PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Library Name:   Alameda Free Library

Project Title:   Pathway to Learning Initiative

Select category you are applying under:

☑ Category A: Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant
☐ Category B: Grant Replication Program

If Category B is selected, enter the name of the grant you are replicating:


1. Please provide a one paragraph project summary.

   The Pathway to Learning Initiative is aimed at enhancing the educational and creative opportunities for Alameda Free Library card holders. This project seeks to create a diverse range of maker and activity kits, each paired with themed, introductory level books, DVDs, essential tools, and all the supplies necessary to get started or practice new skills and hobbies. Through offering these comprehensive resource our goal is to empower our community members to explore and master new crafts and hobbies, fostering lifelong learning, creativity and skill development. This innovative program will not only enrich the lives of our Library patrons but also strengthen community engagement and access to educational resources.

2. Explain how this project fits with the Library’s strategic directions.

   Mission
   The mission of the Library is to foster individual and community enrichment, resourcefulness, and connection through welcoming, knowledgeable staff, and easily accessible collections, facilities and virtual spaces.
   I. Fostering individual enrichment: The Pathway to Learning Kits offer a wide range of hands on activities and learning opportunities, directly supporting enrichment by providing access to resources that promote personal growth and skill development.
   II. Community enrichment: As cardholders engage with these kits they will foster community enrichment through shared experiences, collaboration,
and lifelong learning, thus reinforcing the Library’s role as a hub for community engagement.

III. Resourcefulness: The Pathway to Learning Kits come with essential tools and supplies, making them easily accessible to patrons who may not have the means to acquire these materials on their own. This not only allows patrons to pursue their interests and passions, but strengthens our place as a resource for the community.

IV. Knowledgeable Staff: Staff members will be involved in not only the marketing and sharing of the kits, but also in the creation of pilot programs to encourage the circulation and borrowing of the Learning Pathway Kits. Furthermore, staff member’s involvement in guiding patrons towards the kits effectively ensures that the resources are not only accessible, but also utilized to their full potential, which is in alignment with the Library’s commitment to providing guidance and assistance to patrons.

V. Easily Accessible Collections: By launching the Learning Pathway Kit the Library extends its collections beyond traditional books and media, making a wider array of educational resources available to the community. This accessibility enhances the Library’s role as a source of diverse and enriching materials.

Overall, the kits directly support the Library’s mission by promoting individual and community enrichment, resourcefulness, and connection. All of which are fundamental to the Library’s purpose in service its patrons and community.

3. Please provide a detailed description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

In the heart of Alameda, a city that celebrates diversity and inclusivity, our primary goal is to serve a community that reflects a tapestry of backgrounds and experiences. Spanning various generations, Alameda's population encompasses all walks of life, with a notable 6.0% under 5 years old, 21.1% under 18 years old, and 16.8% aged 65 and over. Here, we come together to honor cultural richness, with residents from diverse backgrounds that include 46.2% White, 31.3% Asian, 19.1% Hispanic or Latine, 6.1% Black or African American, 0.5% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.5% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 10.5% Two or More Races (US Census Quick Facts, 2023).

While our community's median income stands impressively at $113,339 a year (US Census Quick Facts, 2023), it’s worth noting that a family of 4 living in the area needs an average of $120,000 a year to make ends meet (United Way Bay Area, 2023). This serves to reveal the need to support those who may not have access to resources independently. We are inspired to bridge these gaps, ensuring that every resident, regardless of their circumstances, can access the
tools and opportunities for personal growth and skill development that our Pathway to Learning Initiative provides. The Learning Kits are comprised of 12 meticulously curated maker and activity kits. These kits encompass diverse themes that reflect community interests, current and planned Library programs, and will give users the opportunity to try out new hobbies without a financial investment.

I. Pathway to Birding:
   • Supported by current Library programming, a monthly informational talk by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, which had over 100 viewers for the (virtual) July Program.
   • Borrowers will dive into the world of ornithology with binoculars, field guides, and a National Geographic Guide to Birding in North America.
   • Users will learn to identify local bird species and understand their behaviors and habitats.

II. Pathway to Plant and Mushroom Identification
   • Alamedans are fascinated by the natural world, as evident by our always well-attended garden-related programs (a August program on bees saw over 40 attendees of all ages). Additionally, in a recent programming survey 75% of the 60 respondents requested more programs related to botany. This Pathway Kit will help borrower’s further explore the world around them.
   • Includes magnifying glasses, a local plant guide, and a mushroom identification guide.

III. Pathway to Mindfulness
   • This Pathway Kit is supported by Library programs such as our recent Intro to Chair Yoga class for adults, which had 15 participants and received feedback such as “just great for people like myself who need gentle practice”.
   • Borrowers can begin their meditation practice through books and DVDs that explore why we meditate and how it supports our brains in the long term. They can even get started with their own meditation practice through use of meditation cushion that comes with the kit.

IV. Pathway to Knit and Crochet Kit
   • This pathway kit is supported by the ongoing monthly program “Make It”, a fiber arts craft circle and the libraries recent subscription to Creativebug.
   • Borrowers will have access to all the necessary supplies to get started learning how to knit or crochet, including instructional guides, a wide variety of knitting needles, crochet hooks, yarn, and patterns.
V. Pathway to Machine Sewing
- This pathway kit is also supported by our recent addition of the Creativebug database, which offers Library users thousands of creative instructional videos.
- Library users can take their making to the next level by borrowing a sewing machine from the Library. In addition to a sewing machine, each kit will include thread, scissors, and instructional books.

VI. Pathway to the Stars
- Our astronomy kit is supported by our previous and upcoming programs with Wonderfest around the upcoming eclipses. In October 2023 and April 2024 the Library has a variety of space themed programs and activities planned, aimed at reaching a broad range of audiences and interest levels.
- With the Pathway to the Stars Kit users will be able to borrow an AWB OneSky Reflector Telescope as well as star guides and a copy of the Cosmos reboot by Neil deGrasse Tyson.

VII. Pathway to Computer Science
- Our pathway to computer science is supported through in-house Library programs such as Coding with Lego and technology classes offered in our computer lab, and participation in the Hour of Code.
- With this kit users will dive into the world of coding and electronics with a Raspberry Pi computer. Build and program your own digital projects, from simple games to automation systems.

VIII. Pathway to Baking
- With the Pathway to baking kit patrons will be able to borrow everything they need to embark on a culinary journey with baking tools and recipes!
- Contents include cake pans, a scale, mixing bowls, and much more!

IX. Pathway to Ukulele Kit
- The program is supported through the Library’s collection of sheet music. Patrons can strum their way to musical proficiency and enjoy learning a new instrument.
- With this kit borrowers will learn to play the ukulele with a quality instrument, a tuner, and a beginner’s handbook.

X. Pathway to DIY
- With our Do It Yourself Kit patrons will be equipped with the essential tools and repair guides for common household fixes
• Borrowers will have access to a hammer, screw drivers, wrenches, and other common household tools in addition to DIY and home repair guides.

XI. Pathway to Ghost Hunting
• Supported by community events such as The USS Hornet History Mystery Tours, a ghost hunting event on the local ship museum.
• Patrons will embrace the thrill of the paranormal with ghost-hunting equipment and guides, such as EMF readers, a camcorder with night vision, and local ghost hunting guides.

XII. Pathway to 3D Printing
• Alameda has a rich connection to Making, being the former home of the Maker-Faire and the studio where Mythbusters was filmed.
• With the Pathway to 3D printing kit patrons will be able to reserve the use of a 3D printer in the Library. The reservation includes use of the 3D printer for a 3 hour time block, a laptop to use to create/modify their designs, filament, and reference materials.

These Pathway to Learning Kits offer a diverse range of educational and creative opportunities, catering to a wide array of interests and skill levels. Borrowers can immerse themselves in these fascinating themes, fostering lifelong learning, skill development, and a sense of accomplishment. Whether you’re a budding scientist, artist, DIY enthusiast, or simply curious about new hobbies, these kits provide an exciting pathway to exploration and growth.

4. What are the goals and objectives of the project?

By the end of the borrowing period, patrons will have successfully acquired and applied new skills or technologies, using the Pathway to Learning Kits as a low-stakes learning tool.
By the end of the grant period, the Library will host a minimum of 6 themed programs that compliments a Pathway to Learning Kit.
By the end of the grant period, participants will perceive the Library not only as a repository of books but as a dynamic source of learning for acquiring new skills and practicing existing ones.

5. Please include your project timeline (include detail of activities).

October-December 2023
• Establish Pathway to Learning Committee to outline circulation policies
• Clear collapsible shelves for Pathway to Learning Kit storage
- Order and process supplies
- Create marketing and advertising campaign, including outcomes surveys for patrons and satisfaction surveys for staff
- Train staff in materials handling and circulation policies

January-March 2024
- Launch Pathway Kits 1-11 for circulation
- Launch Pathway Kit 12 for in-house use
- Execute advertising plan
- Host one program a month in relation to the Pathway to Learning Kits
- Solicit feedback from borrowers & staff through paper and electronic surveys, measuring outcomes and circulation/processing ease for staff
- Compile and analyze results
- Modify kits/lending policies as needed
- Purchase supplies as needed

April-June 2024
- Host one program a month in relation to the Pathway to Learning Kits
- Solicit feedback from borrowers & staff regarding any changes, measuring outcomes and circulation/processing ease for staff
- Compile and analyze results
- Modify kits/lending policies as needed
- Purchase supplies as needed.

FY 24-25 and beyond
- Add 3 kits per quarter
- Expand holdings out to branches
- Fold into future MakerSpace and Tool Lending Library Plans

6. Please indicate how you will evaluate success of your project.

Quantitative data will be collected through Polaris LEAP, which will include but not be limited to: number of circulations, patron demographics, and in-house use.

Qualitative data will be collected through surveys included in each kit, which will measure a patron’s previous exposure to the theme and compare it to what they learned during the borrowing period. Staff feedback will also be collected and analyzed everything 3 months for the first 6 months, and then quarterly and biannually. Adjustments and additions to borrowing limits, materials included, training support and troubleshooting will be incorporated on the same schedule. Program Evaluation Surveys will be collected at each of the 6 programs which will measure the value of the program and patron satisfaction.
7. Please detail your project budget. (Note: Indirect costs are not allowed).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathway Kit</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Birding</td>
<td>Binoculars, 3 books, 1 bird ID pamphlet, 1 DVD, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Plant and Mushroom Identification</td>
<td>Foraging basket, 1 local foraging guide, 1 mushroom identification book, 1 mushroom ID pamphlet, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Mindfullness</td>
<td>2 books, 2 DVDs, 1 meditation cushion, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Knit and Crochet</td>
<td>Crochet hook set, Knitting needle set, yarn, 2 books, 2 DVDs, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Machine Sewing</td>
<td>1 sewing machine, bobbins, thread, sewing scissors, 3 books, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to the Stars</td>
<td>1 telescope, 1 book, 1 DVD, 1 star finder, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Computer Science</td>
<td>1 Raspberry pi programming kit, 3 books, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Baking</td>
<td>1 digital food scale, 2 round cake tins, 1 rectangle cake tin, 1 half size baking sheet, 1 spatula, 1 bench scraper, mixing bowls with lids, 3 books, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Ukulele</td>
<td>1 Ukulele, felt picks, 2 books, 1 DVD, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to 3D Printing</td>
<td>1 3D printer, 1 laptop, PLA filament, 2 books, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to DIY</td>
<td>1 flashlight, safety glasses, 1 tape measure, 1 pair of scissors, 1 hammer, 1 set of pliers, 1 level, 1 wrench set, 2 books, 1 DVD, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to Ghost Hunting</td>
<td>1 infrared thermometer, 1 digital voice recorder, 1 EMF reader, 1 camcorder with night vision, 1 spirit box, 1 memory card, 3 books, 1 user guide</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and Packaging</td>
<td>12 small bags, 12 medium bags, 12 large bags, 3 really useful boxes, 1 3D printer cart</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Tax @ 10.75%</td>
<td></td>
<td>$742.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$7,642.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Please indicate how the project will be sustained after the grant term is over. Adult Services will add a line item to their yearly budget to the Friends of the Alameda Free Library to support the upkeep of kits and addition of future kits. Further grant funding may be sought for additional kit building.