

**Pacific Library Partnership  
2015-16 Grant Program**

**Due Friday, October 30, 2015 by 5:00 p.m.**

Please provide the following information in a Microsoft Word document. Please email the completed form to Wendy Cao at [caow@plsinfo.org](mailto:caow@plsinfo.org).

1. Title of Project Peer-Inspired Support for Job Seekers
  
2. Category (A or B) Category A – Innovation and Technology
  
3. Library applying for funding Berkeley Public Library/Berkeley Reads  
Name Linda Sakamoto-Jahnke (Library Literacy Program Coordinator)  
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Mailing Address 1125 University Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704  

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4. Amount of funding requested \$15,000

## PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

### 1. One paragraph project summary.

In its recent comprehensive strategic planning process, the Berkeley Public Library identified the “Economic Opportunity Gap” as its number one community challenge. Being able to communicate specific skills and past accomplishments in a way that resonates with employers via resume and cover letter is difficult for any job seeker – and is even harder for people working on their literacy skills. Many Berkeley Reads students, as are many other California Library Literacy Services (CLLS) learners, are unemployed or underemployed and need support in applying for jobs in a way that more fully presents their capacities. The job market has “up credentialed” many positions to require educational degrees, which places a greater burden on students to demonstrate “equivalent experience.” Government sponsored workforce readiness programs have eligibility requirements that many Berkeley Read students do not meet. Even those who do have access to a publicly sponsored job developer indicated that the safe and supportive environment of Berkeley Reads is the place they feel they can have the most success in tackling the stressful task of seeking appropriate employment. This grant will use an innovative process in which a team of adult students plays a core role in developing job seeking support tools for their peers. The tools will combine technology and high touch for maximum impact.

### 2. Explain how this project fits with the library's strategic directions.

One of the four core Roles and Goals for all CLLS programs is being a Worker. Out of the 192 students at Berkeley Reads, 60 set specific goals about getting a job or a better job, and similar numbers set goals for applications and resumes. A key strategic initiative of the Berkeley Library's current strategic plan is to: “Bolster LITERACY in all its forms to bridge the achievement gap- develop dynamic services, programs that meet individuals' and community needs; develop services to support curriculum, educational preparedness, and literacies for all generations.” This project aligns with the library's overall direction of “building Community through Collaboration and Conversation”:

- Making a difference in people's lives by building effective partnerships; providing opportunities for growth through quality programs and services
- Celebrating the Library's positive impacts in people's lives
- Being Entrepreneurial in addressing community needs through responsiveness, innovation

### 3. A description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

A team of adult student leaders will help develop a step-by-step approach to creating a resume and cover letter, and tips for submitting applications that will be provided via workshops, online resources and drop-in office hours.

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In the last reporting period, 192 literacy students were being served at Berkeley Reads. This is an ethnically diverse group, with 32% African American, 24% Latino, 21% Asian, 4% white and the balance identified as other. The majority (56%) of the students are between the ages of 40 and 59, with 27% 39 or younger and 17% over age 60. Most students are in the prime employment years. Looking ahead to how this pilot program could be replicated, there are over 20,000 CLLS students being served in 500 libraries across the state.

### 4. The goals and objectives of the project.

The overall goal is that adult literacy students will be better prepared to apply for jobs that more fully take advantage of their lived experience, enabling them to enhance their career progress and prospects for better economic outcomes.

A team of five adult students at Berkeley Reads initially identified the need for this project and want to be the leaders who follow it through. A first step upon award is that they will survey their peers to further determine needs. Supported by a literacy consultant experienced in student led design (Susan Clark, facilitator of the Easy Voter Guide and Project Money), they will then develop the curriculum and tool kit and workshop. These student leaders will share what they develop via:

- two workshops that they present to peer students
- online PDFs and tool kit (provided to all Berkeley Reads staff/hourlies and tutors)
- drop in "office hours" led by Alma Miller, Adult Learner on Staff

The innovation in this content and delivery is that it is based on learners' own requests for what they need, offered in a format and language developed by peers who understand the students' lives and context better than an outside professional resource. Based on similar projects, it is very likely that this student led material will be valued by CLLS programs around the state. As the project unfolds, we will also be exploring collaboration with other job resource programs such as the SparkPoint Centers sponsored by the United Way of the Bay Area.

### 5. The project timeline (activities).

Assuming award in November 2015, this is the anticipated timeline:

*Late Nov/early Dec 2015* – Initial team meeting and develop survey for peers

*December* – Team administer surveys and interviews to refine needs and issues

*January* – Develop curriculum and examples for resume (using existing tools as resource but not being limited to that)

*February* – Develop curriculum and examples for cover letters

*March* – Draft, practice and pilot workshop #1

*April* – Refine and post materials online (announce to tutors)

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*May* – Offer workshop #2 and announce and offer weekly office hours

*June* – Project debrief with team and initial evaluation

*Dec* – Tracking student and tutor usage of tools and possible collaboration with other CLLS programs

### 6. The evaluation of the project.

Throughout the project, the following are examples of ways we will be assessing progress:

- How many students were reached in the initial needs assessment
- Number of students reached via workshops and served at drop in hours
- Staff follow up with those who were helped (call backs 2-4 weeks later by Alma Miller) to see if they took action based on the support they received and what happened
- Feedback forms from workshop attendees
- Feedback from tutors who used the tools
- Student and tutor reports of personal career progress
- Debrief with student team about their leadership experience
- How the program was of interest to other CLLS programs and other workforce programs

### 7. The project budget.

The primary cost of this program is the planning and project management time of the two Project Trainers/Instructors, Susan Clark and Alma Miller. To contribute to that, Berkeley Reads is providing two hours/week of Adult Learner on Staff Alma Miller out of its CLLS funded operating budget as a way to provide continuity of service after the initial workshops. Other expenses will be for meeting and workshop supplies and materials development. The deliverables will be posted on line and available in hard copy as well.

Project Trainers/Instructors (435 hours at \$32/hour)	\$13,760
Meeting materials and workshop supplies	<u>1,080</u>
Total Request	\$15,000

