

LSTA

Library Services Technology Act

Town-wide Preservation Assessment

Grant Amount:

\$30,000

Time Range:

1 year

Eligibility:

Public Libraries

Staff Contact:

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Summary:

Convene community stakeholders to assess the stability of community memory collections.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program focuses on a preservation assessment of collections in a community. It is the first step in the process of preserving, organizing, and eventually sharing historically significant local collections in Massachusetts. The public library will lead a collaborative project with other collecting institutions in the community, convening to address shared preservation concerns. Each participating institution must submit a letter of commitment and will receive a customized Preservation Assessment report from a consultant (MBLC maintains a current list of vendors). The library and participating institutions must meet at least twice, virtually or in-person. The Preservation Assessment consultant will:

- Focus attention on preservation needs and identify the type of work that these might entail, including actual conservation treatment as well as storage, handling, and security suggestions.
- Help the staff determine the treatment priorities of those items in need of work and the steps necessary to accomplish it.
- Evaluate the buildings and make suggestions for steps to be taken to prolong the life of the materials, including environmental

conditions and controls.

- Review policies and procedures for collection management and make recommendations as to their revision or creation.
- Examine emergency preparedness and any existing disaster plans for collections.
- Review housekeeping and pest management practices and evaluate storage and handling practices for materials.
- Assist in identifying collections of historical significance within the collecting areas of the repositories that would be in need of arrangement and description before they could become candidates for digitization and posting to Digital Commonwealth.
- Provide a report to each repository, and if feasible and appropriate, one for the community's repositories as a whole. The report will delineate the findings of the assessment and will provide short, medium, and long-term recommendations to improve the long-term viability of each repository's collections.

Each institution must submit, upon grant completion, their [special collection management priorities](#).

BACKGROUND

Throughout the Commonwealth, repositories house irreplaceable collections of books, as well as private and public documents that serve as a rich resource for researchers. Libraries, historical societies, municipal departments, museums, and other repositories have long collected materials that document their immediate and adjoining locales, as well as focusing on specific collecting areas. Yet many of these repositories may not often collaborate to reach goals that are shared among themselves. In addition, many of these collections are in need of preservation.

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