

**To:** Professor Caroline Muglia, University Librarian, Michigan University  
**From:** Sarah Tribelhorn, Librarian, Collections Development, Michigan University  
**Date:** March 9, 2021  
**Re:** DONATION COLLECTION REVIEW FEEDBACK

As you are aware, we have been offered a very generous donation of \$5 million in unrestricted funds for the library at Michigan University, provided we accept the donor's extensive private collection of books and papers to include in our collection. Currently, our library is in desperate financial need, primarily as a result of the current economic circumstances. To cut costs, we have reduced several staff positions, and placed our collection development on hold. Therefore, to expedite this donation, I was tasked to review the collection, and make relevant recommendations, including a revised budget.

### **Collection review**

Initially I considered this to be a 'done deal' and a quick review of the collection would easily solidify this donation. However, a basic review of the collection revealed that most of the contents are based on Holocaust denial. Therefore, my initial reaction was that we cannot possibly include this collection, especially with reference to our current focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the library. However, one of the core values of the American Library Association (ALA) is intellectual freedom (American Library Association, 2020). Furthermore, the ALA also stipulates that "it is the responsibility of all libraries to serve every member of their designated communities" (American Library Association, 2018, p. 1) and that minority, as well as majority beliefs should be represented. The ALA also states that collections should not be rejected because the content is "objectionable" (American Library Association, 2018, p. 1). Another important consideration in this decision is our collection development

policy (CDP). Johnson (2019) notes that the CDP should provide guidelines for collection development based on the library mission. Furthermore, CDPs should both protect intellectual freedom and prevent censorship (Johnson, 2019). Our current CDP policy could be interpreted to be inclusive of this new material, since it does not have specific guidelines on controversial materials. However, it supports intellectual freedom and the mission of the university. Based on this, I reconsidered my initial negative bias towards this collection and suggest that we accept this collection, and therefore, the \$5 million donation.

### **Next initial steps**

Based on the assumption that my recommendation to accept the donations is accepted, I have outlined some steps that we could consider going forward, and developed a budget in line with these recommendations for the next five years for the donated funds.

- Hire four new staff members, including an Information Literacy Librarian, Special Collections Librarian, EDI Specialist, and Marketing Specialist.
- Develop a detailed integrated information literacy curriculum, working with all faculty.
- Develop and implement EDI workshops for all staff, faculty, and students.
- Enhance the management of our special collections.
- Focus on collection development to ensure inclusivity of our entire community, based on surveys and metrics
- Develop a collection in line with the donated materials, to ensure all viewpoints are included.
- Revise the CDP, and develop an annual revision plan to ensure it is always thoroughly updated.

- Produce a video documentary series in collaboration with our local community based on material from this special collection, ensuring that all opinions are equally represented.
- Develop a sustainable budget going forward so we do not rely on donor gifts for the long-term survival of our library, with a grant-writing and fundraising program.

The motivation for these considerations is discussed in detail below.

### **Role of new staff members**

The Special Collections Librarian will be responsible for selecting current materials and developing and managing a collection that addresses “the needs for more representation of marginalized groups” (Johnson, 2019, p. 46); provides “broad and unbiased access to information” and “develops resource sharing programs to extend and enhance the information sources available to library users” (Johnson, 2019, p. 58). The collection development will be based on careful strategic planning with Michigan University’s mission and goals at the forefront, as outlined by Johnson (2019), including justification of the donated collection. Suitable metrics should be applied to understand the community effectively and understand how the collection should be developed, considering that “all selection decisions begin with consideration of the user community and the long-term mission” (Johnson 2019, p. 122), Furthermore, the four steps of collection assessment should be applied to “focus both on the collection and the use/user” Muglia (2016), to ensure the needs of the community are being met, and the collection is sustainable. In addition, for the library to be effective, the Special Collections Librarian will need to develop the collection based on our community the library serves (Evans & Schonfeld, 2020).

The Information Literacy Librarian will primarily develop a robust embedded information literacy curriculum, within all undergraduate and graduate courses, as framed by the

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in collaboration with a writing program as outlined by Galoozis (2020). The courses should be planned to develop fundamental information literacy skills and critical thinking so students can accurately discover, access and critically analyze relevant resources, both in print and electronically. This librarian will be required to instruct students on information literacy, related to primary and other sources and further the “learner-centered pedagogy, inclusive learning environments, and equity of student experience” (University of Southern California, 2021). This instruction will aid in critical thinking and writing around this donated collection, and others.

The EDI Specialist will use the standards set by the ALA to ensure that Michigan University Libraries are “dedicated to creating diverse and inclusive” communities (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2021). Work will be carried out to address historical inequities and “identify and work to eliminate barriers to equitable services, spaces, resources, and scholarship” (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2021). Furthermore, this position will develop workshops on EDI for the broader community as part of our outreach and transferable skill development. This will also ensure that there is sufficient awareness of cultural sensitivities surrounding this donated collection.

The Marketing Specialist will be responsible for developing a multi-faceted campaign designed to enhance the image of Michigan University Libraries, and highlight the work that we are doing regarding collections, information literacy, EDI, and outreach. This will be accomplished by ensuring all in the community know the work our libraries at Michigan University is doing, and providing current and potential future library users relevant information on our available and accessible products and services (Evans & Aire, 2013).

These four new roles are fundamental to the success of student scholarship and enhancement of the mission and goals of Michigan University, and are in support of programs needed with the acceptance of the private donated collection. These roles should ultimately work together on this project to develop a robust framework of information literacy, critical thinking and writing, scholarship, inclusivity, and outreach; and a collection that serves the needs of the community.

### **CDP revision**

While analyzing the donor collection, I determined the CDP of the Michigan University Libraries is outdated and should be revised. Furthermore, a plan should be developed for regular updating and revision. The CDP describes “the collection as it is now, sets out a plan for how it will be developed, and defines parameters guiding that development.” (Johnson, 2019, p. 83). Moreover, it can be used to identify current collection strengths and weaknesses, thereby contributing to effective strategic planning. It is “a systematic document that serves multiple purposes as a resource for public planning, allocation, information, administration, and training” (Johnson, 2019, p. 83), and takes the community into consideration, as well as the mission and goals of Michigan University (Johnson, 2019).

### **Video documentary series**

In addition, I propose that we develop a video documentary series focusing initially on the donated collection, similarly to the very successful *Lost LA*, where we use the primary sources of the collection to tell the story (KCET, 2016) of the Holocaust in real terms, through interviews with community members, that were directly affected, or had ancestors affected, and also with those that deny its existence. As in *Lost LA*, this documentary can go on to tell the stories of other artifacts in the special collection and links to the community. A marketing

campaign associated primarily with this documentary will be developed with our specialist – specifically to highlight the work being done with this, and the outreach we are doing, especially regarding EDI.

### **Budget Development**

I have developed a line-item budget to include four new staff positions, the individual rate has been shown based on current statistics from Salary.Com (2021) and the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020); this has been multiplied by four over the five years, with an incremental increase of 2% per year. The breakdown of the video documentary project includes script writers and crew, post-production and editing, licensing, and marketing costs over five years, based on costing from Wide Awake Films (2020). Material acquisitions are for a new collection to be developed to enhance the donated collection (and not the entire library collection necessarily), and includes funds for databases, e-book packages, audio packages, print, and media over five years. However, it is also necessary to work on a long-term budget to ensure that the library is financially sustainable in the future, and does not have to rely on these funds going forward, with the development of a grant writing and fundraising program (with information literacy and marketing support) for potential additional financial support. There are many aspects to sustainability; however, sustainable knowledge can be developed by becoming more adaptive and actively engaging with the community (Miller, Muñoz-Erickson, & Redman, 2011), which will ultimately lead to financial sustainability.

### **Summary**

Considering all aspects of this donated collection, a robust plan can be developed, in line with the mission and strategic plan of Michigan University. Four new staff members can be hired to support various roles around the new collection: instruction of fundamental skills of

information literacy and critical thinking; collection development; CDP revision; EDI support; a video documentary series; and marketing. The librarians will not work independently, but collaboratively, and their intersection will ensure that the needs of the community are met, and the library is sustainable in the future.

### Proposed budget for \$5 million over five years

| <b>Michigan University Proposed Budget</b> |                    |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                                            | Cost per librarian | Year 1           | Year 2           | Year 3           | Year 4             | Year 5             | Total              |
| <b>Personnel costs</b>                     |                    |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| Librarian base salary                      | \$59,930           | \$239,720        | \$244,514        | \$249,405        | \$254,393          | \$259,481          |                    |
| Social security                            | \$4,585            | \$18,340         | \$18,707         | \$19,081         | \$19,463           | \$19,852           |                    |
| 401 k                                      | \$2,937            | \$11,748         | \$11,983         | \$12,223         | \$12,467           | \$12,716           |                    |
| Disability                                 | \$959              | \$3,836          | \$3,913          | \$3,991          | \$4,071            | \$4,152            |                    |
| Healthcare                                 | \$6,371            | \$25,484         | \$25,994         | \$26,514         | \$27,044           | \$27,585           |                    |
| Pension                                    | \$2,517            | \$10,068         | \$10,269         | \$10,475         | \$10,684           | \$10,898           |                    |
| Time off                                   | \$7,607            | \$30,428         | \$31,037         | \$31,657         | \$32,290           | \$32,936           |                    |
|                                            | \$84,906           | \$339,624        | \$346,416        | \$353,345        | \$360,412          | \$367,620          | <b>\$1,767,417</b> |
| <b>Documentary Project</b>                 |                    |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| Script writing & Crew                      |                    | \$100,000        | \$100,000        | \$100,000        | \$100,000          | \$100,000          |                    |
| Post-production & Editing                  |                    | \$70,000         | \$70,000         | \$70,000         | \$70,000           | \$70,000           |                    |
| Licensing                                  |                    | \$50,000         | \$50,000         | \$50,000         | \$50,000           | \$50,000           |                    |
| Marketing                                  |                    | \$80,000         | \$80,000         | \$80,000         | \$80,000           | \$80,000           |                    |
|                                            |                    | \$300,000        | \$300,000        | \$300,000        | \$300,000          | \$300,000          | <b>\$1,500,000</b> |
| <b>Material Acquisitions</b>               |                    |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| Databases                                  |                    | \$100,490        | \$100,490        | \$100,490        | \$100,490          | \$100,490          |                    |
| E-book packages                            |                    | \$79,699         | \$79,699         | \$79,699         | \$79,699           | \$79,699           |                    |
| Audio packages                             |                    | \$38,117         | \$38,117         | \$38,117         | \$38,117           | \$38,117           |                    |
| Print                                      |                    | \$103,955        | \$103,955        | \$103,955        | \$103,955          | \$103,955          |                    |
| Media                                      |                    | \$24,256         | \$24,256         | \$24,256         | \$24,256           | \$24,256           |                    |
|                                            |                    | \$346,517        | \$346,517        | \$346,517        | \$346,517          | \$346,517          | <b>\$1,732,583</b> |
|                                            |                    |                  |                  |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>Total per year</b>                      |                    | <b>\$986,141</b> | <b>\$992,933</b> | <b>\$999,861</b> | <b>\$1,006,928</b> | <b>\$1,014,137</b> | <b>\$5,000,000</b> |

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