduct 1.5-hour semi-structured interviews with 20 formerly incarcerated individuals who completed the survey during Phase 1 of the project** The PD will be conduct interviews with a purposive sample of individuals representing various sub demographics to gain a better understanding of how their different intersecting identities may make them vulnerable for mistreatment by and within institutions, and how those intersecting stigmas affect their SDOH-related information needs and practices. The purposive sampling plans at present are to recruit n=5 participants who identify as a trans or cisgender woman, n=5 participants who identify as a trans or cisgender man, n=5 participants who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or same gender loving, and n=5 individuals who self-report having a chronic illness or disease. The project team will draw on findings from the survey about the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals to develop an interview guide. Additional interview questions may come from the community advisory board and/or the community partners. Participants will have the option of completing the interviews virtually or face-to-face based on their level of comfort, and to enhance

their privacy. The GSRA will take notes during the interviews, and interviews will be audiorecorded. Each participant who completes an interview will be offered compensation of a \$30 gift card.

- **Analyze data from Phase 2 interviews and report back to community advisory board** The PD and GSRA will analyze the interview data thematically using grounded theory methodologies (e.g., line-by-line coding, focused coding, and the constant comparative method).^{56,57} Data will be analyzed using QSR NVivo 12 for coding. Member checking, also known as respondent verification, will be used as a strategy to ensure the validity of the research findings. The PD and GSRA will generate a one-page bulleted list of notes summarizing the key ideas and feelings expressed during each interview and send it to each participant to verify that the data was not misinterpreted or misrepresented. Participants will be given the opportunity to schedule a follow-up interview to provide clarification on anything they feel may be misrepresented. These findings will be triangulated with the findings from Phase 1 of the project. Findings from both phases of the study will establish the foundation of re-entry planning guide and the development of evidence-based recommendations for public libraries seeking to enhance their capacity to work with this population and other community partners to better address the needs and practices identified through analysis of data.
- **Empirical model development** the PD will use the research findings from Phases 1 and 2 to develop an empirical model describing the SDOH-related information worlds, needs, and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. The model will be shared with members of the community advisory board who have experience conducting rigorous research and developing empirical models for feedback (e.g., Dr. Beth St. Jean, Dr. Camille Quinn, and Dr. Karen Wang)
- **Develop manuscripts for publication** based on findings from Phases 1-2 of the study. The manuscripts will be submitted for review and open-access publication in leading LIS journals (e.g., JASIST, Library Quarterly).
- **Develop and submit abstracts for presentations as professional conference** based on findings from Phases 1-2 of the study. The abstracts will be submitted for review at conferences interested in SDOH and research with formerly incarcerated populations (e.g., American Public Health Association, National Association of Social Workers)

Phase 3: Interview data collection and analysis (November 2024-May 2025: 6 months)

During Phase 3 of the study, the PD and the GSRA will work closely with the Library of Michigan, The Library Network, and the community advisory board to investigate how public libraries have *previously* supported individuals in their communities navigate reentry after experiencing incarceration and identify the *professional development* needs and experiences of public library staff addressing the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals through the creation and provision of resources, services, and programming. This phase of the study will produce rich qualitative interview data that will be essential for the development of evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and effective practices for public library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals. Major activities include:

- **Convene community advisory board** for a virtual 1.5-hour meeting to discuss recruitment strategies for reaching out to public library staff located in rural, urban, and suburban areas across the state of Michigan, and to discuss and receive feedback on a preliminary interview guide.
- **Conduct 1.5-hour semi-structured interviews with n=40 public library staff working at public libraries that are part of the eleven (11) public library cooperatives in the state of Michigan**^{58,59} In the state of Michigan, public library cooperatives provider member libraries with “access to resource sharing, library development and training.” Public library cooperatives submit plans for library services to the Library of Michigan and describe the “means and agencies by which the services will be provided. The PD will conduct virtual and in-person semi-structured interviews that will focus on the extent to which public libraries *currently identify and reach out* to formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and *collaborate with formerly incarcerated individuals and staff at community-based organizations and government entities* to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals? The GSRA will take notes during the interview, and the interviews will be audiorecorded. Interview questions will also focus on illuminating the training, if any, that public library staff have received to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, as well as explore the critical elements of a *training program and toolkit* for library staff to address the SDOH-related information needs of formerly incarcerated individuals. As mentioned in the Project Justification section, this project, and especially the results of Phase 3 of this project, will fill a critical gap in professional practice. Based on preliminary conversations with members of the target groups prior to the submission of the preliminary proposal, the PD learned that there is no formal relationship between public libraries (namely the Library of Michigan, and public libraries part the of public library cooperatives across the state) and the Michigan Department of Corrections, and there is no state-wide re-entry planning guide. There is little knowledge and data regarding the how public libraries in Michigan have previous supported formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and even less is known about the professional development and training needs of

public library staff seeking to improve the resources, programming and services that help meet the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. Each participant who completes an interview will be compensated with a \$30 gift card.

- **Analyze data from Phase 3 interviews and report back to the community advisory board** The PD and the GSRA will analyze interview data thematically using ground theory methodologies (e.g., line-by-line coding, focused coding, and the constant comparative method).^{56,57} Data will be analyzed using QSR NVivo 12 for coding. Member checking, also known as respondent verification, will be used as a strategy to ensure the validity of the research findings. The PD and GSRA will generate a one-page bulleted list of notes summarizing the key ideas and feelings expressed during each interview and send it to each participant to verify that the data was not misinterpreted or misrepresented. Participants will be given the opportunity to schedule a follow-up interview to provide clarification on anything they feel may be misrepresented. These findings will be central to the development of evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and best practices for public library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals. The findings will be discussed with the community advisory board and community partners in-person and virtually.

Phase 4: Designing and refining resources (June 2025-December 2025: 6 months)

The project team will host virtual 1-hour community design workshops to bring together members of the target groups: public library staff, formerly incarcerated individuals, and community-based organizations to co-develop a reentry planning guide. Six (6) groups, each with five attendees, will be brought together to share key re-entry resources that should be included in the reentry planning guide. The primary data collected during Phases 1-3 will be summarized by the PD and GSRA and shared with participants of the community design workshop to help guide the sessions. The community design workshops will also cultivate relationships between the target groups by bringing them together to co-create the reentry planning guide. The PD and GSRA will use the primary data collected during Phases 1-3 of the project to develop the evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and best practices for public library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals. The drafts of these materials will be shared with the community advisory board and research participants to gather feedback and will be revised and then finalized in preparation for their dissemination during Phase 5. Major activities include:

- **Conduct 1-hour community design workshops with n=30 members of the target groups** to co-develop a reentry planning guide. The community design workshops will be guided by findings from Phases 1-3 of the study. Each participant completes the community design workshop will be offered compensation of a \$30 gift card. The workshops will be audiorecorded and transcribed. The PD and GSRA will take comprehensive notes during the workshops and will use the data collected to develop an online, open access re-entry planning guide for formerly incarcerated individuals in the state of Michigan.
- **Resource design** Drawing on findings from phases 1-3 of the study, the PD and GSRA will complete initial drafts of the evidence-based recommendations and the reentry planning guide.
- **Convene the community advisory board** for a half-day meeting to gather feedback about the content and format of the evidence-based recommendations and reentry planning guide.
- **Obtain written feedback from the community partners** on the initial drafts of the evidence-based recommendations and the reentry planning guide.
- **Share work in progress and research findings** with research participants via email distribution and presentations at PLA, ALISE, and ASIS&T annual meetings/conferences.
- **Review feedback and finalize the evidence-based recommendations** The PD and GSRA will revise the evidence-based recommendations and reentry planning guide based on the feedback received from the community advisory board and the community partners.

Phase 5: Dissemination of research and professional practice resources (January 2026-July 2026: 6 months)

The project team will publish and disseminate a re-entry planning guide, the evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and the evidence-based recommendations for library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals. The evidence-based recommendations will be disseminated in the form of a written guide. All the materials will be made publicly available using the following methods:

- **Publish resources on the project website** The part-time RA will publish the resources on the project website, which will be hosted by the University of Michigan. The RA will also design infographics depicting key findings of the project and share links to the project resources via social media.
- **Share resources with community advisory board, community partners, and research participants** The PD will share copies of the evidence-based recommendations, reentry planning guide, and the empirical model of the SDOH-related information practices and needs of formerly incarcerated individuals.
- **Publish research in LIS journals:** the project team and select members of the community advisory board will co-author an article about the research design/ methodology used for this project. It will be submitted for review to a leading LIS journal. A second article will be drafted and submitted about approaches to public library collaboration across sectors to better address the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. The article will be submitted to a leading LIS journal.
- **Present research at community meetings and conferences** The PD and GSRA will present the project findings at meetings, conferences, and events where members of the target group are present and well-presented, including the organizations for which community advisory board members work and those hosted by the community partners.
- **Host interactive webinars** The PD will host interactive webinars for public librarians nation-wide who are interested in enhancing their capacity to better support formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities. The webinars will be hosted by UMSI and other national organizations to ensure that the project results reach a broad audience. Webinars will be promoted on ALA Connect, national listservs, and social media.

Project Personnel Planning, Executing and Managing the Project:

(PD): Building on her research agenda, Dr. Megan Threats will lead and facilitate the data collection, analysis, and dissemination of findings in close collaboration and through iterative consultation with the community advisory board, community partners, and graduate student research assistants. She has extensive experience conducting mixed methods and qualitative, community-based participatory research on health information practices, consumer health informatics, and social/structural determinants of health and information disparities among historically marginalized communities. She has also experience working in public, legal, academic, and medical libraries. She has shared her award-winning research at numerous academic/professional conferences including ASIS&T, iConference, ALISE, MLA, ALA and through articles in leading publication venues such as the Journal of Medical Internet Research, Health Education & Behavior, and Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities. This project supports her long-term goal of advancing information practices theory and the development of theory-informed programs, information tools, and policies to support the health of marginalized populations. Research will constitute more than 50% of the PD's position during the academic year. She will be supported by research assistants, and by a course release during the fall semester of the first year of the grant. She will be supported with one month of summer salary during the 2nd and 3rd years of the grant project.

GRAs: A UMSI PhD student and an hourly UMSI Master's Student will assist the PD and receive mentorship from the PD on community relationship building, data collection, analysis, and writing scholarly publications. The UMSI Master's Student will help create and maintain the study website, develop study recruitment materials, help recruit study participants, and create infographics depicting key findings of the project. The UMSI PhD student will aid in recruiting research participants, the design of data collection instruments, arranging interviews, taking notes during interviews and community design workshops, and the analysis of data. The UMSI PhD student will also travel with the PD to present the findings at national academic and professional conferences. The UMSI PhD student will receive a stipend and tuition support. The UMSI Master's student will be part-time and paid hourly.

Community Advisory Board: The community advisory board is comprised of scholars and practitioners with expertise in public libraries, health information practices and community-based participatory research, and working to improve the health of formerly incarcerated individuals. The board is composed of individuals who have been incarcerated or have incarcerated and formerly incarcerated family members, and organizations that consist primarily of or work with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. The board will ensure the rigor and overall quality of the project by 1) providing iterative feedback on the study design, data collection instruments, data analysis, and refinement of the project results (i.e., evidence-based recommendations, re-entry planning guide, and empirical model); 2) help with recruiting research participants, promoting the project, and dissemination of study findings to a national and local audience; 3) participate in quarterly meetings with project team; and 4) provide guidance on issues or difficulties that may arise over the course of the grant. Board members will be compensated \$150 per meeting. The PD has obtained commitments from: Anne de Irala, Community Services Coordinator, Jackson District Library; Beth St. Jean, Associate Professor, University of Maryland College of Information Studies; Camille Quinn, Associate Professor, University of Michigan School of Social Work; Chuck Warpehoski, Program Director, Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration; Karen Wang, Assistant Professor, Yale School of Medicine; Karren Rish, Library Grants Coordinator, Library of Michigan; Michele Howard, Library Director, Traverse Area District Library; Steven Bowers, Executive Director, The Library Network; Amelia Gibson, Associate Professor, University of Maryland College of

Information Studies; Kyle Kaminski, Offender Success Administrator, Michigan Department of Corrections, Offender Success Program.

Community Partners: The community partners represent the key target groups of the proposed project. The PD has obtained commitments (Supporting Doc2) from the following organizations whose representatives are each members of the community advisory board: [Michigan Department of Corrections, Offender Success Program](#); [Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration](#); [Library of Michigan](#); and [The Library Network](#). The PD will enlist the help of their organizations to: 1) spread the word about the study; 2) recruit study participants; 3) share and publicize the study findings within their organizations and through their respective organization websites and social media channels; and 4) meet with the PD to periodically provide feedback on the data collection instruments, data analysis, and project results, and 5) assist in the design and dissemination of project results (i.e., evidence-based recommendations, re-entry planning guide, and empirical model). The PD will make three trips to each community partner organization during year 1, and quarterly trips during years 2 and 3.

Diversity Plan: Given that this project is geared toward enhancing the capacity of public libraries to better serve the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals, a population that is disproportionately Black, Latino, economically disadvantaged, and with a higher burden of chronic illnesses and conditions in comparison to the general population, and understudied in the field of library and information science, it helps to expand the field's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by expanding our reach to serve historically marginalized and under-resourced communities. The project uses CBPR which includes the involvement of the target groups in defining the study's focus and objectives, the refinement and dissemination of the research results, and providing critical knowledge that will benefit researchers and practitioners. (See Project Work Plan) This study is unique in that it leads with investigating the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals *before* developing training mechanisms for public library staff to enhance their planning and delivery of library services, resources, and programs to support formerly incarcerated individuals navigating reentry. This project provides opportunities for public library staff to build relationships with formerly incarcerated individuals while serving on the community advisory board and co-creating a reentry planning guide during community design workshops. The PD is a Black woman who was a first-generation college student, grew up economically disadvantaged, and has family members who are currently and formerly incarcerated. The community advisory board is diverse in terms of race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability, national origin, native language, education level, past incarceration status, and socioeconomic status. This accounts for multiple perspectives and aids in bias control.

Project Results: The proposed project aims to expand our understanding of how public libraries can work with community partners to better support the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals. It addresses a nation-wide need to enhance our support of the health and wellbeing of formerly incarcerated individuals in our communities, by bolstering the skills and leveraging the roles public libraries can play as community partners and stakeholders to advance health equity among this underserved population. In the U.S. there have been efforts to expand library resources, services, and programming for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. However, these efforts have mainly focused solely on the libraries, without first asking formerly incarcerated individuals what their primary needs are while navigating re-entry and ensuring that their experiences and expertise are incorporated into the design of resources, programming, and services provided by public libraries. The proposed project will result in an empirical model of the SDOH-related information needs and practices of formerly incarcerated individuals that can be used nationally by staff and administrators at public libraries, community organizations, government offices, healthcare organizations, and academic researchers interested in designing resources, programs, and services to support reentry among formerly incarcerated individuals. The research approach used by the PD to structure and implement this project will be published in referred journals within the domains of libraries, information science, and public health. This approach can be adopted by other researchers seeking to gain a better understanding of the health information needs and practices of marginalized communities. The reentry planning guide for the state of Michigan will be disseminated to all public libraries across the state via The Library of Michigan and The Library Network. The guide may serve as a blueprint to other states seeking to develop and/or update reentry planning guides for their geographic region. The research team will develop evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and evidence-based recommendations for library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals. The results will be published as an open education resource on our study website, disseminated by our community partners, presented and published in the professional conference proceedings of ASIS&T, PLA, ALISE, MLA, APHA, shared via social media platforms, presented in webinars, and shared via a final report to IMLS. The PD will ensure the dissemination and availability of the project results after the end of the grant period by maintaining the study website, providing print copies upon request to library practitioners, depositing it in an institutional repository, and making sure that all project outputs (e.g., links to published articles) are kept up-to-date and posted to the website.

Schedule of Completion

YEAR 1: 08/01/2023 – 07/31/2024

Activity (organized by phases)	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
Phase 1: Relationship building and survey data collection and analysis												
University of Michigan IRB approval	◇											
NIH Certificate of Confidentiality	◇											
Hire and onboard GSRA	◇	◇										
Hire and onboard RA	◇	◇										
Convene community advisory board		◇										
Design survey; recruit survey participants and disseminate survey among formerly incarcerated individuals		◇	◇	◇	◇							
Visit community partner sites			◇									
Analyze Phase 1 Data						◇	◇					
Convene community advisory board							◇					
Phase 2: Sequential explanatory interview data collection and analysis												
Design interview guide and convene community advisory board								◇				
Visit community partner sites									◇			
Semi-structured interviews with Phase 1 survey participants									◇	◇		
Analyze Phase 2 Data											◇	◇

Year 3: 08/01/2025 – 07/31/2026

Activity (organized by phases)	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
Phase 4: Designing and refining resources												
Resource design	◇	◇	◇									
Convene community advisory board/visit community partner sites			◇									
Written feedback from community partners			◇									
Share work in progress and present research findings at national and international professional conferences with GSRA			◇	◇								
Review feedback and finalize evidence-based recommendations				◇	◇							
Phase 5: Dissemination of research and professional practice resources												
Publish resources on project website						◇						
Share resources with community advisory board, community partners, and research participants						◇	◇					
Draft and submit two scholarly articles for publication							◇	◇	◇			
Present research at community meetings and local conferences									◇	◇		
Host interactive webinars										◇		
Final report to IMLS										◇	◇	◇

Digital Products Plan

Type: The project team will produce the following digital products: 1) an open-access project website hosted by the University of Michigan School of Information (UMSI); 2) recruitment flyers for the study, available as .pdf, .jpeg and .png files; 3) a web-based survey, including an eligibility screener and informed consent form and the main survey instrument using Qualtrics software, the survey can be output as .csv or .xlsx (Excel) files, and the instrument will be available as a .pdf and/or .doc (Word) files; 4) an online re-entry planning guide, the final version will be published as a.pdf file on the project website and disseminated via social media and listservs, working drafts of the guide will be circulated using the Google docs platform to support anonymous and/or name user notes; 5) infographics depicting key study findings will be available as .jpeg, .png, and PDF files and posted on the study website, websites of the community partners, and on social media; 6) the evidence-based recommendations as described in the Narrative will be published as an online education report, the final version will be published as a.pdf file on the project website and disseminated via social media and listservs, working drafts of the guide will be circulated using the Google docs platform to support anonymous and/or name user notes; 7) interview guides, the final versions will be published as a .pdf file on the project website, working drafts of the guide will be circulated using the Google docs platform to support anonymous and/or name user notes; 8) online progress reports, the reports will be available for download as .pdf or .doc files for members of the community advisory board, UMSI Research and Finance offices; 9) slide decks highlighting the project progress and preliminary findings will be circulated using the Google slides platform, and available as .ppt files for community partners and members of the community advisory board; 10) webinar using Zoom account hosted by the University of Michigan, will be recorded and posted to the project website, the UMSI website, and shared via the UMSI social media channels; 11) a final report to IMLS will be available for IMLS staff and UMSI Research Office staff as a .pdf file 12) audio files (mpeg and .mp4) and transcripts (.txt and .doc files) will be generated from the interviews and community design workshops (60 interviews in total and 6 community design workshops in total); 13) scholarly manuscripts, including peer reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and oral/poster presentations will be produced and available as .pdf, .doc, .ppt and .jpeg/.png files (the goal is four scholarly manuscripts and three-six oral/poster presentations).

The project team will use hardware and software provided by UMSI. The PD, GSRA, and RA will be using workstations provided by the UMSI. Survey data will be analyzed using SPSS v29, and transcripts resulting from the interviews and community design workshops will be analyzed using NVivo software by the PD and GSRA. The PD will use an automated transcription service, such as Rev, to transcribe interviews. The PD will work with UMSI's [Security Unit Liaisons](#), Charles Yun and John Lockard, to select an automated transcription service that meets the responsibilities outlined in the University of Michigan's [Third Party Vendor Security & Compliance \(DS-20\)](#). The PD will review transcripts for accuracy.

Availability: The project team will make every effort to ensure that our digital products are widely available and promoted to the public as described in the Project Narrative. Early/preliminary iterations of some the digital products (i.e. recruitment materials, data collection instruments, evidence-based recommendations, reentry planning guide) will be made available to the community advisory board during the research study to collect iterative feedback and to ensure the rigor and quality of the research projects and its intended outcomes. Many of the digital products will be available on the open-access project website hosted by UMSI. The website will be mobile-friendly/optimized and accessible on web browsers. The website will feature HTML web pages; downloadable .pdf, .jpeg, and .png files; and links to external websites. During the grant project period, the website will be updated and maintained by the RA every month. The general public will be provided with contact information to report any broken links or inaccessible files/webpages. The website will be hosted on University of Michigan servers, and will be maintained by the PD even after the end of the grant period. All digital products on the project website will be available in perpetuity on the website. The PD and RA will consult the University of Michigan Library's [research guide on digital accessibility](#) and the Accessibility Strategist and Librarian for Disability Studies, Stephanie Rosen, to ensure that the open access website and its content can be accessed by a diverse audience.

The PD will make every effort to publish open-access scholarly manuscripts via peer reviewed journal articles in leading LIS journals and professional/academic conference venues. The project budget includes allocations for open-access publishing fees. If the manuscripts are published in commercial venues (e.g., Taylor & Francis, Elsevier), preprints will be archived and made available to the general public as .pdf files on the project's website and deposited in Deep Blue Documents, one of the University of Michigan's institutional repositories. The manuscripts will be searchable and viewable by anyone with access to a web browser. This will allow the public to access the research findings even if there is an embargo period imposed by the journals in which the articles are published.

Access: Given that one of the target groups being investigated in this research project is formerly incarcerated individuals, a population that has historically been vulnerable for mistreatment by and within institutions, the PD has planned to take as many precautions as possible to address the privacy and cultural sensitivities associated with the data collection. The PD will seek approval from the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board (IRB). The PD will also seek a certificate of confidentiality to protect the privacy of research participants which prohibits the disclosure of identifiable, sensitive research information to anyone not connected to the research except when the participant consents; this includes federal, state, or civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceedings. This may help to mitigate concerns from participants who are distrustful of researchers and institutions by ensuring them that the PD is taking all measures possible to minimize their risk of participating in this study and to ensure the privacy of participants. The PD has prior success obtaining IRBs and CoCs for research with vulnerable/marginalized populations, and does not expect the process to be difficult. Raw survey, interview, and community design workshop data (including notes and memos generated during analysis) will be kept confidential, with responses labeled by a unique identification number in password secured files on UMSI servers and UMSI computers, and on the secure University of Michigan Google Drive site. This data will not be publicly available. It will only be available to the PD, GSRA, and RA. Audio recordings of interviews and community design workshops will be destroyed after transcription. Participant names will not be identified in any presentations, written reports, or scholarly manuscripts. Pseudonyms will be used in the case that a direct quote from interview, survey, or community design workshop data is used in any presentations, reports, or scholarly manuscripts. The personally identifiable information of participants will be coded using a unique identification number. Identifiers will be stored separate from the research data.

The PD will retain the copyright over the data and publications through the end of the project. Pre-prints of scholarly manuscripts will be archived and deposited in Deep Blue Documents. The data collection instruments, re-entry planning guide, and the open education report containing the evidence-based recommendations for developing a toolkit and training materials for public library staff seeking to better serve formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities, and evidence-based recommendations for library staff collaboration across sectors to enhance services, programming, and resources for formerly incarcerated individuals will be freely accessible and available for use by the public under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivates 4.0 License \(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0\)](#).

Sustainability: As detailed in other sections of this plan and the Narrative, the PD has carefully considered how the digital products of this project will be maintained and preserved during and after the end of the grant period. The research outputs will be archived and deposited in Deep Blue Documents, and published to the project website which will be maintained by the RA during the grant, and by the PD after the grant. The PD will review the website every 3 months to ensure that it is kept up-to-date. Research outputs (e.g., re-entry planning guide, open education report) will also be available on the websites of the community partners. Community partners will maintain and update the re-entry planning following the end of the grant period in collaboration with the PD. The digital products on the project website will remain even if the PD is employed at a different institution at the end of the grant period. The raw data from the study will be destroyed and removed from University of Michigan servers and University of Michigan Google Drive within 5 years after the end of the study.

Data Management Plan

Data Collection, Storage, Protection, Access & Sharing

We will collect the following types of data:

- Survey data: including informed consent, self-reported sociodemographic and behavioral data collected from an anticipated 650 participants, generating one data set. Survey data will be collected from October-December 2023. Anticipated analysis of survey data is scheduled for June-August 2024. Research participants who complete the survey and wish to be compensated will have the opportunity to enter a raffle to receive a gift card. Their names and contact information (email and/or phone number) will be collected. This data will be stored separately from the survey data set and kept in password-protected/encrypted files. Data will be collected using Qualtrics software and the raw data will be exported as .csv and .xlsx (Excel) files. IP addresses will not be collected by Qualtrics. A paper-based survey will be distributed at community partner sites, for respondents who don't have access to the technology or Internet necessary to complete the survey online. The paper-based survey will be in a stamped, postage-prepaid envelope addressed to project director's (PD) institutional address. Given that some of the data collected in the survey will be sensitive (i.e., past incarceration history, past experiences interacting with healthcare, government, and library institutions), the PD will take precaution to ensure that this data is kept confidential. Each survey respondent will receive a unique identification number and the identification numbers will be stored separately from the survey respondent's identifiers. All raw survey data and identifiers will be kept in password-protected/encrypted files on UMSI servers and UMSI computers. Completed paper-based surveys will be kept in a locked cabinet in the PD's office until they are exported into the larger digital data set. Paper-based surveys will be destroyed immediately following their digitization. In accordance with the [University of Michigan IT Services Safe Computing Guidelines for safely protecting and using sensitive data](#), only the PD and graduate student research assistant (GSRA) will have access to the raw data during the grant period. The GSRA will no longer be able to access the data at the conclusion of the project. Security software is installed on all UMSI computers and will be regularly updated on all devices used during the project. Raw data will not be available to the public for re-use, redistribution, or production of derivatives. Only the data collection instruments, research methods/study design, and research findings such as the empirical model, and scholarly manuscripts will be made available after data analysis to ensure widespread dissemination of research, and provide other scholars and practitioners with a blueprint for conducting research similar in nature. These outputs will be archived and made available for public access on the project's website and in Deep Blue Documents, a University of Michigan repository in perpetuity. The University of Michigan will impose no condition on access and materials will be available for use by the public under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivates 4.0 License \(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0\)](#). The research outputs will be available as either .pdf files and/or HTML documents, using free applications such as Adobe Reader. The raw data from the study will be destroyed and removed from University of Michigan servers and computers within 5 years after the end of the study.
- Semi-structured interviews and community design workshop data: including informed consent, transcripts and audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews and community design workshops; notes taken during both data collection activities by the PD and GSRA; codebooks and memos generated during data analysis. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the first target population (i.e., formerly incarcerated individuals) from April-May 2024. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the second target population (i.e., public library staff) from January-March 2025. Community design workshops will be conducted from June-July 2025. Anticipated analysis of the first set of semi-structured interview data is scheduled for June-August 2024. Anticipated analysis of the second set of semi-structured interview data is scheduled for March-May 2025. Community design workshop data will be analyzed from August-October 2025. Audio recordings from the interviews and community design workshops will be stored as mpeg, mp3 files on the digital voice recorders of the project team, and then transferred to a secure UMSI server. All files will be password-protected/encrypted, and only opened on UMSI computers. The personally identifiable information of participants will be coded using a unique identification number. Identifiers will be stored separate from the raw data/transcripts. The PD will work with UMSI's [Security Unit Liaisons](#), Charles Yun and John Lockard, to select an automated third party transcription service that meets the responsibilities outlined in the University of Michigan's [Third Party Vendor Security & Compliance \(DS-20\)](#). Pseudonyms will be used in the case that a direct quote from an interview or community design workshop data is used in any presentations, reports, or scholarly manuscripts. Any hand-written notes taken by the research team during these data collection activities will be kept in a locked drawer at the University of Michigan until they are destroyed. Security software is installed on all UMSI computers and will be regularly updated on all devices used during the project. Raw data will not be available to the public for re-use, redistribution, or production of derivatives. Only the data collection instruments (i.e., interview guide/community design workshop guides), research methods/study design, and research findings such as the

empirical model, and scholarly manuscripts will be made available after data analysis to ensure widespread dissemination of research, and provide other scholars and practitioners with a blueprint for conducting research similar in nature. These outputs will be archived and made available for public access on the project's website and in Deep Blue Documents, a University of Michigan repository in perpetuity. The University of Michigan will impose no condition on access and materials will be available for use by the public under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivates 4.0 License \(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0\)](#). The research outputs will be available as either .pdf files and/or HTML documents, using free applications such as Adobe Reader. The raw data from the study will be destroyed and removed from University of Michigan servers and computers within 5 years after the end of the study.

Data Management Plan Review: This plan will be reviewed at minimum twice per year by the PD. The PD will meet with the UMSP's Security Liaisons every year to ensure that the information assets of the project are protected, and that she and the research team are operating in compliance with [University of Michigan Research Ethics & Compliance office](#). She will review and discuss the data management plan with the GSRA and RA during their onboarding, and will ensure that the plan is followed and understood before and after each data collection/analysis phase is implemented. This plan was completed in consultation with the [University of Michigan Library's Research Data Services](#). The PD will continue to consult this service as needed over the span of the grant-period.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF INFORMATION (UMSI)

Mission Statement of the School of Information (Excerpts): The School of Information (UMSI) delivers the highest quality professional and doctoral education to students who seek careers as educators, researchers, senior administrators, librarians, archivists, digital curators, human-computer interface specialists, and information system developers in both traditional and new settings. Our mission is to “create knowledge so people can use information and technology to build a better world. We educate socially engaged information professionals.” UMSI’s research and instructional programs have a strong component of engagement with diverse communities: private enterprises, not-for-profit institutions, libraries, archives, and museums to address the pressing social and technological needs surrounding digital data management access and use. UMSI's aim is to integrate research and practice via partnerships to enrich both the theory and professional work in the information and library professions.

Organizational Authority: The School of Information is one of 19 schools and colleges at the University of Michigan and is established as an independent organization within the University by Regental By-Law (6.05). Management of the affairs of the School is placed in the governing faculty and dean. UMSI controls the intellectual content of its curriculum, the selection and promotion of its faculty, and the selection of its students. UMSI reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The University provides infrastructure for administrative support systems. The University provides financial support through an annual general-fund appropriation and one-time funds.

Service Area and Levels of Service: UMSI offers a Bachelor of Science in Informatics (BSI), Master of Science in Information (MSI), Ph.D. degrees and a full, online master’s program in applied data science (MADS). We also co-sponsor in a Master’s of Health Informatics (MHI) degree and certificate with the School of Public Health, which began in 2012. As of the Winter 2023 term, the school enrolled approximately 340 undergraduate BSI students, 1220 Masters Students and 133 doctoral students. As of the Fall 2022 term, UMSI has 74 core faculty and approximately 85 staff members. The Master of Science in Information program at University of Michigan School of Information is accredited by the American Library Association Committee on Accreditation, with the status of Continued accreditation. The next comprehensive review visit is scheduled for Spring 2024.

History: The school began in 1926 as the Department of Library Science in the College of Literature, Arts, and Sciences, offering a bachelor’s degree. In 1948, the department ended its undergraduate program, substituting master’s and Ph.D. degrees. In 1969, the department of library science gained independence and became the School of Library Science. The name was changed in 1986 to the School of Information and Library Science. In 1996, the school was rechartered by the University of Michigan Board of Regents as the School of Information.