PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

1. One paragraph project summary.

Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) is in the process of rebuilding its adult education programming as well as enhancing staff training. A subscription from Lyndalibrary will provide the opportunity for on demand, web based training for both patrons and employees to enhance job skills. This software will also allow much needed access to classes that will help further public adult education. The library intends to use this subscription to accomplish five main goals:
1. Provide the opportunity for all the residents in Monterey County to learn valuable job related and other skills that will allow them to improve their lives.
2. Provide the opportunity for people in remote locations to access a variety of training courses from home or anywhere that internet access is available.
3. Provide a venue for valuable training for employees that will further their knowledge in specific job areas.
4. Allow staff to use acquired knowledge to train patrons on various computer skills.
5. Serve as a role model for other rural or spread out library systems and municipalities that face the challenge of providing quality training for the public and staff because of large geographic reach and high cost of, or lack of, trainers.

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

The vision statement of MCFL states that "Monterey County is a community where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential and pursue happiness." According to Lynda.com, "They promote literacy and personal growth that boosts quality of life. They provide gathering places that add value to neighborhoods. Cost-effective Lynda.com solutions are designed to support your public library's community programs and the employees who drive their success."

According to Lynda.com, this is accomplished through four core areas:

Patrons Achieve
Enhance community programs with a dynamic reference resource that supports career skills training and helps members of the public develop professionally.

Staff Grows
Train any employee—from administrative assistants and archivists to branch managers, circulation aides, database managers, and technicians.

HR Succeeds
Roll out an employee training solution that supplements in-person training, supports blended learning, and provides quick answers to everyday questions.

IT Excel
Ease the burden on tech staff with a virtual IT help desk available 24/7 to all employees. Simplify IT migrations, and keep your team current with technology.

This project will help MCFL in achieving two of our strategic plan goals. It will help provide:

A well-trained, learning organization that serves the County with efficiency, accuracy, and with highly skilled staff.

Equity in serving the needs of all residents of Monterey County by balancing resources with needs, and offering the most effective and efficient delivery method to each of our communities.

Over 17% of the people in Monterey County are under the federal poverty line (2014). As of July 2016, Monterey County as a whole has an average of 6.1% unemployment rate (http://data.bls.gov/). Because a large number of people are employed seasonally in the agricultural industry, the unemployment rates can rise by as much as 7% in the winter months. With access to these training programs, we hope to help decrease these percentages.

3. **A description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.**

According to an informal survey of frontline staff, one of the most asked for programs today is computer training. MCFL serves 223,000 individuals spread out over 3,150 square miles through its 17 branches (15 currently open). The subscription to Lyndalibrary will allow all library patrons who come through our doors or live in our service area access to this training, as well as enhance staff skills in job related areas.

MCFL has created many partnerships in the past that have allowed us to provide educational opportunities to the people in Monterey County. We hope to enhance our partnerships through access to these training programs at Lynda.com.

A sampling of cities in our services area shows that many of our patrons live in communities with a higher unemployment rate than the national average; they have lower educational attainment and the average income is lower than the national average. For example, the unincorporated Castroville has 20.7% unemployment. This is much higher than the national average of 7.9%. King City has 19.8% unemployment and only 43% of the population has completed high school or attained a GED. The median income in the community is $18,885 compared to $29,701 for the national average. The largest city in our service area, Seaside, shows 71% of the population with a high school education, but the unemployment level is still above the national average of 8.4%. Other cities in our service area show higher unemployment, lower educational attainment, and lower wages than the national and state averages (usacityfacts.com).

4. Goals and objectives of the project.

There are 5 main goals in this project:

1. Provide the opportunity for all the residents in Monterey County to learn valuable job related and other skills that will allow them to improve their lives.
2. Provide the opportunity for people in remote locations to access a variety of training courses from home or anywhere that internet access is available.
3. Provide a venue for valuable training for employees that will further their knowledge in specific job areas.
4. Allow staff to use acquired knowledge to train patrons on various computer skills.
5. Serve as a role model for other rural or spread out library systems and municipalities that face the challenge of providing quality training for the public and staff because of large geographic reach and high cost of, or lack of, trainers.

The objective is to have an impact on the unemployment rate of Monterey County and to have a venue for staff to have access to on demand training that will help them add to their job skills.

5. Project timeline (activities).

The program will be one year long and will start at the inception of the Lyndalibrary subscription.

We will introduce the program via press releases, social media, website, emails, and flyers.

One of the key benefits of Lyndalibrary is that it accommodates both patron and staff schedules, allowing them to learn when they have time. However, part of the promotion of this product will be to form a key team that will include MCFL staff, volunteers, and a Managing Librarian. This team will facilitate the adult programming education classes using Lyndalibrary to provide the curriculum. A survey will be given that will help us target the areas of learning that patrons desire most.

This team will also be responsible for training themselves in order that they may help patrons who walk into the library sign into the Lyndalibrary software account in order that they may take the classes at their own pace.

Month One:

- Form key team.
- Make list of recommended trainings on Lynda.com and distribute to staff.
- Come up with a plan for collecting data for the program.

- Recruit staff to teach classes. (Key areas of training of staff will be determined by managing staff as well as current frontline staff members at key branches in order to target areas of expertise needed so that we can continue training after our subscription has expired).
- Develop a non-monetary reward system of incentives for staff who enroll in Lyndalibrary trainings.

Month Two:

- Design a survey to give to staff to see where programs will be most useful.
- Determine start date for chosen programs.
- Make a PR plan (make and distribute flyers, social media, reach out to partners, etc.)
- Start training staff and volunteers.

Month Three:

- Develop workshops based on Lynda.com curriculum.
- Create a survey and get staff feedback on database and usefulness.
- Start offering staff trainings at the Administrative Office and key branches in the system to encourage staff to use it.

Month Five-Six:

- Start offering programs at targeted branches.
- Begin offering staff trainings at the Administrative Office and key branches in the system to encourage staff to use it.

Month Seven-Ten:

- Offer more programs at targeted branches.
- Design a survey to get feedback from staff on the usefulness of Lyndalibrary software.

Month Eleven and Twelve:

- Collect use statistics from vendor and staff on use and analyze data.
- Compile a report on the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

6. Evaluation of the project.

A survey will be given at the beginning of the project that will allow us a baseline assessment of the needs of public and of staff. Questions will be asked about the types

of jobs and skills people most desire to learn to better enhance job skills and placement. A survey will be given to everyone who signs up to take classes in the library.

Once a staff member or patron finished their training, another survey will be given that will question if the initial goals were achieved.

Data will also be collected during the year of how many staff members signed up for trainings, as well as how many patrons took classes in person or at their own pace.

Data will be recorded on what classes were used most often by staff as well as requested by the public.

7. Project budget.

1 Year Subscription: $20,000

Staffing:
(4) Librarian II $39.75/hour x 148 hours = $5883.00
Managing Librarian $45.63/hour x   48 hours = $2190.00
Total   cost $28,073.00
MCFL contribution ($5,000 + Staff costs) $13,073.00

Amount requested   **$15,000.00**

8. Sustainability analysis

After evaluating the quality and quantity of Lyndalibrary trainings used by the staff and patrons, we will be better able to assess how we can add this cost sustainably to our budget. Surveys of usage will be conducted throughout the grant project. All practices will include continuous evaluation to determine the importance of the program to further staff development. Discussions based on what it will take to continue practices in the future will be crucial.

Staff members who have received additional training during the grant will be able to use the skills they learned to continue training of the public and other staff members even if we do not have access again to the Lyndalibrary subscription.

We expect the outcome produced during this grant will be that patrons who have earned certificates will enhance job placement due to the skills they learned using the software. Skills learned will help to make patrons more desirable candidates in the job search as well as create opportunities for promotions. We expect staff members to be trained in areas of interest so that we can further their own job skills as well as provide quality programming in the future to our patrons.

Managing staff, to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations and support sustainability, anticipate having to ask one staff member from designated branches to be the lead in training staff as well as the "go to person" for patrons who wish to take classes and learn to set up accounts to do course work at their own pace.

MCFL will continue to evaluate expenses throughout the grant period, looking for ways to reallocate resources to support grant operation in the future.

One possible idea would be to approach the county office to have them pay for the subscriptions for all Monterey County employees to save money already spent on training. Monterey County currently pays $200 per class per employee for computer training through an outside agency.