

Proposal Summary

Beyond Borders Bookclub (BBB) requests \$14,850 to build our online interface and market our services. We will offer digital media to promote literacy, global citizenship, and the love of learning to children around the world.

Organization Information

BBB is an outgrowth of and coordinated by our youth librarian team at TriContinental Public Library (TCPL). However, it is not confined to only our library and its staff. Rather, BBB will use extant cooperative agreements and build on them to encourage children and teenagers around the world to participate and share in a love of reading and exchange of interests. BBB will provide access to diverse written works in multiple languages for all club members through their local library, school, or educational organization. Our TCPL and collaborator librarians will provide site curation and moderation.

The BBB website will host community discussion boards on each of the available works and students will be able to discuss their readings from their unique perspectives with children in different parts of the world. Through discussion on the fora, students will be able to grow their understanding of and appreciation for works they have read and get a chance to learn from other children's experiences and perspectives. Children in BBB will be able to access all of the club's media and will be notified of the country of origin for each work. Club members will be encouraged to discuss how similar to their own experiences each story from their home country is and share their own stories with their fellow club members from other countries. They will also be encouraged to discuss standard story elements of plot, setting, character, and theme. Librarians will provide discussion questions for each work available through the site to help kickstart discussion.

Problem and Need

The community that we are focusing on is underserved youth in need of resources to enhance literacy and language acquisition worldwide. This includes but is not limited to, inner-city youth, rural youth, youth experiencing homelessness, migrant youth, English language learning youth, justice involved youth, foster care youth and youth with disabilities. Many underserved local and global communities do not have access to purchase books, this program desires to provide for the need by creating resources available through collaboration with local libraries. By providing access to content and ways to connect through literature we would enhance community engagement and literacy, as well as reading skills. BBB will also allow youth around the world to learn about other cultures, connect with diverse populations, and learn new languages; thus, promoting global citizenship.

BBB hopes to provide programs for teens and children worldwide. As a virtual library that will have resources in many languages and lessons to help children and teens with reading, literacy and language acquisition. The program will include local/global book clubs, translators, and pen pals. To achieve this we will connect libraries virtually, help connect them to local resources, provide them with additional materials, and means to connect globally. This will be a safe environment for them to meet up and learn both about themselves and others. In beginning levels of international book clubs we will bring in translators as necessary to scaffold second language skills. As students progress they will have the opportunity to learn and teach language skills through real interaction with students their age while bonding over literature.

Youth from underserved communities lack the financial stability to build literacy skills, let alone the needs for second language acquisition or global connectivity. By providing greater access to literacy development and multiple languages combined with a strong sense of global citizenship the youth will have opportunities to empower themselves and their own communities.

Specific Activities

Given the scope of our project and the goal to make an international impact we will invite libraries across the globe to utilize our platform and activities. With this in mind, as we grow and bring on more libraries, we will have the opportunity to continue expanding through new ideas, language options, and added skills of library personnel.

To begin, we have several activities that will launch the program including, book clubs and summer reading programs on two different levels for literacy building or second language skills. As well as, pen-pals and second language acquisition for a multitude of languages, not just English. The book club (offered year-round) and summer reading activities will offer a dual incentive. On one hand, book clubs and summer reading programs will provide opportunities for younger students and students that need to work on building core literacy skills opportunities to participate in a virtual book club local to their community and/or with others that speak their native language. Once the young reader is confident and proven in their skills, they can then have the chance to bump into the next group and work on building, reading, and connecting with a second language. These groups will, for example, connect students in Korea that want to learn French to students in France that desire to learn Korean. The students will have the opportunity to build language skills through the commonality of the book. In early levels a community translator could be utilized to help scaffold conversation. The end goal is to have students help students learn a second language. To continue with the language building skills, we will offer a verified and safe pen-pal program for students to connect globally and if desired build second language skills. Once the program is launched and libraries across the world log-on we will continue to expand activities and utilize resources of new partnered libraries and their communities.

Outcomes/Impacts of Activities

Through the activities we are striving to meet several outcomes, including literacy improvements and second language building while making a local and global impact. Through the reading programs and pen pals we hope to see literacy and language building skills. On a local level we hope to bring resources for young readers to further their literacy skills to create educated citizens that will have better opportunities to be involved in their community. By connecting students, we desire to create global citizens that care about the world's happenings, show compassion, and build connections across the world.

Other Funding

We realize this is a big project; therefore, to assist us further and ensure sustainability of our goals, we are applying to other organizations for additional funding. One such organization is *Mozilla Grants* who provide grants to educators. They believe in improvement for the internet, which would directly benefit the underserved communities that we are serving. Others include *Youth Literacy*, *Believe in Reading*, and the *International Literacy Association*; all of whom believe in serving the youth of struggling communities and promoting literacy.

Evaluation

This website will initially be evaluated in a trial period before it goes live. A group of pre-selected youth librarians from our collaborating libraries will be asked to complete a predetermined list of structured tasks on the website so the designed website interface usability can be evaluated. This would be based on a method of task analysis by George (2008). The tasks will include navigating to the Big Read page on the BBB section of our the TCLP website; selecting a book title from this page; determining if this book is available from the library; and checking this book out from the library, etc. Further tasks will be program specific, e.g., navigating to the Big Read page on the BBB and enrolling in a summer reading program, enrolling in the second-language program, or signing up in the pen-pal program. These librarians will also be requested to complete initial surveys about their overall user experience. Based on the results of these surveys, the BBB pages of the TCLP website will be evaluated to determine their usefulness, usability, findability, accessibility, and credibility. Furthermore, the learnability, control, presentation, and efficiency will also be evaluated.

This evaluation will include both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data will primarily include number of website visits, number of Big Read books borrowed or accessed, and number of patron visits to collaborating libraries specifically for Big Read books. The qualitative data will include feedback via questionnaires or surveys of user experience, as well as feedback from collaborative libraries on perceived impact in the communities. These surveys will include questions on learnability, such as whether it is easy to use, easy to learn and understand, if it is intuitive, and if it is well-organized; control, such as if it is easy to carry out tasks; presentation, including processing speed, screen layout, and ease of navigation; and efficiency data will include speed of information updating, and responsiveness to information needs. The steps of evaluation will follow the ADDIE model below (Figure 1):

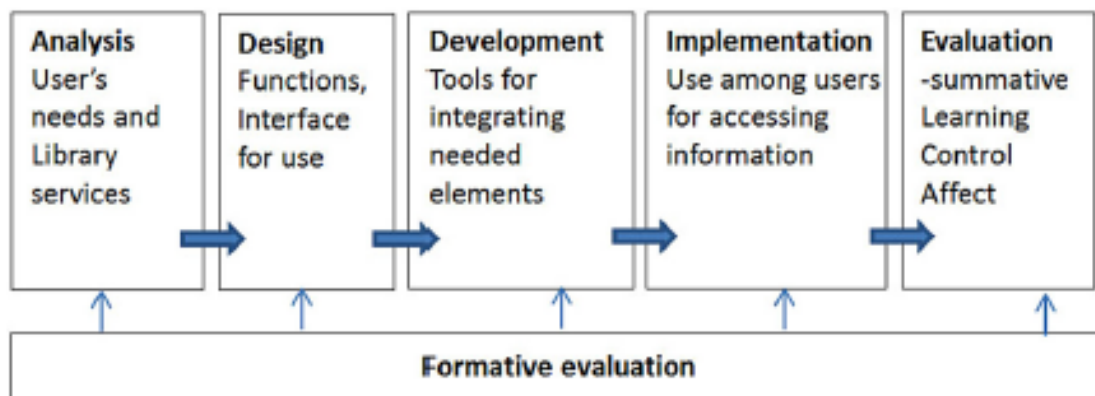


Figure 1: ADDIE model (ChanLin & Hung, 2016)

The quantitative data will be collected and evaluated weekly, to determine progress, and the project can be continually adjusted where necessary to improve success. The qualitative data will be collected on an ongoing basis when website visitors will be prompted to participate voluntarily in a short questionnaire survey at the end of their visit via a pop-up request on the website (Appendix A). Collaborative libraries will be emailed a questionnaire survey for

completion on a monthly basis, and feedback collected will be considered for ongoing improvement to the website and program (Appendix B). In this way, we can continually improve our relationships with our collaborating libraries to ensure that the underserved communities this project is aimed at are being reached and the program is having a positive impact in instilling a love of reading, literacy, and sense of community through the promotion of Big Read books in children and teenagers.

References

- ChanLin, L.-J, & Hung, W.-H. (2016). Usability and evaluation of a library mobile web site. *The Electronic Library*, 34(4), 636–650. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EL-07-2015-0119>
- George, C. (2008). *User-centered library websites: Usability evaluation methods*. Elsevier Science & Technology.

Proposed expense budget for Beyond Borders Bookclub

Expenses

Personnel

Website design/maintenance (4 weeks)	
\$120 hr x 25 hrs/week	\$12,000.00
Website evaluation (12 weeks)	
\$20 hr x 5 hrs/wk	\$1,200.00

Other expenses

Website licensing & fees	\$500.00
Desktop computer, mouse, keyboard & 3 yr warranty*	\$1,000.00
Computer monitor*	\$150.00
Internet access**	-----

NEA Big Reads Grant total request **\$14,850.00**

Income

Matching funds***	\$3,000.00
Matching grants for sustainability	\$2,000.00

Total additional income **\$5,000.00**

* TriContinental Public Library (TCPL) is tax exempt

** Internet access provided by TCPL

*** TCPL has agreed to setup and will provide any maintenance and ongoing evaluation as part of their regularly scheduled staffing provided equipment is purchased

Appendix A: Beyond Borders Bookclub questionnaire for TCLP website users
How do you rate our website? Please provide some feedback!

Topic Please rate the following on a scale from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (highly satisfied)	1	2	3	4	5
Helpful: Did the website help you find what you were looking for?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Usable: Was the website easy to navigate?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Engaging: Was the design of the website attractive?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Findable: Was the website easy to locate?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Accessible: Were you able to access information?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Trustworthy: Do you think the website is reliable and honest?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺

How likely are you to use the website...							
	Extremely unlikely	Unlikely	More or less unlikely	Neutral	More or less likely	Likely	Extremely Likely
again?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
to borrow Big Read books?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Would you recommend the website to another user? YES NO

Comments: _____

Appendix B: Beyond Borders Bookclub questionnaire for librarian evaluation of the TCLP website

How do you rate our website? Please provide some feedback!

Topic Please rate the following on a scale from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (highly satisfied)	1	2	3	4	5
Helpful: Did the website provide direct access to Big Read books in your library?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Usable: Was the website easy to navigate?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Engaging: Was the design of the website attractive?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Findable: Was the website easy to locate?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Accessible: Were you and your patrons able to easily access information?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Trustworthy: Do you think the website is reliable and honest?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Community impact: In your opinion, does this website and program have a positive impact on your community?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Literacy: In your opinion, does this website and program contribute positively to literacy in your community?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺
Second language acquisition: In your opinion, does this website and program contribute positively to a second language acquisition in your community?	☺	☺	☺	☺	☺