**Program/Project Name:** DigitalLearn Expansion

New  Expansion of existing initiative

**Strategic Goal Area(s):**  Transformation  Leadership  Advocacy and Awareness  EDISJ  Organizational Excellence  Not applicable

**Problem or Opportunity Being Addressed:** The PLA Digital Literacy Committee believes the field is lacking tools for libraries to more effectively teach digital literacy and computer skills. These include:

1. easy-to-use reference to existing digital literacy training resources (including shorthand information on format, learner level, ease of use, examples of how libraries can use it, etc.). Resources provided by the [ALA Washington Office](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/federallegislation/govinfo/egovernment/egovtoolkit/training) and [PLA’s Professional Tools](http://www.ala.org/pla/resources/tools/programming-instruction/digital-literacy) are limited in scope and somewhat outdated.
2. training and other resources to help a variety of staff, whether formal instructors or not, learn tips and techniques for digital literacy training (for instance, where does basic help end, time management and how much time is appropriate to spend with learners, what to do with personal data/information, issues regarding use of personal devices versus library devices, interpersonal skills for training or demonstrating computer use, addressing fear and shame, privacy concerns, etc.).
3. guidance on core technology competencies for staff including how to define them based on staff roles, provide educational experiences to create competency, and monitor/evaluate competencies for instance as a part of hiring and performance reviews.

**Program/Project Short Description:** DigitalLearn.org currently includes over 20 self-directed modules (“For Learners”) and over 80 course templates (“For Trainers”). The Digital Literacy Committee proposes expanding [www.digitallearn.org](http://www.digitallearn.org) to include 1-2 additional major sections to house more information on other digital literacy training resources, teaching strategies, staff policies and competencies, and more. Committee members are confident they can identify, vet, and describe many relevant training resources (#1 above), perhaps using short videos to give personal stories about how they can be used and/or using icons as a key to indicate different characteristics of each resource (high reading level, text heavy, short/long, interactive, etc.). We propose to hire instructional designers to help develop training for library instructors and other staff about teaching strategies (#2 above); PLA has already connected with CrowdEdLearning or Designers4Learning, who are doing similar work to help college instructors teach digital literacy to students. The committee also recently had a presentation from Penny Talbot of the Ephrata Public Library, who has developed exemplary materials on staff technology competencies (#3 above) which could be elevated to a national level by revision and addition to the DigitalLearn site.

The committee has also proposed doing a series of webinars and regional trainings to teach the above resources and strategies to public libraries nationwide. Some webinars may simply be informational to promote new elements of DigitalLearn. However, the committee is also interested in doing regional, day or day-and-a-half long training events at libraries to educate staff at many levels about digital skills and access (see draft training program outline, attached).

**Measurable Outcomes and Measurement Strategies:** The project will include process measures to evaluate its success in developing and distributing new content to the field. We will evaluate awareness of the new resources through typical strategies such as website views/hits/clicks/visitors, number of downloads, email responses, social media reach (likes, retweets, etc.) and changes in number of followers. Continuing education/professional development components will track records of attendance and use standard tools to assess knowledge gained, satisfaction, intent to use information, and other aspects at the conclusion of an event. More expansive evaluation strategies could be considered: for instance identifying a cohort of libraries to assess baseline in terms of knowledge of digital literacy training resources, number and impact of classes, staff proficiency, etc. and then doing a follow-up after 1-2 years of the initiative to measure changes.

**Relationship to Other PLA and ALA initiatives:** Primarily related to DigitalLearn.org. Use of Project Outcome as a measurement strategy will be incorporate into the new web site content and training.

**Funding Amount(s) Requested (Estimate)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Fiscal Year | Investment (PLA Funds) | Revenue (if applicable) |
| FY20 | *To be determined* | *To be determined* |
| FY21 |  |  |
| FY22 |  |  |

**Short Description of Requested Budget:**

*to be determined*

**Anticipated Product(s):** Expanded DigitalLearn.org site content, training content offered via webinars and regional events.

**Revenue Potential:**

* Type of Revenue (grants, registration fees, product sales, etc.): PLA has the potential to seek grants to fund this work, given that funders such as Google and Microsoft have already invested in similar projects. Otherwise revenue potential is mainly related to registration fees for training events, or contract revenue from individual libraries or library agencies who “book” PLA to do the training event for their staff.
* Paying Audience (PLA members or member libraries, other markets): PLA/ALA members and member libraries.

**PLA Capacity:**

* Staff Time: Two staff (Allen and Wood) support Digital Literacy at present, and do not have capacity to undertake all of the work above, but consultants might be engaged to fill gaps and make sure the projects keep moving.
* Volunteer Leaders: The Digital Literacy Committee is 100% behind this work and willing to contribute content and spend time on it. If their time is stretched, they can likely engage other public librarians working on computer skills training.
* External SMEs: PLA has a number of external contacts who can contribute (Designers4Learning, CrowdEDLearning, individuals such as Mary Beth Foccioli, Crystal Schimpf, Penny Talbot), although some may require fees.
* Other Challenges: TBD.

**Potential Agenda – Digital Literacy Instruction Road Show**

*Sample/draft objectives:*

At the close of the session, participants will be able to:

* Understand and address the computer/technology training needs of specific learner groups (seniors, students, job seekers, etc.)
* Use readily-available training tools from an expansive list that includes diverse formats, content and other features
* Spend less time on and be more effective with one-on-one computer help
* Develop and offer their own computer/technology training classes, using strong instructional design principles and readily-available content to customize
* Implement an internal program to define, assess, and improve the technology competencies of staff at all levels within the library

*Audience:*

The content is appropriate for a range of library staff. Front line staff who spend time helping patrons use library computers will learn some interpersonal skills and gain access to many online resources they can direct patrons to, saving themselves the time and stress of one-on-one instruction. Program staff who don’t regularly teach technology will gain access to tools that make developing and holding new classes quick and easy, and will also learn the basics of instructional design to help them develop any class. Staff dedicated exclusively to technology training may find some content basic, but they are certain to learn something new and gain access to tools that will expand their repertoire. Library leadership will learn more about how improved digital literacy instruction can impact their library’s strategy and partnerships, and will also learn how to define and assess staff technology competencies.

*Sample/draft agenda:*

8:30am – Registration/Breakfast

9:00am – Welcome/Group Exercise

*TBD – something fun to start off with*

9:30am – Overview of Digital Literacy

*National data about lack of digital literacy skills, impact of low computer literacy on different groups of people, history of ALA/PLA involvement, leading up to DigitalLearn. Some content is already developed but might benefit from stronger presentation of national research, the state of digital literacy skills in the U.S., and the needs/challenges related to particular groups of learners.*

Handouts: Research (Pew?) reports, infographic(s) about digital literacy skills, “2-pagers” from DL committee about different groups (seniors, job seekers, youth, etc.)

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9:45am – Tips for Teaching Technology

*New content to be developed – from Digital Literacy Committee input – topics such as “where does basic help end, time management and how much time is appropriate to spend with learners, what to do with personal data/information, issues regarding use of personal devices versus library devices, interpersonal skills for training or demonstrating computer use, addressing fear and shame, privacy concerns particularly with relation to government documents, and more.”*

Handouts: Summary tip sheet

10:30am – Break

11:00am – What’s Out There? Tools for Teaching Computers and Technology

*Quick review of major resources for teaching and self-directed learning, focusing on what’s available, level for learners, costs if any, pros/cons, etc. Some content is developed, but work is needed to make it consistent and compare products critically. Most libraries will know about some of these but the intent is every library would learn about a few new resources. Resources to be covered will include* DigitalLearn*,* Lynda, Techboomers, Etc.

Handouts: Online training tools resource list, with web sites and perhaps “at a glance” comparison info

Noon – Lunch break

*Afternoon options; could potentially do 1-2 of them, or could become 1.5 days if all are taught*

Option 1– Instructional Design 101 for Public Librarians: *New content to be developed – discussed by Digital Literacy Committee. Help for technology trainers to develop and teach well-designed courses.*

Handouts: TBD

Option 2– Crash Courses: DigitalLearn’s Training Tools for Classroom Teaching and One-on-One Help: *Semi developed content – idea is 15-20 minutes each on a set of topics from the Gail’s Toolkit materials. Not* teaching *them, but teaching* about *them so library staff are better prepared to use them. Speaker would review course objectives, mention major teaching points, make suggestions for how to prepare to teach, talk about potential areas of learner confusion and common questions, etc. People are unlikely to use the resources unless they are explained to them, and tips from expert trainers will help them do a better job when they do. Could ask library/audience what to focus on in advance, or simply teach the most popular (*Internet Basics, Outlook Email, Cybersecurity Basics, Coding: HTML Basics, Quickbooks, Facebook, Resume basics, LinkedIn)

Handouts: Summary sheet of what’s on the “tools for trainers” section of DL/Gail’s Toolkit, along with one-pagers on the specific modules covered in the session

Option 3– Staff Technology Competencies: *New content to be developed based on teaching/program of Penny Talbot of Ephrata Public Library. Could include onsite technology assessments and development of learning plans.*

4:40pm – Final Q&A/Closing Remarks