***SAADA Summit:* A national convening to amplify South Asian American voices in libraries and archives**

SAADA seeks an 18-month, $150,000 forum grant from IMLS to plan and host the inaugural ***SAADA Summit,*** a national forum that will bring together young South Asian Americans (ages 16 to 25) interested in libraries, archives, and museums (LAM) professions ("Emerging Archivists") and current South Asian American LAM professionals ("Mentor Archivists") to take part in a series of discussions and roundtables centered on LAM career paths and community archiving work. In alignment with LB21's **Goal 1, Objective 1.1**, the SAADA Summit will diversify the libraries and information science workforce by inspiring interest in young people and spreading awareness about the ways in which librarians and archivists contribute to the preservation and sharing of cultural knowledge. Following the inaugural Summit, we will conduct focus groups with Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists, and explore how to scale the forum into a financially sustainable annual or biennial event.

Project Justification

In 2022, 86% of librarians and 88% of archivists in the United States were white.[1] A similarly recent survey showed that only 3.7% of librarians and 3.6% of archivists are Asian American—about half their proportion of the general population.[2] **Why do so few young people of color become archivists or librarians?** Several explanations have been proposed:

- libraries and archives are often perceived as a "hegemonic" cultural environment;[3, 4]
- diversity initiatives, while well-intentioned, often invite professionals of color into prevailing structures as "participants" instead of valuing their perspectives;[5]
- stories from communities of color are rarely prioritized in most library and archival collections.[6]

One thing is certain: the lack of diversity in libraries and archives professions have made it harder to attract diverse users or create programming that meets service communities' needs. Our own experience has informed us that South Asian communities, the fastest-growing immigrant group in the U.S., rarely have their information needs met. In May 2023, SAADA and the Edison Township Public Library (NJ) hosted a panel discussion event, "Bringing South Asian Communities Together At Your Library," where it came to light that despite being home to over 40,000 South Asian residents,[7] more than 30% of the city's population, Edison's public library has almost no staff with competency in South Asian languages and cultures. The library's director, Allan Kleiman, has tried to recruit more South

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[1] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022.
[2] A*CENSUS Survey, 2021.
[3] Andrea Galvan, "Soliciting Performance, Hiding Bias: Whiteness and Librarianship," *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*, published June 3, 2015.
[4] Gonzalez-Smith, Swanson, & Tanaka, "Unpacking Identity: Racial, Ethnic, and Professional Identity and Academic Librarians of Color," in *The librarian stereotype: Deconstructing perceptions and presentations of information work*.
[5] Kung, Janice, Fraser, K-Lee, and Winn, Dee. "Diversity Initiatives to Recruit and Retain Academic Librarians: A Systematic Review" *College & Research Libraries*, vol. 81, no. 1 (8 January 2020).
[6] Nancy Liliana Godoy, "Community-Driven Archives: *Conocimiento,* Healing, and Justice" (*Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2021), p. 1.
[7] Alton Wang, "Nearly Half of Residents in Edison Are Asian," *AAPI Data*, published 2 November 2017.

Asian staff librarians, but there are simply not enough qualified candidates. [**Note:** Allan Kleiman has written a letter of support for the SAADA Summit.]

A second issue of concern is that information professionals of color are less likely to remain in the field long-term than their white colleagues.[8] Moreover, librarians and archivists of color often feel frustrated and limited by their roles at dominant institutions. The British Columbia Library Association has identified several reasons for this disparity: [9]

- librarians and archivists of color experience a disproportionate service burden (e.g., people of color are often asked to lead diversity initiatives)
- feelings of vulnerability and exclusion at the workplace
- the perception that they are only valued for "token" contributions to diversity

Young people of color also struggle to find a sense of belonging in archives, as the stories of their communities are frequently absent from collections. A 2021 study, for instance, found that the Latinx, African American, Asian American and LGBT communities make up over 42% of Arizona's population but are only represented in 0-2% of known archival collections.[10] This also aligns with the general lack of belonging felt by BIPOC communities and particularly Asian Americans. In 2022, Asian Americans, at 29%, were least likely among all racial groups to feel they belong and are accepted in the U.S.—less than that of Black Americans (33%), Latino Americans (42%), and White Americans (62%).[11] Many times, stories from communities of color are only given sufficient attention within community-based archives such as SAADA that are specifically dedicated to documenting the histories of their own communities.

Finally, librarianship and archives have a well-documented "image problem." While most young people have been to their public library and met their own school librarian, librarians are often perceived as "gatekeepers of books" rather than dynamic information professionals. Similarly, archives are often perceived as inaccessible spaces that are the exclusive domain of specialists and academic researchers. Most young people are not familiar with the work of academic librarians, special collections librarians, digital archiving specialists, corporate librarians and archivists, or community archivists at all.

To address these issues and provide much-needed exposure to these professions, we are proposing a national forum, the **SAADA Summit**, with two primary questions in mind:

(1) How can we ensure that younger South Asian Americans are aware of the diverse range of work that happens in libraries and archives?
(2) How can existing South Asian American librarians and archivists mentor students and younger professionals while also engaging with meaningful community-based archiving work?

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[8] Juleah Swanson, Azusa Tanaka, and Isabel Gonzalez-Smith, "Lived Experience of Academic Librarians of Color," *College & Research Libraries*, vol. 79, no. 7 (1 November 2018).
[9] Ione T. Damasco and Dracine Hodges, "Tenure and Promotion Experiences of Academic Librarians of Color," *College & Research Libraries* vol.73, no. 3, 279-301.
[10] Godoy, "Community-Driven Archives: *Conocimiento,* Healing, and Justice," p. 1.
[11] The Asian American Foundation / LAAUNCH, "STTATUS Index Report 2022," May 2022.

The SAADA Summit will facilitate networking between a selected cohort of young South Asian Americans who wish to learn more about libraries and archives careers ("Emerging Archivists"), while simultaneously providing them with connections to existing professionals in the field ("Mentor Archivists"). The Summit is also intended as a South Asian American affinity space, allowing for meaningful exchanges over cultural and community-specific issues and thereby strengthening professional and community ties. Our ultimate goal is to create a fieldwide model that reframes traditional practices in diversity recruitment and hiring by emphasizing the innovative work that takes place in community archives. We believe that current professionals of color in the field should reach young aspiring minds not just through the libraries and archives that employ them, but through community archives such as SAADA that empower members from their own communities to decide what materials are preserved and what programs are needed. In addition, the Summit will showcase the interdisciplinarity of our field by inviting "non-traditional" panelists whose "field-adjacent" work would not be possible if not for libraries and archives: historians, memory workers, folklorists, filmmakers, nonprofit leaders, and even filmmakers and media creators. Such an approach is likely to not only attract young people of color into the profession, but to increase retention of current professionals.

While there are a handful of programs that exist for the purpose of training libraries and archives professionals of color—one example is the Public Library Association's Inclusive Internship Initiative, which ran a pilot program from 2017–2021 and offered library internships to high school students—the SAADA Summit distinguishes itself in several ways. We firmly believe that before receiving hands-on training through internship and fellowship programs, it is immensely beneficial for young people to first witness the scope of community archiving work through initiatives that affirm their identities, bring the stories of their communities to life, and broaden their understanding of the field. The SAADA Summit focuses on this critical, earlier stage of engagement—planting seeds of interest and inspiring those who might not yet realize the opportunities available in libraries and archives. The Summit's primary goal is not training, but to spark excitement and raise awareness among young individuals in communities significantly underrepresented in LAM professions. This "preemptive" approach seeks to **complement,** not replace existing training programs by establishing a foundational interest and comprehension that lays the groundwork for future professional growth.

Perhaps the strongest argument that the Summit will facilitate greater interest in our field is that working with SAADA has already inspired many of our volunteers and community members to consider professional paths in libraries and archives. Consider the career trajectory of Dr. Gautham Reddy, who recently completed his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago and has been the subject librarian for South Asian Studies and Religion at Emory University's Robert W. Woodruff Library since 2019. [**Note:** Dr. Gautham Reddy is the author of one of our letters of support.] At the time that Dr. Reddy began volunteering with SAADA, he was pursuing a master's degree in the history of religion. As part of his archival work for SAADA, Dr. Reddy digitized photographs from early South Asian immigrants such as Mohan Singh Sekhon, a captain in the US Army Medical Corps. Dr. Reddy worked directly with Sekhon's descendants to curate a collection that counteracts the false yet commonly believed narrative that there were no South Asians in the U.S. until the second half of the twentieth century.[12] This experience as a volunteer archivist with SAADA influenced Dr. Reddy's career path; it helped him

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[12] Sylvia Sekhon collection, digitized by Gautham Reddy for SAADA. Accessed April 30, 2023. <https://www.saada.org/donor/sylvia-sekhon>

realize that he had a genuine passion for community archives and developing digital resources about South Asian Americans. Inspired by his work at SAADA as he pursued his career as a university librarian, Dr. Reddy has even decided to create an archival collection at Emory that focuses on experiences of South Asian Americans in the American South.

Additionally, young people who have worked with SAADA regularly tell us about how impactful their volunteer experiences have been. One high school student, Kamala Gururaja, began conducting oral history interviews for SAADA when she was a 12-year-old middle school student. As of today, she has collected 21 stories for SAADA's First Days Project, our digital repository of immigrants' first experiences in the United States—more than any of our other Community Historians. Kamala's experience allowed her to build stronger ties with her own community, and even helped her earn her Girl Scout Silver Award. The fact that SAADA provided her with an affinity group where she felt a sense of belonging and personal connection to her work—the same approach we will take with the Summit— was also instrumental in her learning. Here is Kamala's reflection:

> *I learned a lot about leadership, myself, and my community through completing my project [with SAADA]. I learned to take initiative and reach out to people … By speaking and connecting with strangers, I overcame my shyness and learned to be assertive and comfortable with asking questions. Having the opportunity to have intimate conversations with South Asian immigrants about their experiences was really meaningful for me in reflecting on what it means to be a South Asian American. … It really made me think about how I stand on the shoulders of the generations of South Asian Americans before me, and how they uprooted their lives to start afresh in a new country and make a better future for their children and grandchildren.* [**Note:** Kamala Gururaja has contributed a letter of support for the Summit.]

Another young volunteer archivist whose experience with SAADA has cultivated an interest in libraries and archives careers is Sraavya Chintalapati, a fourth-year student at the University of Texas at Austin. Sraavya has transcribed several interviews in SAADA, including one with Rani Bagai, whose grandmother, Kala Bagai, was one of the first South Asian women to immigrate to the U.S. She has also conducted oral histories with community members for SAADA's First Days Project, a collection of over 700 stories from immigrants and refugees about their first days in the United States. Through these experiences, Sraavya has developed a variety of valuable skills, as well as a stronger appreciation for the diverse work that takes place in community archives such as SAADA. [**Note:** Sraavya has contributed a letter of support for the Summit.]

SAADA is ideally suited to host this forum for several reasons. First, our community-led approach and wide range of collaborations means that attendees will have access to many non-traditional perspectives. In fact, considerably more well-resourced institutional libraries and archives often seek our advice when it comes to community engagement. Harvard University's Schlesinger Library, for example, recently asked SAADA to organize a series of trainings for their staff on how to engage Asian American communities.

Second, as a widely recognized leader among community-based archives, we will be able to share our learnings from the forum with other organizations through existing networks. Sharing resources and

knowledge with other community-based archives (CBAs) and small cultural organizations has long been a top priority for SAADA. We will share what we learned from the Summit with the Community Archives Collaborative, a peer network of over 20 community archives co-created by SAADA in 2019 for the purposes of skill-sharing, discussion of best practices, and peer-to-peer mentoring in order to support the long-term sustainability and growth of CBAs. SAADA is often sought after by other archives for advice, whether through informal conversations or mentoring through the CAC. As a "standard-bearer" among CBAs, the Summit's impact is likely to be multiplicative as many other institutions in our field view us as a guiding example. [**Note:** See letter of support contributed by Joan Ilacqua, executive director of nationally known LGBTQ+ community archive The History Project.]

An additional network that SAADA will leverage in sharing Summit insights is our self-assembled research cohort of 113 small to mid-sized BIPOC cultural organizations, whom we surveyed about their experiences with institutional archives as part of a field study led by SAADA, and supported by a grant from the Wallace Foundation. Many cultural organizations serving communities of color have considered partnering with external archives to document their institutional histories, but have found that the use of 'dominant' archival methods have frequently posed structural challenges for their own communities.[13] Through the SAADA Summit, we aim to foster discussions between our nation's libraries and archives and BIPOC cultural organizations, yielding potential collaborations that aim to inspire the interest and participation of young people. Such partnerships are essential if we wish to deepen the capacity of our nation's archives and libraries to serve communities of color.

Project Work Plan

Schedule of Activities

Our 18-month project will span from August 1, 2024, to January 31, 2026, and will consist of five overlapping work phases: (1) forum planning and logistics, (2) marketing and promotion, (3) the scholarship program, (4) the SAADA Summit Forum in October 2025, and (5) evaluation and dissemination. SAADA's co-founder and Executive Director **Samip Mallick** will serve as the **Project Director**, and day-to-day activities will be carried out by SAADA's Programs Team, led by Senior Program Manager **Sreedevi Sripathy,** who will serve as the **Project Manager**. This section contains an overview of our vision for the SAADA Summit and a description of the forum's content and structure, followed by an outline of activities in each work phase of the project.

Overview

The Summit will be structured as a one-day intensive forum in New York City, with a private session the next day reserved for scholarship recipients (10 Emerging Archivists and 10 Mentor Archivists). Having all Summit participants together in the same physical space will be especially meaningful for this sort of large-scale forum. Not only will it be more impactful for each of our panelists to share their presentations with a large group, but there exists an intangible power in collective learning that takes place within members of a shared cultural community. An in-person meeting has the added advantage of fostering deeper relationships among cohort members and attendees, which cannot be replicated virtually.

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[13] Michelle Caswell, *Urgent Archives: Enacting Liberatory Memory Work*, 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2021.

The primary audiences we seek to serve through the Summit consists of the following groups in order of priority: (1) South Asian Americans between the ages of 16 and 25 interested in libraries and archives professions; (2) South Asian American current libraries and archives professionals; and (3) memory workers, archivists, educators, and other cultural storytellers. During our outreach efforts, we will prioritize reaching high school, college, and graduate students to ensure representation from younger people interested in these professions. Other members of the general public will also be able to sign up to attend the Summit, space permitting.

We plan to restrict the Summit to 100 participants in its first year. Of these 100 participants, we will ask IMLS to fund scholarships covering travel, lodging, meals, and the full registration fee for twenty (20) individuals: ten (10) *SAADA Emerging Archivists* between the ages of 16 and 25 and selected through a competitive process; and ten (10) *SAADA Mentor Archivists* who are current libraries and archives professionals. Each Emerging Archivist will be paired with a Mentor Archivist based on their own interests and professional goals.

Forum Planning and Logistics (August 2024 – October 2025)
Beginning in August 2024, SAADA will begin to research and explore venue options for the Summit. Our Programs Team will evaluate forum venues in New York City, with the goal of securing two venues: one with a capacity of 150 for the primary Summit forum event, and a smaller, more intimate venue for the second day with a capacity of 25. We will secure both venues 9 months to a year in advance of the Summit. Not only will this ensure the best pricing, but having the venue decided far in advance will enable more compelling and exciting outreach. During the final months of 2024, SAADA will also arrange a fixed-rate hotel for Summit attendees and make note of transportation options. Once the venue and accommodations are secured, we will draft and finalize the Summit schedule in preparation for outreach.

Beginning in February 2025, SAADA will identify and invite library and archives professionals, community historians, memory workers, and cultural storytellers from its network to serve as panelists for the Summit. Others will be encouraged to apply to be SAADA Mentor Archivists. SAADA has developed strong relationships over the years with a broad network of career archivists and librarians, which we will leverage to find individual mentors for Emerging Archivists. Many librarians and archivists, particularly those who are South Asian American and lacked a professional mentor themselves, have already expressed a strong desire to give back to their community by sharing their expertise with aspiring professionals. [**Note:** See letter of support from Nicolette Khan, a professional archivist at NPR.] Between May and the start of the Summit in October, SAADA will make several site visits to the selected venues to finalize logistical details such as catering and décor. We will also create a series of print and digital materials for Summit attendees to welcome them to the event.

Marketing and Promotion (January 2025 – September 2025)
Beginning in January 2025, SAADA's communications and programs staff will collaborate to design an informative and visually compelling website for the Summit. The website will be launched in April, opening registration for the Summit to the public. Alongside the launch of the website will be a large-scale, six-month marketing and outreach campaign, in which we will consistently promote the Summit through three modes:

(1) SAADA's own email newsletter, social media (with a combined readership of over 15,000), and word-of-mouth networks;

(2) Conducting outreach to teachers, school librarians, university career centers, and public librarians, who will "nominate" students who may have potential interest;

(3) Reaching out to press, blogs, and other media outlets (including those that are widely read within the South Asian American community) to promote the event.

Scholarship Application Process and Selection (February 2025 – September 2025)
By March 2025, SAADA will finalize the criteria and application process for the Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists, launching it along with the release of our Summit website in April. The application process will include questions about participants' own career goals and potential interests, as well as why they are interested in attending the *Summit* and what they hope to gain from the experience. SAADA will conduct targeted outreach to educators, librarians, and other stakeholders to identify potential applicants. The deadline for scholarship applications will be May 1, 2025.

Mentor Archivists will be selected through a streamlined invite, peer nomination, and interview process. In May and June, we will review scholarship applications and select 10 Emerging Archivists and 10 Mentor Archivists. We aim to assemble a diverse cohort with a variety of career aspirations represented among the Emerging Archivists, and a range of professional backgrounds represented among the mentors. We will ask scholarship recipients follow-up questions about what content they would like to see on the Summit's second day, which is exclusive to Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists. Prior to the Summit, we will pair Mentor Archivists with Emerging Archivists based on these interests, and facilitate a virtual one-on-one meeting between each selected pair prior to the Summit in October. We will also ask all participants to sign an agreement to adhere to SAADA's established Code of Conduct, which includes supporting SAADA's mission, cultivating an inclusive and compassionate culture, and maintaining confidentiality around all sensitive materials.

As with other SAADA initiatives, we anticipate that there will be a high level of interest in the Summit—and particularly the opportunity to become an Emerging Archivist. This year, we received 103 applications for 3 fellowship spots in our Archival Creators Fellowship Program. For applicants who were not selected as Archival Creators Fellows, we announced a free archival skills-building workshop that has already registered over 50 participants. Although we will not be able to provide every Summit participant with a scholarship in our inaugural year, we will explore ways of making attendance equitable to those with financial need in the future.

SAADA Summit (October 2025)
The forum will be divided into a series of conference-style panel presentations with a range of South Asian American working professionals from the libraries, archives, and museums fields, many of whom have either been past SAADA collaborators or volunteers. For example, one panel may consist of a university librarian, a special collections librarian, a digital archivist, and a museum curator to discuss the similarities and differences between their professional careers and their community-oriented work for SAADA. Panelists will share how discovering SAADA made them realize the legitimacy and importance of their own stories, and furthered their desire to preserve South Asian American narratives. Panels will also include presenters from SAADA's past and current archiving initiatives, such as the

Archival Creators Fellowship Project, Healthcare Storytelling Residency, Archiving the Arts Fellowship, and First Days Project, illustrating the range of work that is possible within a community-based archive and demonstrating how our work has inspired many to pursue career paths working in libraries and archives. [**Note:** See Sharmeen Mehri's letter of support for an example of a SAADA Archival Creators Fellowship project.] We will also invite some of our younger Community Historians, such as Kamala Gururaja (whose story is excerpted in the previous section), to speak about their own experiences with community archiving work and what they have learned. Our intention is to not only demystify libraries and archives professions and show how they intersect with communities, but to convince Emerging Scholars and other young participants that they can, in fact, get a head-start on experiencing these professions by interviewing community members, volunteering at events, and learning to digitize and transcribe archival materials.

Presentations will also include other SAADA collaborators in adjacent fields who can speak to the importance of SAADA's work to unearth archival materials. For example, singer-songwriter Anju, who collaborated with SAADA to compose the song "Red" after exploring archival materials about South Asian women pioneers Anandibai Joshee and Pandita Ramabai, will talk about her own artistic decisions in interpreting Joshee's and Ramabai's letters and diary entries. Another panel might consist of South Asian American history scholars such as Dr. Amber Abbas, Dr. Manan Desai, and Dr. Seema Sohi in conversation with librarians and archivists, about best research practices and how libraries and archives can facilitate academic discovery. SAADA will also host a workshop on a digital archiving topic, such as licensing and usage, working with the archive's technical backend, or creating metadata that describes materials with accurate and appropriate historical context. The evening will end with a screening of Vivek Bald's feature documentary film, *In Search of Bengali Harlem*, which was based on over two decades of archival and historical research, including in New York City's immigration and passenger arrival records.

The Summit's second day, only open to the ten SAADA Emerging Archivists and ten SAADA Mentor Archivists, will be in a smaller, conversational roundtable format in which cohort members can deepen their connections and further their learning alongside one another. SAADA will host three themed mini-roundtable discussions that provide deeper insight into our archival collecting and programmatic work. The specific content of Day 2 will be tailored to our cohort, based on the feedback that scholarship recipients provide in their applications and post-application surveys. For example, one roundtable discussion could involve Mentor Archivists sharing what they wished they had known about when they first started in the field. Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists will also have the opportunity for 1-on-1 breakout discussions about specific career paths in libraries and archives.

Given the wealth of content that the forum will present and the multitude of new connections that will be made, it would be overly simplistic to describe the SAADA Summit as a one- or two-day event. Viewing the Summit's influence as confined to its immediate weekend would overlook the web of connections made prior to and after the forum. In fact, the dialogue centered by the Summit will begin months prior to the forum and extend indefinitely into the future. Following the Summit, we will invite Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists to participate in SAADA events, initiatives, and roles within committees and decision-making processes, with the objective of nurturing the next generation of libraries and archives professionals.

Starting months before the Summit and continuing in perpetuity afterward, SAADA will conduct a range of cohort-specific outreach efforts, inviting Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists to SAADA events and initiatives, and even inviting them to take part in committees and other SAADA decision-making.

Evaluation and Dissemination (October 2025 – January 2026)
Immediately following the Summit, we will conduct an evaluative survey, which will be distributed to all Summit participants. We will also conduct focus groups with selected Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists, asking them about their experience at the Summit and what could be improved in future iterations of the forum. SAADA's executive director and program staff will debrief and analyze feedback, with responses helping to inform future planning. For the Emerging Archivists, we will provide a list of specific resources that help them with next steps in considering libraries and archives careers.

During the evaluation phase, SAADA will also discuss how to scale the Summit into a biennial or annual event. We will explore revenue-generating activities such as corporate sponsorships, crowdfunding, and partnerships aimed at making the Summit self-sustaining in the future. SAADA will create a planning document that outlines the Summit's outcomes, feedback and analysis, potential future sources of revenue, and recommendations about how to expand the forum in future years. SAADA will engage a professional videographer to create a high-quality **capstone video** of the Summit. This innovative approach enables us to vividly share our learnings and the critical issues discussed, directly connecting with community archives, cultural institutions, and a broader audience. By leveraging the dynamic and accessible format of video, we aim to amplify the impact of the forum, ensuring our insights and outcomes are effectively disseminated and resonate with viewers.

Another novel approach we are taking is to invoke the personal social networks of our own forum participants to amplify the impact of the Summit and create excitement for future iterations of the program. All Emerging Archivists will be asked to make social media posts prior to, during, and following the Summit to share what they learned about libraries and archives professions, South Asian American history, community archiving, and other topics. For participants without social media accounts, SAADA will create a series of consolidated posts featuring their reflections through our own social media accounts. This has been a successful strategy for SAADA in the past: we have demonstrated experience in working with South Asian American social media influencers to share their experiences with SAADA through our Social Media Workshop event in 2022. We will draw upon this know-how in order to create a compelling social media strategy that raises the profile of the Summit.

Project Results
The SAADA Summit's primary result will be an increase in awareness and engagement about library and archives professions among young South Asian Americans. However, we aim to create long-lasting impact that extends far beyond our forum participants. There are currently over 6.1 million South Asian Americans living in the United States, and the Summit will facilitate greater understanding about how to serve the information needs of this rapidly growing community. Ultimately, the conversations, work products, and insights from the Summit will (1) create a more welcoming and inclusive paradigm for LAM professions; (2) facilitate a deeper sense of belonging for South Asian Americans in our country's historical narrative; (3) compel greater urgency around documenting narratives from

marginalized communities underrepresented in archival collections; and (4) create the necessary conditions for stronger collaborations between archives and cultural organizations that serve communities of color. Each of these benefits will further LB21's goal of developing a diverse libraries and archives workforce that can better meet the information needs of their communities.

The resulting benefits from the Summit will be multiplicative. By producing a video that encapsulates key insights, strategies, and best practices gleaned from the event, SAADA will create a replicable forum model for other community-based archives, libraries, and cultural institutions, who can tailor the Summit's successful elements to their respective organizational contexts and needs. We will disseminate these findings through our existing networks, such as the **Community Archives Collaborative,** the research cohort from our Wallace grant-funded study, and the extensive network of libraries, archives, and museums with whom we have previously collaborated.

Our long-term vision is for the Summit to become a financially sustainable annual or biennial event. During the last few months of the project, we will investigate and explore ways to generate earned revenue through the Summit, including but not limited to ticket sales, book and merchandise sales, partnerships with schools and other organizations to 'sponsor' Emerging Archivists, and corporate sponsorships. By driving greater interest and participation in SAADA's other initiatives, the Summit also presents an opportunity to strengthen SAADA's organizational sustainability through expanding our supporter base and fundraising capabilities.

Conclusion

Imagine a South Asian American young adult, who after a formative experience and discussion with a mentor, discovers a newfound passion for storytelling using archival records and historical materials. They go on to study for a Master of Library and Information Sciences degree, dedicating their life to exploring the untold stories of their community. They eventually become a well-known innovator and leader in archival science, giving public lectures and workshops that spread awareness of the power and importance of archives. This is the career trajectory of Samip Mallick, SAADA's co-founder and executive director, who studied computer science and history before discovering the world of libraries and archives. We believe there are many others from underrepresented communities who will similarly discover their passion for libraries and archives if only they are given the opportunity, the support of a mentor, and a new approach to the field.

Ultimately, we envision that the Summit will become that "formative experience" for our community: a large-scale, recurring event that empowers libraries and archives to welcome a wider range of users, create new programming that reflects their service communities, and attract more young people of color into the field. By setting the stage for early interest and understanding among young South Asian Americans, we will not only lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and representative future in our nation's libraries and archives, but ensure that the voices and stories of underrepresented communities are heard, preserved, and celebrated.

SAADA Summit: Project Budget

	2024					2025												
	8	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**1**
Forum Planning and Logistics	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Research and secure venue	▒	▒	▒															
Arrange hospitality (hotel fixed rate for attendees, transportation options)				▒														
Draft and finalize Summit schedule and structure of events						▒	▒	▒	▒									
Identify presenters (librarians, archivists, community historians, cultural storytellers)							▒	▒										
Confirm catering for Summit										▒	▒							
Create print and digital materials for Summit attendees											▒	▒	▒					
Conduct site visits to venue to confirm logistical details, set up, decor													▒	▒				
Marketing and Promotion						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Develop website for Summit						▒	▒											
Launch website and open registration to public									▒									
Promote Summit through SAADA social media and engagement channels									▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒				
Reach out to relevant schools, universities, and cultural institutions to promote Summit									▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒				
Reach out to press, blogs, and other media outlets to promote event									▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒				
Scholarship Program						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Establish criteria and application process for scholarship program							▒	▒										
Conduct outreach to educators, librarians, and other stakeholders to identify applicants									▒	▒								
Deadline for scholarship applications for Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists										▒								
Review scholarship applications and select recipients										▒	▒							
Issue scholarship invitations and support travel planning and logistical information											▒	▒						
Pair Mentor Archivists with Emerging Archivists and facilitate pre-Summit virtual meeting													▒	▒				
Inaugural SAADA Summit															█			
Day 1: One-day intensive forum in New York City for all participants.															▒			
Summit participants make social media posts to raise profile of sessions and learnings															▒			
Day 2: Workshops reserved for Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists															▒			
Evaluation and Dissemination															█	█	█	█
Distribute survey to all Summit participants for feedback															▒			
Create and distribute capstone video																▒		
Conduct focus groups with Emerging Archivists and Mentor Archivists																▒	▒	
Synthesize survey feedback and data analysis to use in future Summit planning																		▒

Digital Products Plan

Type
The following digital products will be generated through the SAADA Summit Forum project:

- **(1) Capstone video** featuring professionally recorded and edited footage from the SAADA Summit; interviews with Emerging Archivists, Mentor Archivists, and Summit organizers; and post-event reflections, offering an immersive look into our forum's impact. The video will document our journey for the general public, as well as serve as a valuable resource for the field of community archives and cultural organizations, effectively democratizing knowledge about the process of hosting such a forum.
- **(2) Web portal** that will be hosted as a regular feature on SAADA's website (www.saada.org), and updated regularly to reflect new announcements regarding the upcoming SAADA Summit. Our web portal will include an array of resources: (1) the scholarship application forms to become an Emerging Archivist or Mentor Archivist; (2) the schedule of sessions and panelist biographies for this year's Summit; (3) digital resources for learning more about libraries and archives professions; and (4) videos and other digital assets from the previous year's Summit (in future years).
- **(3) Social media posts** featuring content created by Emerging Archivists, Mentor Archivists, and other participants at the Summit. Through Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms, we aim to encourage real-time engagement and showcase the multifaceted perspectives of our community. Participants will be asked to creatively post about their reflections on Summit panels and activities, including what they have learned about libraries and archives professions.

Availability
The Summit capstone video, web portal, and ecosystem of social media posts described above are intended for widespread public consumption and will be made freely available via SAADA's website. They will be the subject of significant outreach through SAADA's digital channels (website, email list, social media accounts, *Tides* magazine) for widespread dissemination of information around libraries and archives professionals to young people. We anticipate that our video, website, and other digital products will be used widely in educational settings to introduce students to the wide range of work accomplished within libraries and archives.

Access
SAADA will ensure that the digital products from the Summit are freely accessible and widely beneficial. not only to community-based archives and other cultural organizations, but also to educators, researchers, and the general public. Our digital collections are free to access publicly and will remain so forever. For collection navigability, SAADA adheres to best practices for

encoding and metadata used by the Library of Congress, including the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set (DCMES) and MARC.

Sustainability

In alignment with SAADA's commitment to the enduring preservation of our digital collections, the sustainability and longevity of the forum's digital products are of paramount importance to us. These digital assets will serve as critical resources for future SAADA Summit forums. To ensure their preservation, we will implement robust backup strategies grounded in LOCKSS principles, using secure servers hosted by Pantheon, Amazon Web Services, and Backblaze.