



City of Salinas, LCS Department

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1. One paragraph summary.

Salinas Public Library seeks to attract more high school students into its Library. This summer the Library collaborated with a design thinking class that sought to solve the riddle around why so many students after middle school stop returning to the Library. They created a concept app that brings together several key motivations that could inspire teens to return to the Library and remain regular users. The Salinas Public Library would like to apply PLP's Innovation grant to its proposed program, *Tech for Teens*. The Library would hire an instructor to build out the concept for the app by teaching teens how to develop it. If successful, the app could be used by other libraries to attract teens to their library; and the Salinas Public Library seeks to also build a toolkit for other libraries on teaching teens how to develop apps (particularly apps that serve literacy and library use.)

2. Explain how the project fits with the Library's strategic direction.

The Salinas Public Library seeks to serve teens better. We are working to encourage more reading, curiosity and to expand empathy among our teens. We are doing this by dedicating more space in our libraries for teens, creating new programs, and partnering with various nonprofits that can provide services for youth.

The Library also seeks to provide young people with the skills that they will need for today and tomorrow's careers. The Salinas Public Library is launching a new Innovation Lab at the John Steinbeck Library that will create a platform for a variety of educational functions. It will be a business incubator in the morning, and a creative workspace for youth and adults in the afternoons. One of the goals of this space is to support workforce development programs, and this project will introduce teens to real world applications of coding.

We have also partnered with Digital NEST, a nonprofit that provides high-tech training and collaboration space for youth in our Cesar Chavez Library. For the first time this summer, we conducted three, two-week workshops in coding and robotics for youth, using Google's CSFirst Program to teach Scratch to 9-14 year olds. The enthusiastic demand for this program has led us to begin coding and robotics clubs this Fall for youth. This program would build upon these existing programs by challenging youth to use computational thinking and learn coding skills.

Lastly, the Library seeks to support the City Manager's vision to tap the potential of its residents for turning Salinas into an AgTech capital.

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

The Library seeks to run weekend workshops at two of its locations, Cesar Chavez and John Steinbeck. The intended audience will be approximately 30 high school age students, from freshmen to seniors, and possibly older youth engaged with the Digital Nest (age 14-24). The program will have formal instructions for three months in the spring and three months in the summer. It will seek to develop a librarian-facilitated club to support continued learning after the formal program concludes in the summer. The club will work with highly interested teens to develop the beta phase into a more advanced product. It will seek to consult with the instructor at several stages throughout the year.

Salinas is also a very young community with 8% of the population between the ages of 15-19, and 27% are ages 15 and under. The Salinas Public Library serves a population of 157,000 and it is uniquely located in a rural/urban environment. Seventy-seven percent of the population is Hispanic, and 69% speak a language other than English at home. Only 12% of the population has a bachelor's degree, compared to 29.8% nationally.

4. Goals and objectives of the program.

Tech for teens seeks to build an app that will increase teen usage at the Salinas Public Library and can be a model for other libraries. The app would rely heavily on a points system that would reward teen users for visiting the library, checking out books, attending programs, accessing the library's digital library, volunteering, attaining good grades, bringing friends to the library, etc. Teens would redeem their points for rewards like additional computer time, gift cards or museum/movie passes. The application would also push Library information to the teens about new programs/events and books, build curiosity, interest and skills among the teens in the workshop, and introduce them to other academic and career opportunities to pursue their interests further. The library would also build a toolkit for other libraries to support similar workshops.

Another goal of the program is to introduce youth to computational thinking, and build awareness around careers in technology. We want to position the library as the platform for learning about technology and computational thinking. We want to see some of our students directly apply for the educational opportunities that exist locally at CSUMB and Hartnell College, and at the Digital Nest.

5. Project timeline (activities)

We envision three phases for this project: Phase One will begin in March 2018 and continue for 3 months. In this first phase, students will get an introduction to application design. Facilitated by experts with software application experience, and assisted by librarian staff, students will learn about how software applications are designed, and how the "Teen App" might be built with the features teens want.

The second phase of the program will begin in June and run thru August. It will focus on the development of the concept app to increase teen usage at libraries.

The final phase will be the complete development of the application or product (October – December) and creation of the Toolkit. During this phase, students will form a working group or “club” to continue development and testing of the app through the fall. This work will be a jumping off point to increase their skills and learn about opportunities to help them pursue their growing interest in technology.

6. Evaluation of the project.

The Library will conduct surveys on the teens prior to the start of the program and at the conclusion of the second and third phase to gauge any changes in the levels of their interest in technology, skills gained and Library usage. The program will also be evaluated on the quality of the app’s development and the quality of the toolkit.

7. Project budget

The proposals seeks a total of \$15,000. \$13,875 will fund a part-time instructor who will also help the Library develop a toolkit for future workshops. \$1,000 will go towards snacks and refreshments for the teens and \$125 will be used for printing course materials.

First Phase:

8 Sessions (3 hrs/session) x 2 Sites = 48 hours (includes 1 hr prep/debrief time)

Second Phase:

8 Sessions (3 hrs/session) x 2 Sites = 48 hours (includes 1 hr prep/debrief time)

Third Phase:

5 Sessions (3 hrs/session) at one site = 15 hours (includes 1 hr prep/debrief time)

111 hours x \$125/hour = \$13,875 (curriculum preparation time cost, including consultation on constructing a library toolkit is figured into the hourly rate.)

8. Sustainability analysis

After the program and toolkit are developed, the Library will seek to cultivate the toolkit by actively refining it from input from its use in future workshops and through the “club” and also from feedback from other libraries that hopefully adopt our model. The Library will attempt to leverage this program to strengthen its partnership with CSUMB, and use its experts to further refine the toolkit. The staff will also seek to encourage the teens in the workshop and in the “club” to take advantage of Lynda.com that the Library subscribes to as a way to further expand the teens’ skills.