



Town-Wide Preservation Assessment and Collection Identification **FACT SHEET**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program, focusing on the preservation assessment of collections, will be the first step toward preserving, arranging and describing, and digitizing historically significant local collections in Massachusetts for access. The MBLC will hire a consultant(s) to provide preservation assessments. The public library, in partnership with other local repositories, may apply to have the consultant(s) conduct a preservation assessment of that community's repositories. The consultant will:

- Focus attention on preservation need and will identify the types of work that these might entail, including actual conservation treatment as well as storage, handling, and security suggestions.
- Help the staffs determine the treatment priorities of those items in need of work and the steps necessary to accomplish it.
- Evaluate the buildings and make suggestions as to steps to be taken to prolong the life of the materials, including environmental conditions and controls.
- Review policies and procedures for collection management, including collecting areas, donation of materials, methods of achieving intellectual control, preservation, accessioning and deaccessioning of collections, exhibition practices, and digitization guidelines as appropriate 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 bound volumes, documents, manuscripts, photographic materials, and audiovisual 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.
- Be available to answer questions and to assist in developing the Preservation Long-Range Plan(s).
- 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. Actions may involve low cost/no cost steps or could address significant issues such as building improvements or the installation of environmental controls.

A five-year Preservation Long-Range Plan for each participating institution (as well as one for the community as a whole if feasible and appropriate), based on the recommendations of the consultant's report(s), is required as an outcome of this grant. This plan should include Goals, Objectives and Activities with a timeline and should address building concerns; storage, enclosures, and handling practices; environmental issues; emergency preparedness; preservation policy and planning; and in-house repairs, conservation treatments, and reformatting needs.

Having contracted for a preservation assessment, received the consultant's report, and developed Preservation Long-Range Plans, the library and its partner organizations will position themselves to apply for grant funding to address the consultant's recommendations. LSTA funds may be available to prepare the library's collections for digitization, including arrangement and description, any necessary conservation work, and metadata creation. In addition, the MBLC will provide a resource guide to potential funders.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Public libraries meeting the standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs may apply on behalf of the repositories in their community. To apply for funds, all participating institutions must have completed a Critical Collections Questionnaire and have it on file at the Board of Library Commissioners at the time of application.

PRIORITIES AND FUNDING

Under this program priority will be given to materials of local, state, regional, or national importance that contribute to an understanding of our historic and cultural heritage. Preference will be given to collections in the following order and subject areas: 1) collections documenting significant Massachusetts or local historical, geographical, cultural, economic, and natural developments and/or collections with direct application and relevance to Massachusetts or the local community; 2) unique collections representing resources unavailable in any other repository; and 3) collections located in Massachusetts repositories that provide a unique and/or cohesive resource, independent of subject area.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit an application by **November 17, 2017**. If you need more information about this program contact Gregor Trinkaus-Randall at the MBLC, 1-800-952-7403 x 236, or by email at gregor.trinkaus-randall@state.ma.us.

BACKGROUND

The documentary heritage of Massachusetts is essentially intact from its founding. Throughout the Commonwealth, repositories house irreplaceable collections of books, as well as private and public documents that serve as a rich resource for researchers involved in local, state, regional, national, and international studies. The staffs of 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. Although much of this material is monographs and pamphlets, a significant portion is manuscript material (town records, personal and organizational papers), photographs, posters, ticket stubs, broadsides, audio/visual materials, etc. Many of these collections are in need of conservation work to prolong their lives and to enable them to be handled. Moreover, many will not see the light of day without a special program to identify them, provide for their arrangement and description, identify their preservation and conservation needs, and digitize them to make them available for research. Furthermore, the staffs of these institutions may not have the appropriate training to address these issues.

2018-2022 MASSACHUSETTS LSTA LONG RANGE PLAN GOAL AND OBJECTIVE

Goal 3: Strengthening Libraries

Objective 3: Provide training and professional development to enhance the skills of the library workforce and leadership.

Project 3: Provide Preservation & Disaster Preparedness Training