PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Library Name: Oakland Public Library

Project Title: Tech for All

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.

Although digital skills and internet access are essential to anyone looking for educational, employment, healthcare, or social services resources, a shocking number of people do not have these critical tools. The U.S. Census Bureau’s 2021 American Community Survey reported that 5.5% of households in Oakland do not have a computer, tablet, or smart phone, and 7.5% do not have internet access. The Oakland Public Library (OPL) already strives to meet this need with public computer labs that offer desktop computers, free Wi-Fi, low-cost printing services, and – at some locations – volunteer tech support. But the needs are great, and we know that our patrons require more support to improve their digital skills and increase their internet access. To make a greater impact, OPL will engage local nonprofit Tech Exchange to provide their “Tech for All” workshops at three OPL locations in January - June 2024. Tech for All is a series of basic computer skills classes aimed at adults who are disconnected from online resources due to a lack of experience, technology, and/or internet connection. The library is excited to launch this new program which will bolster our community’s computer skills, increase awareness of OPL’s online resources, and expand access to computers and the internet.

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

The first goal in OPL’s strategic plan is to “reach more people where they are.” This includes specific objectives for planning more OPL activities outside of library facilities, translating
popular OPL resources (already available in English, Chinese, and Spanish) into Vietnamese and Arabic, and offering activities and services that are specifically designed to meet the needs of underserved and marginalized members of our community. The proposed project fits squarely into this last objective.

81st Avenue Branch Library and the West Oakland Branch Library are located in neighborhoods ranked “highest priority” by the Geographic Equity Toolbox – an interactive map created by the City of Oakland’s Department of Transportation to identity and prioritize neighborhoods for new services, programs, and projects. Although the Main Library’s immediate neighborhood is ranked “medium priority” by the Toolkit, it is just two blocks from a “highest priority” neighborhood and it draws patrons from throughout the city.

Tech Exchange has more than 25 years of experience in providing refurbished computers, tech support, and basic skills instruction to individuals and families in Oakland. OPL offers desktop computer access, printing, scanning, faxing, and Wi-Fi at each of the system’s 18 locations. OPL provides more than 125 different online resources, many of which offer significant educational, professional, and linguistic support. Combining our strengths with the internet service discounts currently provided by the Affordable Connectivity Program will make these workshops appealing to individuals in our community with a wide range of needs.

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

This project will take place at three OPL facilities: 81st Avenue Branch Library, West Oakland Branch Library, and the Main Library. Zip-code level U.S. Census data for these libraries shows that more than 20% of the surrounding population lives below the poverty line and approximately 10% of households do not have a computer, tablet, or smart phone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population*</th>
<th>Persons below poverty line*</th>
<th>Bachelor’s degree or higher*</th>
<th>No Internet access**</th>
<th>No computer or device**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81st Avenue Branch, zip code 94621</td>
<td>35,379</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Library, zip code 94612</td>
<td>16,884</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Oakland Branch, zip code 94607</td>
<td>27,022</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Regular access to the internet and a reliable device is an essential need in modern society. Information and opportunities related to education, jobs, healthcare, transportation, tax preparation, and social services are almost exclusively online. And yet – according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2021 ACS report – 9,356 households in Oakland do not have a computer, tablet, or smart phone.

This project will make Tech Exchange’s “Tech for All” workshops available to our community at the 81st Avenue Branch Library, the West Oakland Branch Library, and the Main Library from January – June 2024. Tech for All is a two-week program that meets twice/week for two hours each time (8 hours total) with two follow-up sessions provided as an optional, drop-in service. Each of the three OPL locations will host two of these 2-week workshops over the 6-month period.

Tech for All instruction focuses on basic computer skills but can be modified to meet the needs of the individuals within each cohort of 10 students. Tech Exchange is excited to adapt their existing curriculum to include key library resources that will meet the needs of program participants. Library staff will assess whether to provide a couple of the sessions in languages other than English (Tech Exchange offers classes in Spanish, Mam, and Cantonese/Mandarin).

The 8-hour Tech for All course will include fundamental digital skills: learning the basic components of how to operate a computer, search the internet, and set up and use e-mail. The workshop will also focus on participants' individual priorities, which could include how to: search and apply for jobs, access social services, make health care appointments, access telehealth services, and other important online activities. Support will be provided for issues such as utilizing a template for creating a resume, conducting a zoom interview, and applying for (or renewing) benefits.

In addition to their new knowledge, skills, and confidence, students also will take home the device that they used during the class. OPL and Tech Exchange will work with participants to make sure they are taking advantage of the Affordable Connectivity Program’s internet service discounts.

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

This project aims to help bridge the digital divide in Oakland. It will increase participants' capacity to utilize the tech and digital resources offered by OPL. Fundamental computer skills will be taught with layered content in the same classroom, allowing people with different skill levels to benefit from the class.

The need for this type of program is supported by the U.S. Census data listed above, OPL staff’s daily interactions with library patrons, in-depth discussions with learners in OPL’s Second Start Adult Literacy program, and questions fielded by volunteer tutors in the OPL’s public computer labs.
We plan to hold six 2-week sessions each followed by two optional drop-in support classes, each serving 10 students. From January – June 2024, we expect 60 individuals to have completed the training, received a computer or similar device, and set up (or confirmed) discounted internet service at home. We also plan to conduct a 2-week pilot workshop in November 2023.

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

| November 2023       | • finalize agreement with Tech Exchange to provide instruction & (in-kind) refurbished devices for up to 60 participants  
|                     | • schedule six workshops at three locations  
|                     | • prepare outreach materials  
|                     | • run pilot workshop |
| December 2023       | • finalize curriculum  
|                     | • promote workshops  
|                     | • begin registration |
| January 2024        | • conduct first workshop, evaluate, and adjust plans for next cohort  
|                     | • promote next sessions |
| February 2024       | • conduct second workshop, evaluate, and adjust plans for next cohort  
|                     | • promote next sessions |
| March 2024          | • conduct third workshop, evaluate, and adjust plans for next cohort  
|                     | • promote next sessions |
| April 2024          | • conduct fourth workshop, evaluate, and adjust plans for next cohort  
|                     | • promote next sessions |
| May 2024            | • conduct fifth workshop, evaluate, and adjust plans for next cohort  
|                     | • promote final session |
| June 2024           | • conduct sixth workshop and evaluate  
|                     | • evaluate project, determine whether to seek funding to continue and -- if so – plan any adjustments that should be made |
6. Please indicate how you will evaluate success of your project.

Success will be evaluated by looking at the numbers of students who sign up for and complete the training. Additionally, OPL and Tech Exchange will conduct pre- and post-program surveys. The pre-program survey will ask about participants’ internet connectivity at home, pre-course skills, and digital literacy personal goals. Post-program surveys will assess the effectiveness of the workshop and collect information on more advanced class needs.

7. Please detail your project budget. (Note: Indirect costs are not allowed).

Tech Exchange has been teaching the Tech for All program at their facility in Oakland for many years. It’s a popular and effective program, and OPL is excited to offer it to library patrons at libraries in three underserved neighborhoods.

Tech Exchange will provide the following services for a total cost of $12,400:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit Price</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program build out, data enhancements to capture metrics, Tech Exchange staff capacity building and prep, scheduling, and device distribution planning. Tech specs set up in OPL facility. (Includes a pilot testing session in November 2023)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Skills Instruction (hourly) 24 Two-Hour Digital Literacy Classes (six 8-hour workshops)</td>
<td>48 hours</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Hour Preparation for Each Class. Class organization and content alignment for each class. (24) Digital Literacy Classes</td>
<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two optional, one-hour drop-in support sessions to be offered after each workshop ends.</td>
<td>12 Hours</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$12,400</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If this project is selected to receive a full award of $12,000, OPL will request $400 from the Friends of the Oakland Public Library to cover the remaining cost of the program.

Additionally, OPL will provide in-kind staff support, meeting space, and promotional materials for the program.

Also in-kind, Tech Exchange will provide 60 refurbished personal computing devices (with an estimated value of $300 each) to be given to each participant upon completion of the 8-hour workshop.
8. Please indicate how the project will be sustained after the grant term is over.

OPL and Tech Exchange are committed to making technology and the internet more accessible to individuals and families in Oakland. We anticipate that this project will be welcomed by our community and that we’ll have no difficulties recruiting the 60 students to complete the 8-hour workshops.

If this project is as successful as we expect it will be, then we would prioritize future iterations of the program within OPL’s existing programming budget or seek outside funding from other sources. The evaluation data – both the numbers of people served and the impact of the training – will be critical to planning the future of this project.

**Complete Only for Category B Grants:**

9. Explain what grant was selected to replicate and why.

   N/A

10. If there are changes or enhancements to the original grant, including budgetary changes, please detail the changes and your rationale for making them.

    N/A