

State Library of North Carolina
2019-2020 LSTA Online Signature Page

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Project Title: Practicing Inclusivity Grant Type: Project Grant
Institution/Library: Durham County Library Year 2 of 2
Mailing Address: 101 East Morgan Street
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LSTA Funds Requested this year: \$ 106062
Matching Funds: \$ 35000
Project Total this year: \$ 141062

Project Abstract:

Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main provides programs, services, resources, and spaces for all members of the community, with special emphasis on individuals with special needs. The goal of Practicing Inclusivity is to focus on individuals with special needs, including, but not limited to: autism, developmental delays, emotional disabilities, hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech and/or language impairments, traumatic brain injuries, vision impairments, and other health impairments. The Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units at the renovated Main Library allows for Durham County Library to expand and improve services, spaces, and programs for individuals with special needs, an important part of the Durham County community who have largely been underserved in the library.

Certification and Signatures (please sign in blue ink)

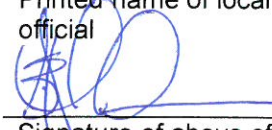
We are aware of and agree to comply with all state and federal provisions and assurances required under this grant program. If awarded grant funds, we assure that we will carry out the grant project according to the approved grant application. This application has been authorized by the appropriate authorities of my institution/library.

Tammy Baggett
Printed name of library director


Signature of library director

2-26-19
Date

Wendell M. Davis
Printed name of local government or institutional authorizing official


Signature of above official

2-26-19
Date

Durham County Library intends to apply for a second year of funding for the Multi-Year Project Grant, *Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main* in the amount of \$106,062.00 with \$35,000.10 in required matching funds. Durham County Library (DCL) will be responsible for the match of this program, and for providing opportunities for continued sustainability and enhancement. *Practicing Inclusivity* supports all three goals from North Carolina's LSTA Five Year Plan: it strengthens the capacity of DCL through essential technologies, spaces, and staff training; it expands access to library resources and programs for people with different or special needs; and, it allows DCL to effectively engage with an underserved portion of the community served.

1. PROJECT TITLE

Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main

2. ABSTRACT

Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main provides programs, services, resources, and spaces for all members of the community, with special emphasis on individuals with special needs. The goal of *Practicing Inclusivity* is to focus on individuals with special needs, including, but not limited to: autism, developmental delays, emotional disabilities, hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech and/or language impairments, traumatic brain injuries, vision impairments, and other health impairments. The Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units at the renovated Main Library allow for Durham County Library to expand and improve services, spaces, and programs for individuals with special needs, an important part of the Durham County community who have largely been underserved in the library.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main seeks to make Durham County Library (DCL) locations more welcoming and accessible environments for individuals with special needs, their families, friends, and caregivers. *Practicing Inclusivity* aims to achieve these goals through a holistic approach to librarianship – through centering on the needs of the whole person and adapting programming, spaces, technologies, and resources to meet their needs. A key aspect of this project is staff

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training, which serves as a catalyst for larger organizational culture changes and improvements in customer service.

Originally, the first award year of this project focused on the creation of a Multi-Sensory Environment (MSE) and Inclusive Playroom in the renovated Main Library. Substantial programming and staff training efforts were intended for the proposed second award year. However, the construction timeframe for the renovation of Main Library shifted, thus affecting the project coordinator's ability to create the MSE and Inclusive Playroom. Therefore, the primary activities for the proposed fiscal year two (FY2) of promoting staff training, inclusive spaces, and sensory friendly programs throughout the system became the focus of fiscal year one (FY1). Year one of the award became focused on training DCL staff, making our existing programs and spaces throughout the library system more accessible while also developing programs and spaces specifically for individuals with special needs. This was done while constantly engaging with the community of individuals with special needs, their caregivers, families, and the agencies that serve them. Now for fiscal year two, we will turn our attention again to establishing the spaces (MSE, Inclusive Playroom) in the renovated Main Library while maintaining a robust schedule of programming and services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their support people/groups.

Thorough research was conducted and gathered in preparation for the initial proposal for *Practicing Inclusivity*. Due to the unique nature of the topics in this proposal, the original PROJECT DESCRIPTION is attached in **APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESCRIPTION FROM FY1**. This appendix includes information on sensory processing, multi-sensory environments, and how we determined the target areas for the proposal.

B. PROJECT SCHEDULE

As mentioned above, the Project Coordinators had to switch the focus of FY1 of the project to the focus of the proposed FY2 due to the delay in the construction timeline for the renovated Main Library. Within this change, our project on schedule – and getting busier by the day, as the word of the programming and project spreads, and more staff and organizations come forward energize and excited about the project, and ready to partner or provide programs! We fully anticipate that all awarded funding will be spent by the end of this fiscal year. We fully plan to accomplish our goals of training staff, promoting awareness both for internal and external DCL customers, and for making our programs and spaces throughout the system more inclusive and welcoming for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

With this change, the proposed FY2 of this project will continue to focus on staff trainings, making our library spaces more inclusive throughout the system, and offering a robust schedule of inclusive programming – all while establishing the Multi-Sensory Environment and Inclusive Playroom within the renovated library.

C. CURRENT AND FUTURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The project coordinators learned of the change in the Main Library renovation schedule shortly after the award announcement, and immediately met with funding coordinators at the State Library to propose the shift in focus on the project. With approval, the coordinators began working on the project in earnest – and have accomplished a great deal thus far.

Despite the temporary setback due to this change in schedule, *Practicing Inclusivity* has had an immense impact within our system. Because of this award, multiple training sessions for library staff on topics such as inclusion, customer service and American Sign Language have been offered. Our staff members are becoming more aware of the importance of sensory inclusion to their programs. Even though our project thus far has focused more on community building, training, and enhancing partnerships, we have begun implementing limited programming. To date, we have had six inclusive programs available to the public since February 1, 2019. These programs have reached 259 individuals, with a larger following online where, in response to community requests, we are posting videos of ASL programs sessions for view. Programming system-wide will begin in earnest with the onboarding of the Special Needs Services Coordinator as well as with the system-wide Kick Off Sensory Events in late March 2019. We anticipate that the numbers of people in our community that we will serve will only continue to grow.

Below is a list of our current accomplishments to date, as well as planned milestones and activities for the remainder of the award year.

Events accomplished to date with explanations, dates, and outcomes are included below.

- Pre-Award Training: Durham County Library provided for one project coordinator to go to the annual Snoezelen MSE conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for three days of training on MSEs and how they benefit and are of use to families, teachers, and therapists. This was after the *Practicing Inclusivity* application was submitted, but prior to receiving the award notification. While there, the project coordinator met the founders of the Snoezelen Room concept and developed relationships with the consultants who will be assisting with the development of the MSE in Main Library, as well as with procuring equipment for all the locations to create their sensory spaces.
- October 3, 2018: Presentation to about 35 staff, from pages to the director, on Sensory Processing and Multi-Sensory Environments. Presentation titled “Lights, Bubbles, and Textures, Oh My!” at first of two staff conference days in October 2018
- October 10, 2018: Chris Ulmer of Special Books by Special Kids gave the Keynote Presentation to all 165 staff members at the second staff conference day. He presented on his work with people with special needs, emphasizing practical applications for customer service and daily life. Staff mentioned it was the best staff day speaker we’ve ever had. Staff continue to share with the project manager key takeaways from the impactful presentation, especially reflecting on Ulmer’s recommendation to “assume competence” when working with all people, not just those who have special needs.
- October 10, 2018: Open discussion titled “Inclusivity in Action Panel Discussion” at staff day on serving various populations. Panelists were Chris Ulmer, a representative from a shelter serving people experiencing homelessness that is across the street from Main Library, and a representative from Durham Public Schools who works with individuals in the Spanish-Speaking community. Presentation to about 90 staff members, who asked a variety of practical application questions on how to serve these populations in a holistic manner. Staff were encouraged to ask

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questions, and the microphone was in high demand. Many staff flocked the desk after the session to ask additional questions of the panelists when time ran out, particularly Chris Ulmer.

- October 10, 2018: Staff day LSTA/Sensory Room and Assistive Tech tabling. The project coordinators set up a table during the exhibition hall portion of staff day, where staff could come and interact with different aspects of an MSE, and different assistive technologies. Staff began asking questions immediately about what they could have in their locations to make them more sensory friendly.
- October 11, 2018: Project Coordinators traveled to Charlotte, NC to meet with the coordinator of the Multi-Sensory Environment at EasterSeals UPC. Project Coordinators learned practical applications for MSEs and evidence-based methods for introducing individuals to the space, all while discussing best practices within the Occupational Therapy field.
- October 11, 2018: Project Coordinators met with librarians at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Main Library and learned about programming for individuals with special needs at the library, as well as the assistive technologies they provide.
- October 11, 2018: Project Coordinators toured and discussed with staff at the Imagine-On children's library about their Braille collection, leading to the idea of a Tactile Collection for Durham County Library.
- October and November 2018: Project Coordinators met with Teens and Children's staff at all Durham County Library locations to discuss the project, how to make existing programs and spaces more adaptive and inclusive and get feedback on what kind of training they would help staff feel more comfortable working with this population group.
- November 17, 2018: Hogwarts Club of Witchcraft and Wizardry had a sensory friendly astrology program with 20 tweens in attendance.
- November 2018: Initial meeting held with a representative of the Durham Special Needs Advisory Council; an advocacy group for parents of children with special needs in Durham Public Schools about the project and future program offerings.
- November – Ongoing: Project Coordinators are developing and continually/regularly meeting with multiple members of the Durham Public School's Exceptional Children's Department.
Meetings include:
 - November 20, 2018: Meeting with Dr. Kristin Bell, coordinator for DPS Exceptional Children's Program. This meeting has led to the ability to provide 3 programs at DPS elementary schools for individuals in the EC program AND the whole school during the Month of March 2019. Programs will be focused on inclusive programming - events for individuals with special needs and their peers in the schools.
 - December 12, 2018: Meeting with the Assistive Technologies Team at DPS to explore equipment and partnerships
 - February 19, 2019: Meeting with Assistive Technologies Team to explore collaboration in board maker and tactile collection projects, as well as providing staff trainings and programs for parents on assistive technologies.
- November and December 2018: Project Coordinators began purchasing and distributing items to locations to make existing programs more inclusive. Items are a range of sensory items, including items such as egg shakers, light up tambourines, scarves, bubble machines, Tactile walls and panels, etc.
- December 2018: Project Coordinators began establishing fidget kits full of sensory items for each location to have to make programs more adaptive and inclusive. Fidget Kits/Sensory kits include: hand held fidgets like sensory balls, weighted lap pads, bean bags, gel pads, sequined pillows, and more!

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- January 4, 2019: Fidget kits distributed to all locations! Training will be provided by the Special Needs Service Coordinator after the new position is onboarded by Durham County Human Resources.
- January 2019: Project Coordinators purchased and worked with DCL's Resources and Technical Services division to create the Tactile Collection for programming to have more Braille print and text offerings and books that are more sensory friendly to engage readers of all levels.
- January 16 – January 31, 2019: The Special Needs Services Coordinator position posted, and recruitment began!
- February 12, 2019: Submission of purchase order to order supplies for location sensory materials, including larger items like bubble walls, a tactile wall panel, a Vecta Deluxe mobile MSE unit, etc.
- February 14 – 18, 2019: Interviews for Special Needs Services Coordinator took place, external references acquired, and a selection was made and submitted to Durham County Human Resource for approval.
- February 2 – March 6, 2019: American Sign Language Training Course provided, open to library staff and members of the public. This six-week once a week course averages 25 staff attendees, and multiple members of the public. There are even teens in attendance! By request, starting the second week, all class videos are posted to Youtube so that others can access the trainings.
- February 12, 2019 - Children's librarians at DCL's Southwest Regional Library began introducing purchased sensory elements to existing storytime programs, using egg shakers in baby storytimes for a total of approximately 70 attendees. The most important outcome of this, however, was when the librarian then emailed the project coordinator that the grant had caused them to research how to make the program more sensory friendly: *"After we got the shakers from you all thanks to the grant, I started looking into the benefits of using shakers in baby times. It's wonderful because it helps the babies work on fine and gross motor movement, can help with the idea of cause and effect, and helps teach the idea of play to both babies and caregivers (which is essential for early literacy). As I'm trying to incorporate more early literacy practices and information for my parents and caregivers, having the shakers fit perfectly into that goal."* Staff are excited and want to learn more to make their programming more inclusive.
- February 19, 2019 – Project Coordinators met with founders of Gigi's Playhouse in Raleigh, NC. Gigi's Playhouse is a resource center for individuals with Down Syndrome, their families and caregivers. Project Coordinators have begun, and will continue, to share information, programs, training, and best practices with this established partnership.
- February 19, 2019 – Established partnership with Alisha Boden, who will provide BoardMaker trainings to families at Library locations from April – June 2019. BoardMaker is a communication tool used heavily within the Durham Public School systems.
- February 22, 2019 – First inclusive "Live and Sing" storytime at Southwest Regional Library, using LED tambourines. The program had 69 participants.

As evident above, many of our accomplishments have been training staff, purchasing materials, and securing partnerships to gain community support and momentum for the project. Now that we have accomplished identifying and strengthening some key relationships within the community, our upcoming and anticipated milestones will center largely upon community engagement through programming.

- February – March 2019: Installation of Bubble Walls and Sensory Areas at various DCL locations

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- March 2019: Onboarding the Special Needs Services Coordinator, who will begin working at Durham County Library. This is a significant achievement in the project and to Durham County Library's commitment to the project.
- March 21 – March 25, 2019: Bubble Wonders Sensory Programming at all library locations, in three Durham Public Schools Elementary Schools, and at the March 25 Sensory Jump Meet and Greet Kick Off Event. This program will be open to all ages and sensory needs, and will be an opportunity to work with library staff on how to set up a more inclusive programming atmosphere, with spaces reserved for wheel chairs, etc.
- March 25, 2019: Sensory Jump Meet and Greet: This event at Skyzone Durham is intended to be the kickoff event for much of the programming for this project. At the event, individuals with special needs and their families can enjoy the trampoline park, watch a Bubble Wonders performance, experience a mobile sensory room, meet librarians from locations in a non-threatening environment, and establish relationships. There will also be therapy dogs to help provide a calming environment. The goal of this program is for families to meet librarians so that they know they will have an advocate and a familiar face at the library.
- April 2019: Ribbon Cutting and Unveilings of Sensory Areas/Features at library locations
- April 2019 – May 2019: Board Maker Programs at library locations. Board Maker is a communication tool for individuals with special needs, that is used heavily within Durham Public Schools and other communities. Programs will take place at each location over the course of two months, where families can receive training on how to use Board Maker and create their own boards. As mentioned above, FY 1 has allowed us to purchase 5 laptops and licenses for Board Maker to be used at the different library locations. We will have the laptops available for general use by the public upon request, and families can connect with the Special Needs Services Coordinator, request the computers, software, and/or to get assistance in creating their various communication boards.
- April 2019: The Special Needs Services Coordinator will provide more in-depth training for library staff on sensory friendly storytimes and programming. Trainings will include how to make existing storytimes more inclusive, as well as how to have storytimes and programs specifically tailored for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- April/May 2019: The Special Needs Services Coordinator and at least one project coordinator will travel to a MSE nearby Durham, North Carolina, so that the Special Needs Service Coordinator can experience a Snoezelen concept MSE
- May 2019 – Programming at the MakerLab and North Regional Library for adults with Alzheimer's, partnering with the North Carolina Museum of Art and their Traveling Trunk program. Specific dates to be determined.
- May 2019 – Rhythm and Rehab Programs for teens with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Programming will take place at multiple locations. Specific dates to be determined by staff and contracted programmers based on availability.
- May 16 – 18, 2019: Program Coordinators will travel to the TFH Foundations and Strategies for Multi-Sensory Environments MSE Training 2019 in Pittsburgh, PA. This three-day training will be with the creators of the Snoezelen MSE concept, and with the consultants at TFH who are working with the project coordinators on the MSE in the renovated Main Library. At this training, Project Coordinators will visit multiple MSEs, and will learn how to support individuals with special needs, their families, Occupational and Physical therapists, and teachers within the context of the MSE.
- June 2019 – Yoga and dance classes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at multiple library locations. Dates to be determined based on availability.
- June 2019 – Completion of the tactile collection, including staff training on implementation and use in programming.

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- June 2019: Assistive Technology and Space Assessments: Project Coordinators will work with DPS partners and other partners within the community to conduct assessments of the assistive technologies we have within the system, as well as our spaces, and use these assessments on methods for improving our services both in staff training and how our spaces are designed.

D. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

In FY1 of this project, we anticipated three areas as challenges, but which have turned into unexpected opportunities for growth and expansion of this project, beyond what we had planned or hoped. As mentioned during our Mid-Year Monitoring meeting, if the project coordinators had to re-write the project proposal, we would incorporate the changes made from these challenges, as it has strengthened the project immensely.

Opportunity 1: Adjustment of Main Library Renovation Timeline

Our first challenge has been mentioned already within this proposal. Shortly after receiving the award for FY1, we learned that the timeline for the renovation of Main Library had been pushed back far later than was originally anticipated. This meant that we had to immediately change the focus of the project, as creating the specialized spaces within the renovated Main Library in this fiscal year was no longer an option. This switch was a relatively easy one, as the proposed FY2 of the project was focused on staff training, programming and spaces throughout the library system.

Therefore, instead of focusing on establishing the MSE in Main Library in this first project year, we have worked to promote awareness with DCL staff. We have held trainings, meetings, and sessions with staff to help them better understand the project and the importance of making their programs and spaces more inclusive. We are working to create sensory spaces at each location, and we are working with the librarians to create more welcoming, inclusive environments. They have received trainings on how they can make existing programs more inclusive, and how to create programs specifically geared towards individuals with special needs. Instead of focusing our efforts on equipping the space just at the Main Library, we have worked to equip our whole team with the trainings, spaces, and items they need to be empowered to better serve this community of individuals, and really – our entire community when we consider straight forward good customer service skills. The basis of the training and work we are doing with this project is emphasizing the humanity of the individual with special needs – which is a characteristic that can be transferred to any individual. We are hoping to generate a culture shift within the organization that focuses on customer service and holistic, whole person librarianship.

In addition to this, the FY shift has allowed us more opportunities to creatively engage with the community. We have worked to establish relationships with organizations like Durham Public Schools, the Durham Special Needs Advisory Council, Gigi's Playhouse in Raleigh, and others. From this ability to engage the community, we have been able to partner with organizations to provide programming in typically unexplored ways. For example, with the Bubble Wonders program, we have partnered with three Durham Public School elementary schools and are providing inclusive sensory programs for students in their special education programs and their peers. At one school, we will be programming for the whole school – including the special education students!

Due to the fiscal year switch, we have worked this year on outreach programming, which has been a tremendous benefit to the proposed (now) FY2 of establishing the MSE in the renovated Main Library.

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We strive to establish all the DCL locations as safe and welcoming spaces for persons with IDD. We are reaching the community where they are, establishing connections for increased comfort, and are then inviting them to come into the library. We are marketing the proposed MSE for the renovated library and are establishing a base of individuals and groups who are excited (and very ready!) to use the room, and who want to visit the library. As hoped, through our efforts, people are recognizing that the library has services and resources for people with special needs in Durham, and that we are advocates for their communities.

Establishing these relationships with the communities and with staff has helped us evaluate some of the original proposals in the project to see if they are what the community really wants and needs. We have also gotten some phenomenal ideas for programming and ways to assist the community. We have been able to make our project stronger and more meaningful, so that if the FY2 of this project is funded and we are able to continue programming and to establish the MSE in the renovated Main Library, we will have a year of expertise and evidence-based evaluations to help inform decisions and best practices.

As mentioned in the Mid-Year Monitoring visit – if we had to write the full project proposal again, we would structure it the way that it is now, with the original FY2 as the first year of the project.

Opportunity 2: The Special Needs Services Coordinator

The second challenge for this project has been that the Special Needs Services Coordinator position has yet to be filled. To show support for this initiative, and in recognition of the amount of work needed, Durham County Library agreed to the creation of a part-time with benefits position to be the Special Needs Services Coordinator. The request for this position was filed in February 2018 before the initial proposal request was submitted. Due to circumstances beyond our control, there were some delays with the position's approval and posting process.

However, with the support and help of library administration, the Special Needs Services Coordinator Position has been posted, candidates have been interviewed, and a selection has been made and sent to Durham County Human Resources. Even in the posting of the position, the community support of our efforts has been encouraging, demonstrating the need we have in our community for this library service! We are unsure of when the position will officially begin but know that we have the full support of our leadership team to help the onboarding process move as quickly as possible. We hope to have the position onboarded in March 2019.

This was a challenge not only due to the need for assistance in carrying out the initiatives and items within this project, but also because the salary for the Special Needs Services Coordinator was a part of the in-kind contribution for this project from Durham County Library.

While we would have greatly benefited from the help of the Special Needs Services Coordinator, several opportunities arose from this challenge. First, that we had to enlist the help of staff throughout the system to accomplish some of the programmatic goals for the project. An example of this can be found in the enthusiasm of librarians throughout the system to make their own programs more inclusive, and to then do specific programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The change in FY focus, as well as not having the coordinator position helped us empower librarians to be our champions and partners in this project, and in making our libraries more welcoming and inclusive places. It has given

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staff more ownership over the larger project. It is our belief that if the Special Needs Services Coordinator position had been in place at the beginning of this project, then we may not have gained the champions throughout the library system, as they would have seen the programming and advocacy as squarely the responsibility of the coordinator, instead as a system-wide initiative. Now, when the new position is onboarded, the Special Needs Services Coordinator will be an asset to the team to continue and further the work they have already started.

Furthermore, the need to adjust some of the in-kind funding led to the creation of the tactile programming collection, which is intended to support our program experiences and make them more sensory friendly. The tactile collection contains Braille books and books with sensory features like “lift the flap” that are not purchased in our regular collection. This collection will be a pilot program and will be available to librarians and library staff for use in programming. Based upon this pilot program, we will evaluate if it would be valuable and beneficial to make these books available to check out to the public. We anticipate partnering with Durham Public Schools teachers so that they can check out the books and the collection to supplement sensory teaching activities in their classrooms.

In addition to the new programming collection, this opportunity allowed us to incorporate an even more diverse group of staff into the project, specifically the librarians within our Resources and Technical Services division. These are the behind-the-scenes selectors and catalogers for the system. Due to their assistance cataloging and developing the collection, they are now stakeholders and champions in the project. Ultimately, the delay of the Special Needs Services Coordinator has proven to be a positive factor in increasing staff knowledge and participation in the project, and in the overarching goal of making our libraries more inclusive spaces. The catalogers who helped with the tactile collection are faithful attendants of the ASL course, for example, and have walked up and down the halls of the Library Administration Building for the last four weeks practicing their new sign language vocabulary. These staff members are not only champions for the success of our project, but they are becoming advocates for making our libraries more welcoming for individuals with special needs, their families, friends, and caregivers. Together, we are working to create staff change, achieve the project goal, and improve overall customer service within our system.

Opportunity 3: Unanticipated Positive Response & Managing Capacity

As mentioned in the original proposal, one of the catalyzing factors for this project was several library customer service encounters where individuals with special needs, their staff and their families/caregivers did not receive excellent service from library staff. Due to these experiences and stories, we were unsure of the response that we would get from the full staff when the project was announced.

We were wrong. This project has received an overwhelmingly positive response from staff and community members. We have received so many inquiries for training, for programming, and for supplies and spaces, that it has been a full-time commitment to respond. These requests are all beyond what we had expected or anticipated for the first year of this project.

To resolve this issue, as mentioned above, we have gotten more staff involved in the project, and are working to train them on how to make their programs and spaces more inclusive. We are meeting this demand by training and empowering our staff and involving more community partners so that we can meet these requests and expand our programming and offerings for the community. Hiring the Special Needs Services Coordinator will also help us expand capacity to meet this overwhelming need.

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Furthermore, expanding the position from part time to full time was recommended in the budget for the library for next fiscal year. While there is no guarantee that we will be able to have this position expansion, this demonstrates DCL's commitment to the work of this project and acknowledgement of the overwhelmingly positive response to its work.

E. RIGHT ON TRACK

Despite the three challenges above, our project's original premise has not changed. *Practicing Inclusivity* still seeks to make our library locations more welcoming and inclusive places for people with special needs through staff training, programming and spaces. The project is still the same as the previous proposal – the impact has just expanded due to the fiscal year switch. The emphasis on programming at the locations and staff training and community engagement has created a larger scope and expanded reach of the project for the proposed FY 2. Now, instead of just programming for one year, we are programming for two years. So, we are now proposing to establish the Multi-Sensory Environment and Inclusive Playrooms in the renovated Main Library, while maintaining the inclusive programming and spaces at the library locations throughout the system. The community and staff want this project, and as such we have a continued need for a robust programming schedule.

Due to the fiscal year switch – and the fact that we will be establishing the MSE in Main AND continuing a second year of programming, we will be requesting more funding than originally expected in FY 2, so that we can maintain and expand upon the momentum and standard of programming set in the first year of the project.

F. SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE FUTURE

Durham County Library is committed to making our library system more welcoming and inclusive for individuals with special needs. The initiatives begun as a part of this grant will have lasting ramifications on Main Library and the Durham County Library system. The Special Needs Services Coordinator position is a permanent position, which will last well beyond the scope of this two-year project. Furthermore, the Multi-Sensory Environment and Inclusive Playrooms are areas that have been built into the permanent plan for the renovated Main Library. These rooms, and the items within, will continue to be available to the public well after the award period is complete. This project will allow Durham County Library to establish the MSE and an Inclusive Playroom within the renovated library, as well as make sensory friendly and more welcoming spaces in our other library locations. As evident within our proposal, these items have a large cost – most of which is an initial purchase cost. Once these sensory items (like bubble tubes) are installed, the cost of maintenance will be manageable when anticipated and incorporated into the Durham County Library operating budget.

Furthermore, much of this project centers around staff training. Our main challenge will be continuing to maintain staff excitement, and commitment to being more aware of the needs of our customers with special needs, their friends, families, and caregivers. Library Administration has already seen the impact of the trainings offered and are working to hire a Training Coordinator that will help offset the need for additional and continued staff training. We believe that once more staff can work comfortably with this population – and experience how rewarding it can be – that they will maintain this excitement. It will be the job of the Special Needs Services Coordinator and Training Coordinator to continue to provide

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training refreshers, and brainstorm program ideas, and develop new programs to ensure that we continue to stay up to date with the best evidence-based methods for serving this community.

With programming, the fact that we are emphasizing making exiting programs more sensory friendly and inclusive makes long term sustainability easier for location librarians. Staff already have expectations of executing programs, such as storytimes, and are only having to make very small changes to make them more inclusive. The more these small changes (like adding egg shakers into the babytime or a fidget for a teen with autism to help them focus during a STEAM program) are incorporated, they, too, will become a routine part of programming.

Finally, perhaps the biggest sign of Durham County Library's continual commitment to the premise and goals of *Practicing Inclusivity* is the willingness of our administration team to include requests to expand the number and type of positions associated with the project in the position requests for the next budget fiscal year. Due to the overwhelmingly large and positive response to the project, we proposed that the Special Needs Services Coordinator position be expanded from Part Time to Full Time, and that an additional part time position be added. While we are unsure if these positions will be funded within the upcoming budget cycle, the inclusion in the request demonstrates DCL's awareness of the impact of this project within our library system and our community.

4. NEW PROJECT PARTNERS

For the second year of *Practicing Inclusivity*, Durham County Library will continue to strengthen existing partnerships and create new relationships with key organizations within the community to maximize the capacity, impact, and output of the project. There has been strong support and excitement for this project from community partners already, as well as library users and potential users. As we have worked to create partnerships within the community to achieve our outreach and programming goals, we have established relationships with several organizations and individuals who play an integral part in serving the community of individuals with special needs. None of these organizations are formal project partners, but their support has been critical in adapting our programming and learning best practices for working with people with special needs. These agencies and individuals have written letters of support that are attached in **APPENDIX II: LETTERS OF SUPPORT** to this application packet. These agencies and organizations include Durham Public Schools, the Durham Special Needs Advisory Council, and Signs of Learning, INC. We also have letters of support from parents of individuals with special needs, and from advocates within the community.

5. PROJECT TIMELINE

FY 2: TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITIES FOR FY 2020	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
	<p>FY Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Multi-Sensory Environment in the new Main Library. 2. Develop the playroom in new Main to be an inclusive environment for children with special needs. 3. Continue system-wide professional development and staff training including more specialized training for specific programming. 4. Further development and implementation of inclusive programming at library locations system-wide. 5. Enhance community engagement efforts for individuals with special needs. 6. Continue Inclusive Programming using Multi-Sensory Environment and supplies. 	

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July, August, September 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If grant award is given, place award on Board of County Commissioners agenda immediately following award. - Upon BoCC approval, work with Durham County Finance and Budget Departments for fund code information - Work with vendors, County and library personnel as well as consultants to redesign and develop the plan for the Multisensory Environment and Inclusive Playroom. - Host training of all children's and teens staff in use of sensory kits and tactile collection. - Host photography workshop marketed toward individuals with down syndrome with intended purpose of displaying their artwork featuring individuals with special needs at a library location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faith Burns, Interim Manager of Main; Sarah Alverson, Community Engagement Administrator; Sandra Lovely, Assistant Director for Planning & Facilities; Vines Architects; other DCL staff and County personnel as needed - DCL Marketing Division - Kathy Makens, Resources and Finance Officer; Durham County Budget and Finance Offices - Durham County BoCC - TFH Consultants - Jenny Levine, Humanities Coordinator and Durham County Library Art Committee
IF ADDITIONAL POSITION(S) IS FUNDED BY DURHAM COUNTY August, September, October 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with County HR and appropriate library staff to post, recruit, and hire second Special Needs Services Coordinator and to make existing position a full time-employee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faith Burns; Sarah Alverson; Lakesia Farmer, Library HR Analyst; Durham County HR - Special Needs Services Coordinator - Library Administration

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October, November, December 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue working with vendors, consultants, and other County personnel to plan and design the MSE and Inclusive Playroom. - Finalize design of MSE in Main Library with consultants and vendors - Ensure purchasing processes with county finance and vendors before purchase of MSE equipment for efficiency in procurement - System-wide programming as determined by existing Special Needs Services Coordinator - System-wide training for staff development day in October 2019, depending on availability - Work with DCL art committee to display art from photography workshop - Work with Durham Reads Together committee to make planned programs more welcoming for our diverse customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Alverson; Faith Burns; DCL staff; Special Needs Services Coordinator - Architects; engineers; county project manager; consultants - TFH Consultants - County Budget and Finance and Purchasing Departments; Library Finance Department - DCL Art Committee and Jenny Levine, Humanities Coordinator - DCL Durham Reads Together Committee
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January, February 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue working with consultants, county and library facilities as necessary to purchase supplies and materials for Inclusive Playroom and MSE - System-wide programming as determined by existing special needs services coordinator - Development of Grand Opening MSE programming - Purchase and installation of MSE for the Main Library - Purchase and installation of items for the Inclusive Playroom in Main Library - Once MSE is installed, training for all Main Library Staff on the MSE and the room booking procedures - Once Inclusive Playroom is installed, training for all Main Library staff on the space and its purpose - Work with Library IT, Special Needs Services Coordinator, and appropriate staff to develop processes and procedures for public reservation of the MSE in Main Library - Work with Special Needs Services Coordinator to begin trial of augmented or virtual reality videos to assist individuals with special needs before they come to the MSE - Submit budget proposal for Inclusive Programming to Library Admin for county budget request – to sustain programming after the award period ends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Alverson; Faith Burns; DCL staff - Vines architects; others as needed - DCL Special Needs Services Coordinator - TFH Consultants - Durham County Library IT - Durham County Library Marketing
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March, April, May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - System-wide programming as determined by existing Special Needs Services Coordinator and library staff - Ensure all is ready to go before Main Library opens - Pilot Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality introduction to Main Library and the MSE - Special Needs Services Coordinator to begin process of creating What to Expect Guide for individuals with special needs for all library locations, starting with Main Library - Opening of Main Library - Grand Opening of MSE special programs and events, tours (potential of Sharon Draper as keynote speaker) - Community reservations of MSE begin, programming begins at Main Library in earnest - Begin system-wide planning for upcoming fiscal year, pending budget allocations in July 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architects; Contractors; DCL staff; Faith Burns; Sarah Alverson - DCL Special Needs Services Coordinator - TFH Consultants - Durham County Facilities - DC Finance - DCL IT
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June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalize grant expenditures and report - Complete contracts for system-wide programs for programming as paid for by the award - Continue system-wide programming as determined by staff at locations and the Special Needs Services Coordinator - Continue daily reservations of the MSE in Main Library, recording statistics - Continue staff trainings as determined by the Special Needs Services Coordinator - Submit final report to LSTA at State Library 	
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6. EVALUATION

Program evaluation is key to maintaining, measuring, and ensuring the success and impact of *Practicing Inclusivity*. Both the Co-Project Managers and Durham County Library are committed to developing and implementing a comprehensive evaluation process for this project that accurately captures both the scope and impact upon the members of the community both with and without special needs. Analysis of programming data such as attendance, room visits/use, and feedback, will continue to serve as indicators of the effectiveness of the project and will also identify areas to improve and strategies for enhancing the long-term initiative.

A. Documentation of Outputs

Utilization of the Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units within the library will be critical for assessing the use and impact of the resources provided through *Practicing Inclusivity*. Visitors to each space will be counted daily, as well as how much the resources and technology provided are utilized. A key indicator of the success of the project will be an increase in the number of people with special needs who use our libraries and the services provided.

Program attendance will be measured at every program created and implemented. These may be programs that have been specifically created and targeted toward individuals with special needs or programs that have been made more inclusive and sensory friendly through training or sensory items purchased through

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the project. The number of workshops, sessions, classes, and other related programs will continue to be documented per common practice with attendance data logged into the library's program/event management database, which is currently Communico. Special attention will be placed on capturing attendance at programs specifically designed for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DCL staff will also share information about each program, to include the program description, attendance, and any anecdotal information shared by participants.

Furthermore, the number of programs offered for individuals with special need throughout the system will be measured. This evaluation will demonstrate the effectiveness of the training in staff. Increased staff confidence and knowledge for working with individuals with special needs will encourage the increase of system-wide program offerings. Tracking the number of sensory specific programs system-wide will also highlight increased offerings and use by our community members with special needs.

Skills gained, ideas explored, and needs met by the MSE, Inclusive Playroom and Adaptive Mobile Technology and Sensory Cards will be measured in a variety of methods, both quantitative and qualitative. Where applicable, the Project Managers will seek feedback from individuals and families of individuals with special needs who utilize the spaces, programs, technologies, and services. This feedback will be in the form of anecdotal conversations, drawings, or written reflections.

A critical outcome of *Practicing Inclusivity* will be a more inclusive and aware staff, who are comfortable with and aware of inclusive practices for working with individuals with special needs. Growth in staff will be measured primarily through assessments and surveys administered after training sessions. In some cases, the same survey will be administered both before and after the session, which will allow project managers to see the information gained by staff during the session. Attendance to optional trainings will also be a great indicator of the success of and interest in the project.

Growth in staff due to *Practicing Inclusivity* will also be apparent through comments and feedback gathered from members of the community with special needs and their families who visit the library and/or attend library programs. Feedback from the community about the degree to which staff made them and/or their family member(s) feel welcome will allow the Project Managers to assess the degree to which training is having the desired outputs, or the extent to which additional training is needed.

B. Reaching Intended Outcomes

The Project Managers and the hired Special Needs Services Coordinator will work together to gauge the impact of *Practicing Inclusivity* on the community served and to ascertain how relevant the programs and services offered by library were to the community. Where applicable, caregivers, family members, and those with special needs will be given adaptable exit surveys to assess what they did and did not like about the resources, programs, and spaces offered by the library. There will be heavy emphasis on anecdotal information about the impact of the project, due to the nature of the community being served. These informal reviews and conversations help the Project Managers and library staff understand where the community members' interests lie and where there is a need for additional resources, services, and staff training to serve this population.

A large component of assessing how *Practicing Inclusivity* reached intended outcomes is through continuing to cultivate respectful and trustworthy relationships with individuals who have special needs, their families/caregivers, and the organizations that serve them. It is because of the Project Coordinators' established relationships with these individuals and groups that awareness of the need for *Practicing*

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Inclusivity arose. As the Project Managers and library staff continue to work with individuals who have special needs and their families and caregivers, they will seek open and candid feedback about the impact of the program.

Data will also be gathered regarding the use of technologies and program attendance, so that we may determine increases in participation of individuals with special needs, and in their consistency of attendance. Our goal is to see a 60% increase in the number of programs for individuals with special needs and to create an environment where these families and individuals return on a regular basis to attend programs and spend time in the sensory spaces. Our intended outcomes will be met with an increased presence of individuals with special needs, expanded services, and a fully equipped and aware staff who are willing and able to engage and serve this population.

7. MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED

The required matching funds for FY2 of this project are \$35,000.10, which is 33% of the total program ask of \$106,000.00. These funds are anticipated through a variety of possible ways: the library budget, support from the Friends of the Durham Library in the form of a staff proposal grant to support MSE Grand Opening events, and support from the Durham Library Foundation in the form of Humanities Funding.

8. BUDGET NARRATIVE

A. Salaries/Wages/Benefits

The Community Engagement Administrator and Interim Manager of Main Library are the two FTE Project Managers of *Practicing Inclusivity*. In a commitment to the project, Durham County has hired a new position, a 53% FTE Special Needs Services Coordinator to help with the continued and sustained implementation of the project. In this year of the project, the team will spend time working with personnel from the proposed consulting firm, and other Durham County and library staff to ensure that the equipment is purchased and properly installed in the new room. The Special Needs Services Coordinator with support from the two Project Managers will ensure the day to day functionality of the spaces and equipment, as well as ensuring that staff system-wide implement programs and skills taught in training. The Special Needs Services Coordinator will also continue to be responsible for assisting with implementing programming, upkeep of spaces, and evaluation of the project. This staff member will spend time working to create guides, such as virtual and augmented reality tours of the library and publications on what to expect at the library for individuals with special needs. They will also work with staff on adapting existing programs for a multisensory audience. From experience with the first year of this project, the Coordinators have learned that there is much more time dedicated than 10% of their time. Durham County intends to use the full allowed percentage of salary/time for an in-kind contribution. According to our calculations, the allowed maximum is \$8,750.10.

B. Consultant Fees

To maximize the potential use and effectiveness of the MSE and associated spaces within the project, it will be necessary for the Project Managers to provide expert-level training to the various groups of

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community members who can benefit from the resources. In their experience in the first year, the Project Managers have learned that there are five target groups who tend to use MSEs. They are: occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, teachers/educators, and family members. All these groups use the room in conjunction with their student or family member that has special needs. To make sure that these community members have the appropriate information and training to use the room, the Project Coordinators intend to hold programs and trainings where consultants can come and instruct on how the room/sensory equipment can be used for a purpose.

We also plan to have consultants come and work with library staff on how to improve services, spaces and programs for individuals with special needs. The goal is to have consultants come in and assess items like library signage, marketing materials and their visibility, resource accessibility, web design, and more, and then report back about what can be done to improve accessibility. Staff can then take the findings from these assessments and change practices as necessary to be more welcoming and adaptive. We are requesting a total of \$6,040.00 for consultant fees to accomplish these initiatives.

C. Travel, Library Staff

In the first year of *Practicing Inclusivity*, training and travel to visit other Multi-Sensory Environments and learn best practices has been an essential aspect of enhancing the project. It is crucial that as we work to install and open the MSE to the public, we continue to research and implement best practices from organizations that have previously implemented the services and areas. In this fiscal year, \$5,000.00 is allocated towards travel for library staff. While the location of travel has yet to be determined, it will be necessary for library staff to identify additional avenues of continuing education related to working with individuals with special needs and MSEs. Possible travel includes visiting other MSEs in the US, attending the annual CSUN Assistive Technology Conference, the annual Snoezelen/Multi-Sensory Environment Training through TFH, or other trainings as identified. It is crucial that the staff associated with *Practicing Inclusivity* maintain a cohesive and thorough knowledge of the tools, technology, systems, and best practices in place not only for working with individuals with special needs and their families, caregivers, and guardians, but also for working in libraries in general. Travel will include airfare, lodging, and meals. As in the previous year of the award, the Project Coordinators will share travel plans with grant facilitators at the State Library, to ensure approval and adherence to the standards of the project.

D. Supplies/Materials

Due to the award year switches, the key outcomes of *Practicing Inclusivity* for the second award year will include establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment or Sensory Room, an Inclusive Playroom, as well as maintain a robust schedule of programs and trainings system wide. These aspects, and particularly those focused on improving spaces for individuals with special needs, will require a significant amount of specialized supplies and materials outside the normal range of materials/supplies purchased by Durham County Library. These supplies can be best broken down into the following three categories: supplies for establishing and maintaining a Multi-Sensory Environment; supplies for launching and maintaining an Inclusive Playroom; supplies to sustain programming for individuals with special needs and their caregivers, families, and friends. Furthermore, a benefit of switching the focus of the award years is that we were able to gain more knowledge of and experience with traditional MSE items and determine which will work best for our space and community. The list of materials below is like our original request but has been further curated for additional items that will enhance the abilities of the space.

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As such, a total of \$46,072.00 is requested for supplies/materials, with at least \$14,500.00 in in-kind contributions from Durham County Library. The supplies in the Sensory Room are intended to be as adaptable as possible and to allow individuals with special needs the ability to control every aspect of their environment. Expressing this degree of control over their environment empowers individuals with special needs, allowing them to assert a degree of control over their surroundings and situations. This is something that they may not be able to experience in other settings. The supplies for the Sensory Room include items such as: 2 LED Interactive Bubble Tubes, Interactive Hemisphere Mirror, touch a color podium, two wood back acrylic mirrors, an interactive fiber optic curtain, a Vibroacoustic Relaxer, a large marvelous marble panel. This request also contains miscellaneous materials needed such as: Bubble Machines, Bubble refills, fiber optic carpet, fiber optic hemisphere table, fiber optic padded platform, fiber optic spray set; soundproofing insulation, outlet plug covers, and attendant call/staff buttons, bubble tube security brackets, bubble tube draining pumps, and bubble tube wipes.

Supplies for the Inclusive Playroom include a three-panel activity panel set, and a marvelous marble panel. Pictures of these items can be found in **APPENDIX III: EXAMPLES OF SUPPLIES**. These items are tactile in nature to promote sensory engagement for all students.

There is \$3,000.00 written into the budget for miscellaneous supplies to account for items that should be included in the MSE, Inclusive Playroom, or for program supplies but were not accounted for in the larger list. These supplies may not yet be known to the Project Coordinators or could be incidentals.

To further sustain and enhance programming system-wide, there are plans for Copernicus premium STEM/Maker stations system wide. These stations will contain a large variety of sensory and adaptive craft items and solutions to be implemented in programs throughout the library locations. There is a total of \$4,500.00 devoted to providing these sensory programming supplies, with \$1,000.00 of that funding being in-kind. There is support provided to sustain the noise cancelling headphones in these stations as well. These stations will provide portable sensory materials for programming and for working with the population with special needs in all our Durham County Library locations, not just at the Main Library. This will help all our locations to be more inclusive of our community with special needs.

The remaining funds for supplies/materials includes money for programming supplies, specifically for programs for individuals with special needs. These funds will be used to procure system-wide supplies for these programs, and would include a variety of materials: paints, tactile craft objects, paper crafting supplies, and other materials needed as programs are developed. Based upon the previous Sensory Storytime and research by the Project Coordinators, it is anticipated that many of these supplies would be tactile, craft supplies that encourage hands-on sensory development.

Durham County Library plans at least \$14,500.00 matching funds for supplies/materials. A large portion of the in-kind funding will be the creation of an Assistive Technology Room in Main Library. While the details will be determined later, tentatively, this room will provide access to various software and hardware for customers who require assistive technology. There will be two computer stations established, taking into consideration visual impairments, intellectual and developmental disabilities, dexterity and physical impairments. Examples of the type of hardware this room might have available is a Braille keyboard, a Braille embosser, PCEye Tracker Plus, an Xbox adaptive controller, alternative keyboards and pointing devices, headphones, and video magnifiers (both desktop and handheld). An example of the type of software we hope to have available in the Assistive Technology Room is ZoomText, JAWS, Kurzweil, Text Help, Duxbury (a program used for creating documents in Braille) and EyeGaze. The Assistive Technology Room will also have access to an FM ADA Compliance Kit for library use during regular programming.

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E. Equipment that exceeds \$5,000 per item

We do not plan to purchase equipment that exceeds \$5,000.00 per item in the second award year of *Practicing Inclusivity*.

F. Services – Contracted Services: Program Initiatives

To continue to strengthen community partnerships and maintain a robust schedule of program offerings, Durham County Library intends to enlist the services of known organizations and persons within the community to provide unique program opportunities for individuals with special needs, their families, caregivers, and others. Using third party contractors to provide services will allow for library staff to work with other experts to gain program ideas and will also allow for the cultivation of new library partnerships for serving this community. In this fiscal year, \$48,950.00 is budgeted from the LSTA for providing programs for people with special needs, with \$12,000.00 in matching funds.

The programming budget for this fiscal year is more robust for several reasons. First, with the switch in fiscal years, the program is now two years of system-wide programming, instead of just one. We must maintain and expand upon our offerings from the previous award year. Second, in working with community partners, members and staff in award year one, we have learned of the desire for this project within the community and have heard the needs the community has. Increased emphasis on programming will help meet this overwhelmingly positive demand for inclusive programming, both from community and staff members. One of the items in the budget to meet this demand is one a quarter ASL classes that are each six weeks long. \$3,200.00 is budgeted to accomplish this goal. The pilot of this course has been extremely successful with a weekly retention rate of almost 80% of participants. Another aspect to meet this goal is our planned community engagement opportunities at local elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as adult day centers, which is \$8,250.00 of the contracted services budget.

Award year one of this project also showed the Project Managers the importance of engaging speakers and programmers that are individuals with special needs. We found in our conversations that representation was critical in training and programming. As such, we have budgeted \$10,000.00 for programming honoraria to bring in speakers and performers with special needs.

Third, with the Special Needs Services Coordinator in place, a budget is needed for the position to develop and implement system-wide programming for the community and a total of \$10,000.00 of programming funding has been allocated to allow this position to create a menu of programs and trainings specifically tailored to the needs of the DCL community.

With the opening of Main Library and the MSE, there are several high profile and larger programs that have been planned. These programs would celebrate the grand opening of the space and would include a kickoff event for the MSE and Inclusive Playroom featuring an author talk and inclusive programming. This kick off would be similar in nature to the Kick Off Sensory Jump of the previous award year, only this time, it is within the library space instead of a community location. For this series of Kick Off Events, we would like to also engage a high-profile author for the keynote speaker. Our research has led us to speaking with agents representing Sharon Draper, who has published *Out of My Mind*, a juvenile novel about a young person who uses an adaptive communication device. Ms. Draper is a well-known African American author, and it would be an honor to have her at the library for this event. Due to Ms. Draper's fee and the grand scale of the kickoff event a total of \$21,500 is budgeted. \$13,000.00 of funding for this event would be from the LSTA award, with the remaining as in-kind funding. In-kind funding will

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include programming budget funds, possible support from the Humanities fund, and possible support from the Friends of the Durham County Library and the Durham Library Foundation. Funding would also include items such as the time to create and market materials, and any additional copies of books purchased for the collection.

Finally, once the room is in place, we plan to have programs and trainings for specific groups of users on how to best use the space with their loved one or student. Our goal is to have a Multi-Sensory Symposium style event for Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Teachers, and Parents/Caregivers in May/June 2020. This would be a multi-day event, with respected keynote speakers in each area of the field. We have \$4,500.00 of LSTA funding and \$1,500.00 of in-kind funding budgeted for this large-scale community training event.

In the final year of this award, programming will take place on multiple levels; on a large scale with the Grand Opening of the MSE at the Main Library; on smaller levels with the continuation of inclusive and sensory programming system wide from FY1, and within the community to sustain outreach also begun in the first year of the project.

G. Subtotal

The total LSTA Funds requested is \$106,062.00. The total Matching Funds anticipated for this project comes to \$35,250.10, which exceeds the required amount of \$35,000.10.

H. Indirect Costs

Durham County Library will not be including indirect costs in this award proposal.

BUDGET TABLE

	Budget Category	Quantity of Items	Cost per Item	Matching Funds	LSTA Funds
A	Salaries/Wages/Benefits				
	Community Engagement Administrator	10% time	\$0.00	\$5,300.00	\$0.00
	Special Needs Services Coordinator	53% FTE position with benefits	\$0.00	\$3450.10	\$0.00
	Salaries/Benefits Total:		\$0.00	\$8,750.10	\$0.00
B	Consultant Fees				

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	Training and Consultant for Multi-Sensory Environment	Experts and Specialists	\$4,200.00	\$0.00	\$4,200.00
	Consultant on specific library services for students with special needs	23hrs at approx. \$80/hr	\$1,840.00	\$0.00	\$1,840.00
	Consultant Fee Total:		\$6,040.00	\$0.00	\$6,040.00
C	Travel, library staff only				
	Travel for 3 library staff to multi-sensory environments to learn best practices: location TBD		\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
	Travel Total:		\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
D	Supplies/Materials				
	Activity Panel 3 Set: Fiber Optic, Sound and Music, Tactile	1	\$1,955.00	\$0.00	\$1,955.00
	2M Interactive Wireless Bubble Tube	2	\$2,239.00	\$0.00	\$4,478.00
	Interactive Hemisphere Mirror	1	\$1,737.00	\$0.00	\$1,737.00
	Junior Relaxer	2	\$299.00	\$0.00	\$598.00
	36" Woodbacked Acrylic Mirror	2	\$449.00	\$0.00	\$898.00
	Vibroacoustic Relaxer	1	\$1,049.00	\$0.00	\$1,049.00
	Touch a Color Podium	1	\$1,125.00	\$0.00	\$1,125.00
	36" Mirrored Podium	1	\$489.00	\$0.00	\$489.00

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	Large Marvelous Marble Panel	1	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
	LED Sound to Light Panel	1	\$1,849.00	\$0.00	\$1,849.00
	Interactive Fiber Optic Waterfall	1	\$2,269.00	\$0.00	\$2,269.00
	LED Fiber Optic Softie-Interactive	1	\$2,325.00	\$0.00	\$2,325.00
	Multi-Sensory Room Misc.	MISC. Include: Time trackers, call buttons, security brackets, additional child proofing, bubble mirrors, padded walls/floors, body support wedges, etc.	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	\$9,000.00
	Copernicus Premium STEM/Maker Stations, systemwide	6	\$583.33	\$0.00	\$3,500.00
	Craft Supplies/Materials for STEM/Maker Stations, Systemwide		\$4,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
	Maintenance and upkeep on materials purchased in FY1, and shipping		\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
	Noise Cancelling headphones- expansion and sustainability	10	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
	Misc. Supplies		\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
	Adaptive Communication Devices for Multiple Locations	6 devices + software	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$4,800.00

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	Assistive Technology Room in Main	Items including hardware, software, and furniture for two assistive technology stations	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
	Supplies/Materials Total:		\$48,418.22	\$14,500.00	\$46,072.00
F	Contracted Services: Program Initiatives				
	Marketing staff time for development of promotional materials for room	\$25/hour for staff time of 80 hours	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
	Misc. Programming for Special Needs Services Coordinator discretion	Multiple programs system wide and outreach, supplies, etc.	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
	Kick-off event for MSE and Inclusive Playroom featuring author talk and inclusive programming (matching funds will include programming, possible friends staff proposal, etc)		\$12,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$5,000.00
	ASL Class	\$800 for 6-week course- quarterly and various locations	\$3,200.00	\$0.00	\$3,200.00
	Programming in Elementary, Middle, and High School DPS sites	approx. 28 school visits @ \$250 per performance	\$7,000.00	\$0.00	\$7,000.00
	Outreach programming to adult day centers- to promote library services	5 sites- approx. \$250 per performance	\$1,250.00	\$0.00	\$1,250.00

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	workshops and multi-sensory symposium- target OT, Teachers, and parents/caregivers (May and June 2020)	multiple workshops/days, various experts brought in	\$6,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$4,500.00
	Speaking fees for speakers with special needs to speak about life experiences		\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
	Sharon Draper- African American juvenile author of book <i>Out of My Mind</i> (Matching Funds- Humanities Honorarium)		\$9,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$8,000.00
	Programming Total:		\$60,950.00	\$12,000.00	\$48,950.00
G	Subtotal			\$35,250.10	\$106,062.00
H	Indirect Costs			\$0.00	\$0.00
	The library chooses not to include indirect costs.				
I	Total LSTA Funds Requested				\$106,062.00

APPENDICES

Supporting Documentation

APPENDIX I: ORIGINAL PROPOSAL PROJECT NARRATIVE

Too frequently, there are limited opportunities for individuals with special needs. This population is often underserved within our communities.¹ Few Durham County Library programs specifically focus on serving this population.² Storytime programs for children are hallmarks of public library services. Storytimes are designed to meet several children's developmental needs such as literacy and language acquisition, reading comprehension, relaxation and enjoyment, and social cognition and awareness. Durham County Library also offers extensive programming for older populations that encourage similar developmental factors. These are the same types of programs that are needed by individuals with special needs; yet we, as a library system, are not providing them. Furthermore, as mentioned in the need statement, we are not encouraging the use of our libraries within the DCL system by persons with special needs, because we do not have inclusive spaces and appropriately trained staff.

We plan to meet this need and better serve this community through the initiatives in *Practicing Inclusivity*, including creating a Multi-Sensory Environment and Inclusive Playroom in the renovated Main Library; creating Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units; extensive staff training; and expanding programming specifically designed for people with special needs.

Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment (MSE) and Inclusive Playroom

Research shows that the behavior of individuals with sensory processing deficiencies, including autism, brain injury, challenging behaviors, dementia, developmental and cognitive disabilities, mental health illnesses, PTSD, and more, benefit greatly from Multi-Sensory Environments (MSEs), or Sensory Rooms. We will use the terms MSE and Sensory Room interchangeably. These spaces allow persons with special needs to interact with the world in ways that they typically cannot, due to differences such as mobility, vision, or hearing, to name a few.³ A Sensory Room provides a dedicated space where those with special needs and/or sensory dysfunction can both relax and be intellectually stimulated.⁴ Sensory Rooms allow for individuals to control and manipulate many aspects of the environment, including light and sound just to name a few.⁵ Sensory Rooms empower individuals with special needs by allowing them control of their environment, an aspect and quality of life that they may not be able to experience otherwise.

We propose to create this kind of enriching Sensory Room on the ground floor of the renovated Main Library in downtown Durham. This room would be near a dedicated STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) space to enhance STEAM and other programming opportunities. The Sensory Room would also be near the auditorium, easily accessible for those who may need to step out of another program to utilize the Sensory Room. In the Sensory Room we have proposed a number of

¹ American Library Association. (2009) Services to Persons with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. American Library Association Council.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/servicespeopledisabilities>

² Nord, Leslie L. (2015). Reaching Out: Library Services to the Developmentally Disabled. *Public Libraries Online*. Sept/Oct 2014. <http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/01/reaching-out/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hidden Angel Foundation (n.d.). What Are Multi-Sensory Environments? Christopher Douglas Hidden Angel Foundation. <http://www.cdhaf.org/what-are-multi-sensory-environments/>

⁵ Ibid.

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technologies and items to promote sensory interaction, such as interactive floor panels, bubble tubes, and fiber optic lights. We have also included plans for tactile interactive play panels on the walls. In the planned Sensory Room, individuals of all ages would be able to control the environment to fit their specific therapeutic, leisure, and/or educational needs. This Sensory Room would allow customers of all ages the ability to control, manipulate, intensify, or reduce sensory stimulation. The Sensory Room would allow customers to change behaviors, increase focus and attention, and would encourage self-esteem and a sense of welcome to our customers with special needs.

Similarly, we propose an Inclusive Playroom in the Children's Area on the first floor of the library. This room would feature many items to address and engage many of the same sense and sensory needs, including some of the same sensory elements as the designated Sensory Room, but would be located in an area that is more convenient to parents and children who may be using library services or programs in the children's area. Responding to the focus group's desire for a safe space where children with special needs can interact safely and with other children, the Inclusive Playroom would be an adaptable environment designed with sensory features for children of all ages and ability levels. While the designated Sensory Room on the ground floor would be open to all ages and abilities as well, the Inclusive Playroom is specifically designed to promote inclusive play and interaction between children of all ability levels. Children with special needs and their parents will have the option of the specific Sensory Room or the Inclusive Playroom.

Both the Sensory Room and Inclusive Playroom would encourage families with special needs individuals to visit the library – and to feel safe and comfortable doing so. They would now have the ability to manipulate and control various aspects of their environment to match their particular needs. These rooms would also allow patrons with special needs the ability to remove themselves from stressful situations and have time in a safe, calm, and enclosed space.

Expanded Service through Staff Training and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units

As important as it is to create welcoming and inclusive physical spaces for people with special needs, those spaces cannot stand in for or succeed without appropriately trained and equipped staff to serve the population. As described within the statement of need, often individuals with special needs have not been accommodated or have been treated unfairly by Durham County Library staff. If we are to have an inclusive library, it cannot just be the space. *Practicing Inclusivity* will incorporate various levels of staff training. First, select staff will travel to different Multi-Sensory Environments in North Carolina and Virginia and will meet with staff and persons who have pioneered best practice methods for working with and supporting people with special needs and sensory environments. We will bring in experts in this field to offer system-wide training for all staff. This training will be evaluated and adapted by DCL staff and will become regular training for all new hires and current staff. Staff's capacity to assist individuals with special needs will be expanded even further through the Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units. These mobile carts would include various adaptive technologies, such as weighted lap pads, GoToTalks, noise cancelling headphones, and iPads that would allow staff to assist people with special needs throughout the building. We want persons with special needs to be welcome throughout the whole of the library, not just in two specific rooms. These mobile units would allow for that flexibility and for the ability to have programming for individuals with special needs throughout the library. This flexibility and adaptability, along with staff who are trained to provide caring, respectful, customer service, will demonstrate our commitment to the individuals in our community with special needs.

Expanded Programming Opportunities

Finally, *Practicing Inclusivity* will allow us to expand our programming opportunities for those with special needs. As mentioned in the focus group, and in the experience with STEAM programs, there has been a consistent call from parents of children with special needs, and from persons with special needs, for programs that specifically meet their needs. At DCL, it is our desire to be a community-centered library and to respond to the needs and desires of our customers and community. *Practicing Inclusivity* will allow us to do just that by increasing programming for individuals with special needs. It is our goal to use the spaces and equipment provided, along with appropriately trained staff, to expand sensory storytime options and to begin STEAM and tutoring programming specifically for those with special needs. We plan to partner with outside performers to provide sensitive, engaging, and interactive programming for people with special needs and others. It is our goal to create various digital and physical guidebooks and handouts to library programs and resources for people with special needs. These guides would help explain what families and individuals can expect at programs and in the library, so that they can be prepared for their visit.

Through inclusive spaces and programs, paired with assistive technologies and knowledgeable, considerate staff, *Practicing Inclusivity* will allow the Durham County Library system to better serve those with special needs in our community. It is our goal that this project will not only allow us to serve this population but will transform DCL into an inclusive environment that is an example to and for other libraries in North Carolina and throughout the country.

APPENDIX II: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

On the following pages are letters of support from multiple community agencies and partners who work with individuals with special needs.

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Faith Burns

Interim Manager, Main Library

Durham County Library

101 E. Morgan Street

Durham NC 27701

Dear Ms. Burns,

Thank you for the opportunity to join in support of your LSTA project and proposal "Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main." Initiatives like this are truly some of the leading examples that show how Durham cares about all of their community members. The benefits are one that will yield fruitful operations to others for years to come.

I must say that I'm empathetically engulfed in the progress of this proposal. The approach that is being taken is one that shows that addressing the special needs community matters. The proposed project is relevant to my work, as the Chairperson of the Durham Special Needs Advisory Council (D-SNAC). With an understanding that over 20% of the Durham Public Schools (DPS) is populated with children that can be classified as having special needs this is a program that could be widely embraced and utilized. I propose to support the project through whatever means that are available to me.

I look forward to my involvement in a project that engages individuals with special needs through multi-sensory environments and programs; adaptive technologies; and better trained and equipped staff.

Please let me know if you need additional information from me in support of this proposal

Sincerely,

Frederick X Ravin III

Chairperson / D-SNAC

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book harvest

Faith Burns

Interim Manager, Main Library

Durham County Library

101 E. Morgan Street

Durham NC 27701

Dear Ms. Burns,

Thank you for the opportunity to join in support of your LSTA project and proposal “*Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main.*”

I am very interested in the exciting approach that you are taking to better serve those in our community with special needs in the transformed Main Library. This project is interwoven in my work as the Community Partnerships Manager for Book Harvest, as I strive to weave elements of inclusion into the fiber of our organization. I know, firsthand, as both a parent and provider of those with special needs the challenges associated with creating inclusive environments. I have worked alongside library staff to envision ways that the programs they offer can better support individuals with a wide range of abilities. Their ideas and implementation of those ideas have been nothing short of remarkable. It has been my honor to work with the library so far, and to witness their dedication to individuals with special needs, and their families. I am even more excited to see what the future of inclusivity and the Durham County Library holds, and I am looking forward to the continued opportunity to send the children I serve to sensory friendly programming that this establishment provides on its premises, and out in the community.

I look forward to my involvement in a project that engages individuals with special needs through multi-sensory environments and programs; adaptive technologies; and better trained and equipped staff.

Please let me know if you need additional information from me in support of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Nadiah Porter

Community Partnerships Manager

Book Harvest

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Kristin M. Bell, Ed.D.
Exceptional Children's Department
808 Bacon Street / Durham, NC 27702
919-560- 3774 Office
919-560-2607 Fax

February 21, 2019

Faith Burns, Interim Manager
Durham County Library
101 East Morgan Street
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Dear Ms. Burns:

Durham Public Schools is pleased to write a letter of recommendation for Durham County Library's grant proposal titled, "*Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main.*" We are pleased with the partnership and work that the Durham County Library has done in helping to provide a providing academic and social-emotional support for our special education students.

Currently, the Durham County library works with our Exception Children's department in a variety of programs throughout the school year and summer, serving all of our 53 schools in some manner. With funding from the grant, the current level of programming could be continued in order to serve more students who have special needs or require assistive technology for literacy development. This gives all of our students, many of whom are minority students from low-income households, access to academic and external support that may not occur otherwise.

Durham Public Schools is pleased to provide this letter of recommendation for your application. If the grant is awarded, please be aware that any research with students or staff must be approved by the Research Review Committee and a Data Use Agreement to collect student or staff information must be signed prior to the start of the project. In addition, staff from Durham Public Schools would need to have additional conversations about the project prior to the start if approved in order to make sure that systems are in place to support programming. Also, a fee for the research application along with any data requests may be instituted for any requests due to limited staffing.

We look forward to working with you on this project. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact our office by phone at 919-560-2000 or via email at kristin.bell@dpsnc.net.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this worthwhile program.

Sincerely,

Kristin Bell, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Exceptional Children's Department
Durham Public Schools

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Faith Burns

Interim Manager, Main Library

Durham County Library

101 E. Morgan Street

Durham NC 27701

Dear Ms. Burns,

Thank you for the opportunity to join in support of your LSTA project and proposal "*Practicing Inclusivity: Establishing a Multi-Sensory Environment, Inclusive Playroom, and Mobile Adaptive Technology and Sensory Units for Transformation Main.*"

I am very interested in the exciting approach that you are taking to better serve those in our community with special needs in the transformed Main Library. The proposed project is relevant to my work, since I teach American Sign Language to babies and young children as well as their caregivers, teachers and early intervention specialists in the Triangle area. I propose to support the project by offering trainings for the library staff so that they can serve individuals with hearing loss or adults and children who use American Sign Language to communicate. I am delighted to be part of a program that is committed to making the Durham County Libraries more inclusive.

I look forward to my involvement in a project that engages individuals with special needs through multi-sensory environments and programs; adaptive technologies; and better trained and equipped staff.

Please let me know if you need additional information from me in support of this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jessica Kelly".

Jessica Kelly

Owner and Instructor, Signs of Learning

APPENDIX III: EXAMPLES OF SUPPLIES

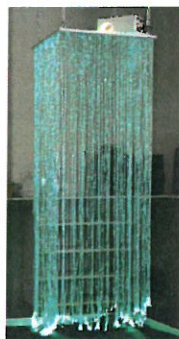
Activity Panel 3 Set: Fiber optic, Sound and Music, Tactile



Touch a Color Podium



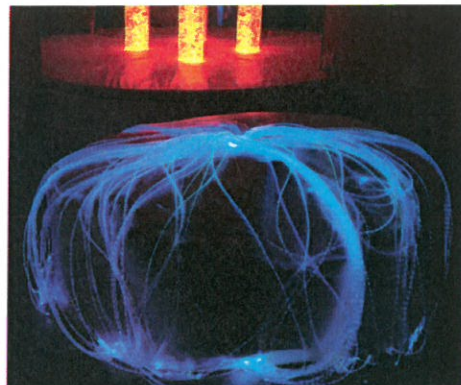
Interactive Fiber optic Waterfall



Interactive Hemisphere Mirror



LED Fiber Optic Softie



APPENDIX IV: PROGRAM PHOTOS

Staff Day Chris Ulmer Keynote Presentation:



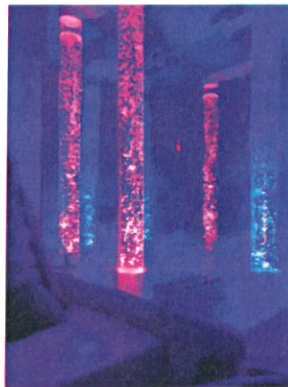
Staff Day “Lights, and Textures, and Bubbles, Oh My!” Presentation:



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Multi Sensory Environment in UPC Easter Seals, Charlotte, NC:



Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Visit:



Staff Day Exhibit Hall Sensory Room and Assistive Technology Display:

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Staff Day “Inclusivity in Action” Panel Discussion:

