

Catalyst Fund Proposal

Proposal Title:	Participatory Community Archiving Event Resources
ID:	43
Institution:	UMass Boston, Healey Library
Requestor:	Carolyn Goldstein, Public History/Community Archives Program Ma
Budget:	\$31,089
Goal (as pulled from the application):	“... Proposes a two-part project to produce an informational video and a set of interactive online tutorials to enable communities to partner more effectively with the Mass. Memories Road Show (MMRS) as well as to plan and produce local digitizing or scanning events based on the proven MMRS model.”
Description:	<p>1) GOAL University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston proposes a two-part project to produce an informational video and a set of interactive online tutorials to enable communities to partner more effectively with the Mass. Memories Road Show (MMRS) as well as to plan and produce local digitizing or scanning events based on the proven MMRS model.</p> <p>2) PROBLEM In his recent article on “Participatory Archiving: The Next Generation in Archival Methodology,” published in College and Research Library News (September 2016), Eddie Woodward highlighted the growing interest in community-engaged archiving initiatives. Indeed, events where individual community members can contribute photographs and stories to document a town, event, or historical theme have become so popular that the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) initiated a Common Heritage grant category in 2015 to support them.</p> <p>Woodward’s article and the NEH both cite the Mass. Memories Road Show (MMRS) as an exemplary program of this type. As a public research university, UMass Boston welcomes this leadership role in the national archival community, makes the Mass. Memories Road Show Project Handbook freely available on our website, and advises interested organizations in Massachusetts and beyond on conducting their own events. As a result, many libraries, museums, and archives throughout the United States are using the MMRS as a model, seeking to learn from the proven track record of the program’s techniques and methodologies, honed since the program’s launch in 2004. These include events documenting the fishing heritage of New Bedford, Massachusetts the local history of Westborough, Massachusetts the Irish immigrant community of Middletown, Connecticut family and local businesses in Staunton, Virginia the Chicano and Latino communities of Robstown, Texas and the residents of the Palos Verdes Library District in California.</p> <p>To reach and support others who are planning such events, Healey Library staff is currently revising the MMRS handbook to provide a more generalized set of guidelines for “digitizing days” that can be used apart from the MMRS program. While the existing and revised publications provide a helpful overview for many colleagues, based on feedback from past partners, we believe that a set of visual</p>

explanatory and instructional resources will be both more accessible and engaging, as well as more detailed, effective and specifically useful to a broad range of organizations interested in capturing and preserving cultural and community heritage materials.

The MMRS is a statewide digital history project that documents people, places, and events in Massachusetts history through family photographs and stories. In partnership with teams of local volunteers, the project organizes public events to scan family and community photographs and videotape “the stories behind the photos.” The images are indexed and incorporated into an online educational collection at openarchives.umb.edu. To date, the MMRS has organized more than three dozen events throughout Massachusetts, and has nearly 10,000 photographs, stories, and videos available in the online collection. A 2016 survey of the local communities with which we have worked over the years revealed that partner organizations desired clearer and more engaging information describing what individuals can expect to experience at a Mass. Memories Road Show and how to plan for and operate the functional “stations” through which individual contributors are guided at an MMRS event.

UMass Boston has the capacity to produce four Mass. Memories Road Shows per year, but the proposed communications and instructional resources would allow for us to scale up in the future. Moreover, the availability of these resources to the whole country—and the world—would certainly place state-of-the-art participatory archiving within reach of a greater number of cultural institutions, ensuring the broadest possible audience for this type of public history program and populist collecting endeavor.

3) ACTIVITIES

This funding would allow the Healey Library at UMass Boston to create two important resources that will strengthen and solidify the Mass. Memories Road Show (MMRS) program, while also providing archives, museums, libraries, and community groups with concrete and comprehensive guidance in the MMRS model which can assist them in organizing their own events. These resources will allow us to widely disseminate our experience and our proven method for organizing “scanning events” that are engaging for the public and that facilitate the gathering of high-quality digital assets and standards-based metadata that can be shared and incorporated into a wide range of repositories, including the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) via statewide and regional content hubs. For each of the following activities, UASC staff will work closely with the consultants (as in-kind contribution) in developing the final products to ensure the video and tutorials accurately and effectively communicate MMRS practice and spirit.

First, we will hire a consulting videographer to produce a short video (5-7 minutes) that introduces the Mass. Memories Road Show in an engaging manner. Aimed at potential contributors, the video will inspire ordinary citizens to share their family photographs and stories, while also providing an overview of what community members should expect from the experience of attending a Road Show event. The video will model the expression of the goals, organization, and logistical

management of a successful digitizing day event. The planning and production process would include two meetings with a small group of representatives from past partner organizations to solicit feedback from users about the early plan and the first cut of the video.

Second, we will hire an instructional design consultant to help us plan and produce three interactive online tutorials outlining the specific skills and techniques required to manage each of the Mass. Memories Road Show's three major "stations": the Welcome Station for greeting and orienting event attendees the Information Station for recording descriptive metadata about contributors' photographs and the Scanning Station for digitizing photos. Each tutorial will include interactive exercises for staff and volunteers to practice, for instance, applying the project's numbering system for linking photos and contributors, eliciting rich and clear descriptions of photographs from contributors, and setting up equipment and maintaining quality control for scanning.

4) SHARING THE RESULTS

The video and the interactive tutorials will be freely available on the Mass. Memories Road Show website and blog at blogs.umb.edu/archives/mass-memories-road-show/ and widely shareable under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA) license.

We would also look forward to participating in Lyrasis' October 2017 conference, and to presenting at additional professional meetings in New England and beyond. Any presentations about this project and the project outcomes will also be included on ScholarWorks, UMass Boston's institutional repository for scholarship and research out of the university, which is online at scholarworks.umb.edu.

5) BUDGET

Administrative Coordinator—graduate student to provide administrative assistance with recruiting focus group participants, inventorying existing video footage, coordinating storyboard and content meetings for video and tutorials
50 weeks x 12 hours x \$15/hour including benefits \$9,089

Community Focus Group—2 meetings with 5 representatives from past partner organizations to review planned informational video at 2 stages
Honoraria (10 x \$200) and lunch (2 x \$500) \$3,000

Video Production—shooting new footage, editing existing footage, producing final product in two development stages (flat fee) \$10,000

Instructional Design Production—consultant to plan and produce of 3 interactive tutorial modules
3 tutorial modules @ \$3000 each (flat fee) \$9,000

TOTAL \$31,089

Comments from Field Reviewers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="435 205 846 233">1. Sounds like an intriguing project<li data-bbox="435 243 1403 373">2. Some of these costs should probably be borne by Mass and not from the grant. Seems to be part of the normal operating business. For e.g. administrative coordinator, focus group costs. I'm Ok with funding this proposal, but perhaps at a lower amount than requested. I'd suggest \$19,000.<li data-bbox="435 384 1386 625">3. I felt that this proposal makes a great case for the value of participatory community archives and creates a model that other organizations could use. While conducted by a university, their model would scale to other membership constituencies of LYRASIS. The Creative Commons license allows others to reuse relevant content for non-commercial uses. I also liked the inclusion of DPLA to enrich that content through their work with communities. Overall a very strong project.
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