# Library Innovation Lab 2021

*Exploring New Ways of Engaging Immigrant Communities Through Public Humanities Programming*

## Program Information and Application Instructions

Applications accepted January 4 – March 1, 2021

Grant Period: April 1 – December 31, 2021

## Overview

| TIME PERIOD | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|
| January 4, 2021 | Application Opens on grant portal |
| January 2021 | Informational Application Webinar (RSVP) |
| March 1, 2021 | Applications deadline at 5:00 PM |
| March 2021 | Review Period |
| March 2021 | Grant Decisions emailed to all applicants |
| March 2021 | Grant Agreements emailed to Grantees |
| April 2021 | 1st Convening: Introductions and skill-building activities ( virtual) |
| May – July, 2021 | Research and design of project plans – ongoing support |
| June 2021 | 2nd convening: presentations of work-in-progress (virtual or in-person) |
| August 2, 2021 | Project plan due (second installment of funds released) |
| August – December, 2021 | Project implementation and assessment – ongoing support |
| January 2022 | 3rd convening: Project presentations and debrief (virtual or in-person) |
| March 30, 2022 | Final Report deadline |

### Program Description

Library Innovation Lab (LIL) is a nationally recognized program that aims to build the capacity of California public libraries to provide responsive and relevant public humanities programming through a practice-based professional development experience and participation in a peer-oriented learning community. Over the past four years, over 40 programming librarians and other library staff members from across the state have participated in the program. Each participant designed, implemented, and assessed an innovative short-term public humanities

project to engage immigrants in their community (see list). A new cohort for 2021 will be selected through an open call process (see application instructions and details below).

**Program Purpose**

California has the largest immigrant population of any state; 27% of current residents are immigrants, and almost half the state's children have at least one immigrant parent. Public libraries play and have long played an important role in welcoming newcomers by providing citizenship classes, English language instruction, and other valuable services and programs.

The LIL program aims to build on these efforts by supporting library-based **public humanities programs*** that will enable immigrants to express and share their experiences, stories, traditions, values, dreams, and hopes for the future. By providing opportunities for all community members to develop greater understanding of what it means to make a new life and a new home in a new place, public humanities programming can help build bridges between new and long-term residents of our state.

More generally, California Humanities hopes to build the capacity of participating libraries to provide engaging humanities learning opportunities and experiences that will reach and interest *all* Californians.

Our principal objectives with this program are to:

- Foster innovative and creative public humanities programming in and by libraries through application of Design Thinking methods;
- Build the capacity of participating librarians and libraries to provide welcoming experiences for immigrants that will contribute to building more inclusive communities;
- Use collaborative learning and reflective practice as a means of professional growth and development

**Program Overview**

Building on past success, LIL 2021 will support a cohort of 10 public library staff members as they research, design, implement and assess a small scale, short-term public humanities project between April and December 2021. Working in a collaborative learning environment that will include face-to-face and virtual group meetings as well as individualized advising, participants will acquire new skills and knowledge in program development and project management, build confidence and develop capacity in working with immigrants and other target audiences, and exercise creativity and imagination through experimenting with new programming approaches. This process of learning and discovery will be facilitated by library and humanities field experts, including peer mentors drawn from our previous cohorts. Grant funds will provide material support

Specifically, the LIL program will provide participants with:

- A framework for collaborative learning (group virtual and/or in-person meetings, electronic communications platforms, individual consultations, and site visits). Support will be provided by peers, project staff, library mentors, and consulting experts;
- A $5,000 grant to each participating library to support project-related research, planning, implementation, and assessment;

- Additional support for travel and related expenses associated with attending any face-to-face program meetings

## Eligibility and Requirements

A California public library or affiliated nonprofit organization with active federal tax-exempt status (e.g. Friends group) must serve as the "applicant organization." This organization will receive the award funds and will be responsible for administering them in alignment with program activities.

Participation in the cohort is limited to librarians or other library staff members with *direct* public programming responsibilities; this person will serve as the "Project Director." Only one person from each applicant library can serve in this capacity.

We seek participants who will represent the geographical and cultural diversity of the state, and are curious, open-minded, and eager to experiment with new approaches to public humanities programming. Applicants should demonstrate a strong desire to strengthen library-community connections, an interest in immigrant populations, openness to innovation and experimentation, and enthusiasm about being part of a group-learning professional development experience. Past cohorts have included participants with varying levels of experience and tenure, as well as different areas of specialization.

Participants (librarians and their sponsoring libraries) will be expected to:

- Research, design, implement, and assess a public humanities project in alignment with LIL goals over the program period (April – December 2021)
- Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in program meetings (may be in-person or virtual, depending on current public health recommendations)
- Actively participate in other ongoing program activities, including virtual meetings and other program communication channels
- Submit a written plan and budget at the conclusion of the planning phase
- Match grant funds (1:1 minimum ratio) by the end of the grant period with cash or in-kind contributions of labor, goods, or services from the applicant library or local sources
- Maintain records and supply requested programmatic and budgetary information as part of the final reporting process
- Cooperate with California Humanities' grantmaking and publicity protocols

## Application Instructions

To apply, please visit https://ch-grants.smapply.io/prog/LIL/ to complete the online application form and required attachments.

This url is also accessible on the Library Innovation Lab homepage: http://calhum.org/funding-opportunities/library-innovation-lab/ when you click on the "Grant Portal" button (available between January 4 and March 1, 2021).

The application form requests information about the applicant library (or Friends group) and Project Director (the person who will plan and oversee the project and participate in cohort activities) as well as confirmation of approval from the Authorizing Official of the applicant

library/Friends group. The Authorizing Official is the person who is authorized to enter into contracts or grant agreements on behalf of the applicant library or other entity.

Prospective Project Directors should provide responses to the following questions:

1. Why would you like to participate in this program? What especially interests you about it? How do you imagine this experience will benefit you (the librarian or library staff member), your library, the immigrant community/communities you will engage, as well as the broader community you serve?

2. What immigrant group(s), population(s), or constituency/ies in your community would you like to engage through the project you will develop and implement? Why? What do you already know about their needs, circumstances, and interests?

3. Have you ever developed a new program or activity based on a needs assessment or other type of research? If so, please describe.

4. Have you had any previous experience with public humanities programming? * If so, please describe.

5. What local resources will you be able to draw on for support? If you will be working with a team, who will be involved? What resources do you anticipate your library and/or community will be able to contribute to provide the required budget match by the end of the grant period?

In addition, applicants should submit a resume (two pages or less) outlining relevant interest, knowledge, and experience.

***NOTE: Prospective Project Directors are strongly encouraged to become familiar with grants management systems and protocols at their library in order to facilitate the application and award process at their institutions.***

## Notification and Award

Applicants will be notified of their status **before the end of March 2021**. An initial installment of funds will be issued upon return of the signed grant agreement; the second installment will be disbursed upon approval of a proposed project plan and budget to be submitted at the conclusion of the planning phase (August 2021).

## For More Information

An informational **webinar** will be held Friday**, January 22, 2021 from 11 am – 12 pm**. Register at https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7214792303323637260 A recording will be archived and made available on the LIL webpage if you are unable to attend the live event.

More information can be found in the FAQs accessible from the LIL webpage

For additional information or assistance please contact **Felicia Kelley,** Project and Evaluation Director, at fkelley@calhum.org or 323450-7901

* **Public humanities programs** provide opportunities for people to experience, engage with, and participate in the humanities outside formal educational environments. The humanities encompass a wide range of activities that enable us to understand, explore, and communicate about the human experience, including such "everyday" activities as reading, conversation, and reflection. Public humanities programs can take many forms depending on the subject matter at hand, the programmer's goals and intent, as well as the characteristics, interests, and needs of the intended audience. California Humanities encourages experimentation and innovation with new approaches to public humanities programming along with time-tested formats, such as oral history, writing, photovoice or participatory documentary projects, reading- or film-and- discussion programs, interpretive exhibits, lectures, presentations, demonstration or performances with interactive elements, story-sharing activities, and cultural festivals with strong interpretive components. Programming may be virtual or face-to-face but must include interactive elements. For more ideas, see the list of projects implemented by previous LIL cohort members.