Project Description

Specifically identify the historical resource and state its significance.

Iowa has a large number and range of organizations that bear responsibility for diverse documentary collections. Each of these discrete collections together form an invaluable statewide historical resource whose preservation is the ultimate aim of this project. There are 99 counties and 947 municipalities which create and preserve public records; 667 public and academic libraries which hold 4.6 million titles and 16.5 million items; and 450 local historical and genealogical organizations, historic sites, and museums which care for an unknown number of collection items.

Different types of collecting organizations throughout the state have particular areas of strength. Iowa’s university collections are particularly strong in American literature; German language and literature; British and French history; American history (especially the Civil War); railroad and agricultural history; American labor and working class history; architecture, art, and design; history of science and technology; women in science and engineering; and the study of popular culture.

Our college collections are strong in local and regional history, business, personal papers, ethnic groups, and religious organizations. Iowa’s private and community colleges often hold a significant percentage of unique items, such as texts in applied technology and regional and local history.

Iowa’s museum collections are rich resources for the study of art, architecture, history, natural history, and the sciences. These collections are augmented by photographs, manuscripts, diaries, and films.

Public libraries, local historical and genealogical societies, newspaper office archives, and county courthouses hold collections that document the heritage of local and regional communities, including ethnic groups, civic and religious organizations, community leaders, and private industry.

Collections contained in Iowa libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies are vital to the government, education, and cultural life of the state. Federal, state, and private resources have been used to build and maintain these collections. School children, high school students, college and graduate students, educators, researchers and faculty, business people, county clerks, and the general public use Iowa’s documentary collections every day.

Provide an overview of the activities you will complete

The Iowa Preservation and Conservation Consortium (ICPC) proposes to provide a 2 1/2 day disaster response training workshop with follow up training a year later to 25 individuals around Iowa with the goal of forming an Iowa Collections Emergency Response Team (Iowa-CERT). The team will be comprised of a geographically-distributed mix of staff from libraries, museums,
archives and other collecting organizations throughout the state. The training will be developed and lead by Consultant Barbara P Moore and University of Iowa Libraries Preservation Librarian Nancy E Kraft, with assistance from University of Iowa Libraries Digital Preservation Librarian Emily Shaw and ICPC Administrative Assistant Lucy David.

The training will be modeled after the training Kraft received to become a member of the American Institute for Conservation's Collections Emergency Response Team (AIC-CERT) in 2011, which Moore co-developed and co-taught. More information on AIC-CERT at http://www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=695. This proposal builds on the completion of an IMLS grant, "Developing a Statewide Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan for Iowa," 2009-2012. The conclusion of this grant was a two-day disaster preparedness and response conference, during which 25 individuals signed up to receive additional training and form the Collections Emergency Response Team described in this proposal. In addition to conducting the training workshop, the project team will develop a list of expectations for Iowa-CERT members, a phone and email tree for requesting disaster response assistance, and will establish and publicize a 24/7 phone number for assistance in responding to collection emergencies.

Follow up training for the team will be held in June 2015 as a part of the daylong Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium annual conference.

**How will the proposed actions assist the historical resource?**

Iowa has the capability of providing first responder assistance that will save time, money and our state’s invaluable collections during emergency situations of all kinds. This capability and readiness was evidenced in Cedar Rapids during the response to the June flooding in 2008. Seven professionals were at the gate and ready to provide assistance to the African American Museum of Iowa and National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library when the waters receded and officials allowed citizens into the recently flooded areas. Members of the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium provided advice, guidance, and assistance. The collections of these institutions benefited beyond measure from this early coordinated response; the African American Museum of Iowa estimates that over 90% of their collection was salvaged due to the rapid response coordinated by ICPC.

Yet Iowa’s collections are distributed throughout the state. In order for smaller collections and those located outside of major metropolitan areas to have access to the kind of first responder services that saved the collections of the AAMI and the NCSML in 2008, a distributed team of collections emergency responders must be established and trained. Although written disaster recovery guidelines are widely available, best practice in emergency preparedness and response requires face-to-face training and practice where emergency responders learn to work together in a team environment. The proposed 2 1/2 day training workshop will incorporate a variety of team-based
exercises to build knowledge, confidence and experience among Iowa-CERT members in simulated emergency response situations.

Through Consultant Barbara Moore and Project Director Nancy Kraft, as well as through a shared training curriculum, the Iowa-CERT will be tied in to the national AIC-CERT. This tie will facilitate faster response in the case of larger emergencies that require assistance from experts outside the state.

*How will the project have an impact on the local community?*

Many of Iowa’s collections have great significance to the local communities in which they are located. Whether the emergency is a leaking sprinkler system or a regional catastrophe on the scale of the 2008 floods, responding quickly to collection emergencies can minimize the cost and impact of a disaster to the local community. Small institutions in particular often do not have the staff or financial capacity to respond appropriately to threats to their collections. This project will build a network of experts throughout the state who can respond quickly to collection emergencies. ICPC proposes to train and build an Iowa Collections Emergency Response Team (Iowa-CERT) of "first responders" that will assist Iowa’s collecting institutions response to collection emergencies of different sizes and types.

Iowa-CERT members will be trained, ready and able to assist and provide guidance on both short- and long-term recovery of collections. The 2008 floods are a prime example of the impact Iowa-CERT would have on local communities. During the 2008 floods, ICPC members coordinated an effort to move and clean collections from the African American Museum of Iowa (AAMI) and the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (NCSML). ICPC members assisted with training volunteers on proper salvage techniques, advised on salvage priorities, and worked with a disaster recovery company to provide needed supplies. Due to early ICPC assistance, both the AAMI and the NCSML were able to use the same disaster response company, and were able to meet to plan response and salvage before the flood waters receded.

In times of stress such as collection emergencies, having an expert on hand to advise local community members and assist with the many difficult decisions that need to be made can result in significant savings to the local institution. ICPC member and proposed Project Director, Nancy Kraft, served this function in 2008 and continued to provide advice and assistance for several months after the waters receded. Kraft provided the AAMI and NCSML staff with an easily accessible expert sounding board throughout the long recovery process. Though local community members may provide most of the labor needed to salvage damaged collections, a trained expert can provide the structure and guidance needed for local community members to act quickly and in the best interest of their collections.
For instance, in the immediate wake of the 2008 Floods, an AAMI staff person initially set aside 100 CDs and DVDs for disposal because they were covered in mud. On Kraft’s advice, the discs were instead cleaned, and all were playable. Without this expert advice, these items would have been discarded at great cost to the local community. The CDs and DVDs contained operating information, photographic images, grant applications, and exhibit plans; salvaging this collection greatly assisted the AAMI in becoming operational again. While the NCSML had plenty of local volunteers to assist them, the AAMI did not. The community that would typically assist AAMI was itself hard hit by the flood, and was largely consumed with response to more immediate personal emergencies. Bringing in outside assistance to help with the AAMI collections response was thus critical in that first week.

These stories are evidence of the real need for and value of trained professionals to assist with recovery of documentary collections after a disaster, and the impact Iowa-CERT would have on local Iowa communities.

Scope of Work

Project staff: Consultant and Personnel
July 1, 2013-July 1, 2014

Project Director: Nancy E Kraft, Preservation Librarian, University of Iowa Libraries, has disaster response experience and provides disaster response training. She will supervise the grant project, work with consultant to finalize training curriculum, and provide some of the training.

Assistant Project Director: Emily F Shaw, Digital Preservation Librarian, University of Iowa Libraries, has attended disaster response training sessions. She will assist with project coordination and lead follow up training on digital collections.
Consultant: Barbara Moore, trained objects conservator, has knowledge and experience in disaster response for cultural institutions. She will provide instruction and course materials for the workshops.

Administrative Assistant: Lucy David serves as the administrative assistant for the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium. She will provide office assistance.
Other instructors include an industrial hygienist, Emergency Manager or FEMA representative, and commercial disaster recovery firm representative. Based on past experience, these individuals provide training free of charge as part of their job.

Assembly of Collection Emergency Response Team
July 1 - December 31, 2013
In April, 2012, after attending an ICPC hosted disaster preparedness and response work, 25 individuals volunteered to receive additional training to become a part of an Iowa disaster response team. These individuals will be contacted to confirm their participation. Additional members will be solicited if needed with commitment to good cross section of library, museum and archive professionals and geographic representation. A listserv will be established for easy communication.

Participation requirements will be finalized and agreement form developed. An e-mail letter will go out detailing requirements and include a sign off form agreeing to requirements. Anticipated requirements are:

- before the start of the training program, to complete FEMA’s on-line “Incident Command System (IS-100)” course.
- participation in respirator fit tests, supply personal equipment, such as their own respirator, boots, clothing, and personal items, and maintain recommended immunizations.
- sign off by their administration that they have permission to respond to disasters to Iowa cultural institutions
- responsible for mileage expense to training

Preparing Emergency Response Training Curriculum
July 1, 2013 - July 1, 2014

Participants will receive in-depth training in emergency response procedures and techniques over a two-and-a-half day period. Barbara Moore and Nancy Kraft will conduct this program, with additional contributions from an industrial hygienist, an Emergency Management or FEMA representative from the local community, and a representative from a commercial disaster recovery firm. The training program will consist of lectures, hands-on activities, and table-top scenarios. Participants will learn how to organize and manage a recovery operation, recommended recovery techniques for the different types of materials in collections and how to incorporate health and safety precautions. On completion of the training, participants will receive a disaster response trunk kit which was purchased with IMLS grant funds in 2012 and personal safety supplies.

- Review Barbara Moore’s proposed training outline and adjust where needed
- Identify and invite an industrial hygienist, Emergency Manager or FEMA representative, and commercial disaster recovery firm representative to assist with training
- Review Barbara Moore’s proposed list of handouts, add/revise as necessary to fit Iowa’s needs

Hosting the Emergency Response Training
August 1, 2013- September 30, 2014

The training will be conducted somewhere centrally, possibly in Ames or Des Moines, to reduce travel time for participants as much as possible. Activities include:

- Select site, determine dates for training, secure hotel rooms
- Confirm dates/place with participants and trainers
- Identify a local arrangement host(s), if possible
- Identify and address presentation needs of presenters (hand-outs copying, equipment, etc.)
- Secure items and supplies for wet salvage exercise
- Assembly of trunk tool kit (Pliers, wrenches, screw drivers, hammer, mallet, crowbar, string, twine, utility knives, caution tape, duck tape, gloves, scissors, flash light, head light)
- Purchase and assembly of personal safety items (hard hat, N95 disposable respirators, and tyvek suits)

Work with ICPC Board and workshop participants to identify a host for a 24/7 phone line.
July 1, 2013 - September 30, 2015

This will require research as to whether to establish and pay for a landline or cellphone line that can be rolled over to individual phone numbers on a rotating basis.

Follow Up Training and Sustainability
June 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015

Providing ongoing training to the Iowa collections emergency response team will be critical to its success and sustainability. A follow up training session for the team will be held in June 2015 as a part of the annual daylong Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium annual conference. Topics for additional training will be solicited from the team and team members will be asked to contribute time to plan details and assist in the training. In order to insure that all can attend this additional training we are asking for $1,500 that can be used to assist with hotel expenses for those who will need to stay overnight. The site for the 2015 ICPC conference has not yet been selected.

ICPC is committed to the health and longevity of the Iowa collections emergency response team and will include disaster response training sessions open to the team and ICPC members on an ongoing basis. The continual education will serve to create a team spirit, insure team member readiness, and develop a pool of future candidates to select from when team members retire or move out state.