

Sample Grant Proposal:
Non-English Access Support for the
Cheltenham Township Library System

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Executive Summary

The Cheltenham Township Library System (CLTS) seeks to increase informational access for a substantial minority community of non-native English speakers of Korean descent that exists in the population that they serve. In order to accomplish this goal, CLTS proposes three integrated initiatives: 1) creation of Korean language access instructions; 2) development of a Korean language print collection and 3) a Korean cultural programming series to raise general community awareness of Korean culture and customs and increase awareness of the new information resources among members of the target community. Although CLTS will solicit support and funding from local businesses and community organizations for most of its programming efforts, it seeks funding in the amount of \$23,500.00 to help alleviate the substantial costs associated with development of the proposed print collection and creation of Korean-language informational access aids.

The Elkins Park Free Library

Community

The Elkins Park Free Library is located in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, a suburban community located in Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County just north of Philadelphia. Despite Cheltenham Township's proximity to the city, the atmosphere is one of a small, well-established residential community that houses many historic buildings, mostly historically and architecturally significant homes and estates. The township covers a total of 9.03 square miles and contains roughly 500 acres of parkland, seven public schools, 23 private and parochial schools including three colleges and three seminaries, one adult school, an active community arts center and the historical Richard Wall House Museum. The local government is overseen by a

Board of Commissioners comprised of seven members representing the many neighborhoods that comprise the township.

Library

The Elkins Park Free Library, along with three other branch libraries –East Cheltenham Free Library, Glenside Free Library and LaMott Free Library – comprises the Cheltenham Township Library System (CTLS). The CLTS is governed by a seven member Board of Directors, which represents the interests of the Cheltenham Township School Board, the Cheltenham Township Board of Commissioners and local community members. CLTS's nearly \$1.7 million operating budget comes from a variety of sources including local and state funding as well as donations and generated revenue. At 78 % of the total income stream, local government appropriations are the largest monetary support channel for the libraries.

According to data submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for 2006, the system's collection contains more than 135,000 print volumes, almost 10,000 video materials and more than 7,000 audio materials. Collectively, CLTS also maintains subscriptions for more than 850 print serials and 48 databases. The same data also shows a system-wide total of 309,418 library visits for 2006. These visits led to an annual circulation of 357,123 and close to 14,000 reference transactions. To provide additional print based resources to its patrons, CLTS also takes part in an interlibrary loan program through the Montgomery County Library and Information Network Consortium (MCLINC). Additionally, CLTS participates in the Access Pennsylvania program that provides patron access to a number of databases of digital materials – including full-text articles, photographs and maps – through a portal known as Power Library.

The mission statement of CLTS shows its commitment to serving the information needs of a diverse community:

The Cheltenham Township Library System fosters a love of reading and lifelong learning by providing free and convenient access to information, technology and entertainment. The system's friendly, courteous, and well-trained staff responds to the dynamics of our diverse community in a welcoming environment. As an innovative library system, we respond with promptness and flexibility to changes in technology and the needs of the community.

To reach the goals of access and flexibility to changing needs, CLTS has developed a set of guiding principles that steer their decisions and actions. These guiding principles are customer service; fiscal responsibility; intellectual freedom; physical plant; lifelong learning; knowledge and information dissemination; free and equal access; creativity, flexibility and innovation and community building.

Towards these ends, each of the CLTS branch libraries runs an extensive and multi-faceted programming schedule that includes everything from children's story hours, adult book discussion groups and an annual summer reading program to a teen-focused manga discussion group, life skills classes and resume building workshops. Events are well publicized and well attended and in 2006 alone, CLTS reported annual program attendance numbers at about 11,000 patrons. The libraries are assisted in their programming efforts by a strong Friends of the Library program. Each of the branch libraries are supported by a Friends of the Library group consisting of community members who participate in advocacy and fundraising activities.

Patrons

As of the 2000 U.S. Census, Cheltenham's population was 36,875. CLTS's patron base is diverse and well educated. 33.6% of the township's population belongs to a non-white minority; the two largest subsets being African Americans at 24.6% of the total and those of Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent make up 6.4%. Roughly 54% of the population is female and a majority of the residents live in family households. A majority of the patron base, about 70%, has completed at least some college-level coursework and almost half of the residents have received an undergraduate degree. The mean annual household income is roughly \$74,500.

Staff

An Executive Director who is housed in an administrative office at the Glenside branch heads operations of CLTS. Day-to-day oversight of each branch is provided by site-specific Head Librarians, one for each of the four branches. Including the Executive Director and the four Head Librarians, CLTS employs a total of nine librarians with a MLS from an American Library Association accredited school. In total, CLTS employs 26 full-time equivalent staff members across the four branch libraries and the administrative office. Some service roles are also filled by volunteer efforts.

Statement of Need

As evidenced by its mission and guiding principle, CLTS is committed to providing free and equal access to information to its patrons, the population of Cheltenham Township. Additionally, CLTS recognizes that it is tasked with serving a diverse patron base with varying levels of information needs. While current resources and procedures are good at providing for the information needs of a large number of patrons, there are some areas that could be improved with the intent of better serving portions of the population who may feel that their information

needs are excluded from consideration. In particular, CLTS would like to improve non-English access and resources. CLTS currently lacks, system wide, resources in languages other than English. Additionally, there are currently no systems in place to assist non-English speaking and English as a Second Language (ESL) patrons locate information and utilize library resources.

In accordance with its mission and guiding principles of free and equal access and community building, CLTS seeks to take first steps to address shortcomings in these important areas.

Principally, CLTS is committed to increasing access and resources for the substantial native Korean speaking population in Cheltenham Township. Ethnic Koreans make up 3.6% of the local population, representing an overwhelming portion of the township's 6.4% Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population. Much of the ethnic Korean population is concentrated in a single location within the township, in the southern portion that lies just over the border between Philadelphia County and Montgomery County. This area is known as Elkins Park.

Besides containing a large concentration of residential units, Elkins Park also plays host to a large number of Korean owned and operated as well as Korean focused businesses and services.

These businesses cover a wide range of needs from grocery and food specialty stores to accounting services, medical and dental care and educational institutions. Korean friendly and Korean run faith-based organizations also are located in the area. Because of its location within this particular community, CLTS feels that Elkins Park Free Library is the best choice of location for implementation of Korean language focused access initiatives within the system.

Proposed Initiative

CLTS realizes that reaching the goal of improved access for native Korean speakers will be a sizeable and costly undertaking. To help reach this goal of increased access for this population

of potential patrons, CLTS proposes starting with a three-pronged spearhead initiative. The three main activities to be undertaken are: 1) creation of instructional and help documentation in Korean; 2) development of a Korean-language print collection and 3) a series of cultural events to raise awareness of both Korean culture and the library's new Korean-focused resources. It is to help implement these initiatives, expounded upon below, that CLTS seeks funding assistance.

The first and, perhaps easiest step, in the plan is creation of instructional documentation in Korean. It is hoped that these documents will assist ESL users better utilize existing access and information resources by providing native language support. This native language support documentation has been suggested as a good first step for increasing access for non-native English speakers by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services Task Force on Non-English Access. It is proposed that these documents should cover very particular areas of knowledge, namely: introductory information regarding the layout of the Library and its general services; instructions on how to get a library card; library policies; instructions on how to access and use the electronic catalogue, run by MCLINC, and instructions on how to access and use the Power Library system, run by Access Pennsylvania. CLTS would make these materials available in physical format in several locations throughout the Library as well as electronically on the CLTS website.

Secondly, CLTS would like to develop a Korean language collection to be housed at Elkins Park Free Library in order to serve the interests of non-English speaking Korean speakers and ESL patrons. It is proposed that the initial collection contain a total of 300 print volumes that cover a broad spectrum of topics. The collection should include a circulating fiction and non-fiction section as well as a non-circulating reference collection. In the area of fiction, current and classic Korean literature as well as translations of current English language best sellers should be

included. The fiction collection should offer reading material appropriate for a range of age groups including children, young adults and adults. The non-fiction portion of the collection should focus on Korean cultural information and popular subjects such as cooking, computers, health issues and travel. The reference collection should be used to support the needs of ESL patrons by including English language learning materials and the needs of new immigrants by including materials regarding United States citizenship and American culture.

Because there are no in-house personnel with the requisite language expertise to build this collection from scratch, CLTS proposes contracting with the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). In connection with its non-English collection development service called Language Sets, OCLC offers contracted custom collection services. Through this contract service, collection development and Korean language experts will develop an initial collection of print materials, the breadth of which would be based on CLTS input. OCLC will not only develop the collection but will also purchase and deliver the materials to CLTS along with electronic cataloguing information. The cataloguing information will be provided in both Romanized record format, which could be integrated immediately into the MCLINC bibliographic utility, and non-Romanized, native character record format, which could be integrated later as additional support of native script records are developed and implemented.

The final prong in this initiative is to increase awareness, especially among the target population, of the access aids and Korean language resources available at the library. To accomplish this, CLTS proposes two activities. The first is print-based, broad reaching approach in which CLTS would place informational advertisements in a few of the local Korean language newspapers as well as place flyers in prominent establishments within the community such as the local shopping center and at religious institutions. The second advertising approach is focused on

cultural programming efforts. CLTS proposes to run a series of Korean cultural awareness events during the month of May as this is Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month. This proposed programming series would include four events: 1) an initiative kick-off event including traditional Korean food and games as well as informational tables run by local Korean-focused community groups; 2) a Korean language children's story time; 3) an evening of Korean popular culture including a movie viewing and traditional and modern Korean snack foods and 4) a lecture and performance by a kayagum – a traditional Korean stringed instrument – musician. The benefits of this programming would be twofold, both increasing community awareness of Korean culture and language and drawing the target patron group into the library by partnering with existing local Korean focused community organizations and Korean owned and operated businesses. Additionally, these events will allow time for the target patron base to interact with library staff and the new resources in an environment that may be more comfortable than an individual visit.

To accomplish these tasks, CLTS is asking for a total of \$23,500.00. \$7,750.00 of the proposed budget will go to pay for creation and dissemination of the Korean language instructional material. The largest portion of the budget, \$13,250.00, is devoted to the costs of developing the proposed print collection. For programming efforts, on the other hand, CLTS is requesting assistance to cover only two key areas: local newspaper advertisements and flyer printing and fees associated with hiring the musician for the final program in the series. In total, this would only be \$2,500.00. The remaining material costs for the programming efforts will be covered by solicitation of in-kind donations from local Korean owned and operated businesses and organizations. This type of involvement on the part of established businesses and organizations within the target community would hopefully improve community investment in the initiative as

a whole. More detailed information regarding the appropriation of funds can be found in the attached proposed budget.

Evaluation

CLTS plans to utilize several quantitative factors in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed initiative. Just as the initiative itself is three pronged, so too is the approach to its evaluation. Quantifying the usage of the Korean language access aids that were created by this initiative is possible, at least in part, by tracking the number of page views and length of page views for the webpages that would contain the newly created information. Evaluation of the new collection, on the other hand, is a bit more straightforward. The most effective method of evaluation is looking at circulation statistics for the new collection in particular. In 2006, CLTS reported system wide circulation of 357,123, meaning a circulation per capita of 9.68. Because this new collection is targeted at a particular subgroup of patrons, circulation expectations should be lower than that of the general collection; however, a branch-specific circulation of 300, roughly one check-out per volume in the collection, for the first year of operation would be ideal.

The final prong of the evaluation methodology deals with quantifying the effectiveness of the planned programming component of the initiative. There are two quantitative measures that CLTS feels are necessary. The first and most obvious of the two is number of event attendees. The more populous these events, where the new collection and access aids are being highlighted, are, the more successful the initiative is likely to be. The second statistic that CLTS considers important is the number of reference inquiries that occur immediately preceding, during and immediately after these events. These statistics will give a more definitive representation of how

interested event attendees are in actually utilizing library resources, not simply attending an enjoyable cultural and educational event.

Conclusion

In this age of ever increasing technology integration and increased informational access outside of the confines of the physical library for a majority of potential patrons, public libraries struggle to stay relevant to community members who provide their financial support. At the same time, these public institutions are tasked with serving all members of the community. Thus it is important in these times - when the traditional patron base turns to other sources, such as bookstores and home internet access, for its information needs - that public libraries turn their focus to providing information services to those portions of the population that have traditionally be underserved, having little or no access to quality informational resources. For CLTS, catering to the information needs of a substantial community of non-native English speakers of Korean descent through targeted access aids and collection development will help the library's services reach a wider audience, becoming more relevant to the community that it is committed to serving.

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Proposed Budget

Korean language access information

Writing/Translation Services	\$3,000
Printing (250 pieces each)	
Introductory Pamphlet	\$2,000
Library Card Instructions	\$250
Library Policies	\$500
Electronic Catalogue Instructions	\$1,000
Power Library Instructions	\$1,000
Subtotal	\$7,750

Collection development

OCLC Custom Collection Service	\$12,000
Shelving	\$1,250
Subtotal	\$13,250

Programming

Performer Appearance Fee	\$1,000
Performer Travel Expenses	\$1,000
Newspaper Advertisements	\$400
Flyer Printing Services	\$100
Subtotal	\$2,500

Grand Total \$23,500