

**Pacific Library Partnership  
Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program**

**Due Friday, October 10, 2014**

Please provide the following information in a Microsoft Word document. Please email the completed form to Wendy Cao at [caow@plsinfo.org](mailto:caow@plsinfo.org).

1. Title of  
Project: Swimming to San Francisco: A Game to Celebrate SFPL's Neighborhoods
  
2. Library/Committee  
applying for funding: San Francisco Public Library  
Name: Luis Herrera  
Email: [luis.herrera@sfpl.org](mailto:luis.herrera@sfpl.org)  
Mailing Address: 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, California, 94102
  
3. Amount of funding requested: \$15,000

## PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

1. One paragraph project summary.

*Swimming to San Francisco* is a game that will be designed to allow anyone with a cell phone or access to the Internet an opportunity to play. The game will last a total of one-and-a-half to two hours and involve completing challenges. Each challenge features a branch library and the neighborhood it serves. The intent of the game is to introduce the players to SFPL's newly rebuilt branch libraries. The game has a narrative, which is based in historical fact, a mystery that players must help solve.

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

In service to the residents of the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Public Library is aspiring to be the premier urban library in the country. The development of the *Swimming to San Francisco* game underscores the library's commitment to promote digital literacy, San Francisco's history and the unique character of S.F. neighborhoods. This innovative community engagement activity will also serve to celebrate the completion of the Branch Library Improvement Program (BLIP) and highlight the results of the largest capital campaign in the organization's history. The interactive game will be designed to support cultural awareness, youth engagement and SFPL's digital strategy efforts.

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

The City and County of San Francisco enjoys one of the most diverse populations of any major urban area in the entire country. Library users are a true cross-section of residents, commuters from the surrounding Bay Area counties and a steady stream of visiting tourists from all over the world. Roughly 400,000 residents of San Francisco, equal to nearly 50% of the population, are registered borrowers. They are children, teens and seniors; they have disabilities; they are many-gendered and represent numerous ethnic groups.

*Swimming to San Francisco* will be developed for participants to use basic 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like texting or uploading photos and videos, while navigating the game and primarily target the following demographics and user groups:

- Ages 10 to 65; a mix of digital natives and digital immigrants
- School classes, tourists, families and history buffs
- Non-traditional library users and new audiences - groups of friends, gamers
- Mystery enthusiasts

People without cell phones will be encouraged to use the library's public access computers and/or laptop lending program in order to solve the following mystery:

*In 1962, three prisoners escaped from Alcatraz using an inflatable raft. They were never seen or heard from again. After a seventeen-year investigation the FBI declared they were unable to verify whether the three successfully escaped or died in the attempt. They closed the case. The U.S. Marshals Service took a different view - their case remains open, what they call an active warrant.*

#### Game Play

- Players get the chance to prove how the three disappeared into the daily life of various San Francisco neighborhoods in 1962.
- The game issues challenges that players must complete.
- Each challenge asks players to make or do something that has to do with a fact associated with the escape, the prisoners, 1962 and a neighborhood.
- Each challenge involves a trip to a branch library.
- When players complete challenges they receive the next challenge.
- The first fifty players to complete all challenges in the best time win prizes.

#### Game Launch

- Occurs over one weekend day, late May 2015
- Launch coincides with U.S. Conference of Mayors and American Library Association Annual Conference (June 2015) and is made available to families accompanying convention attendees.
- Four branch libraries and neighborhoods are featured:
  - Potrero – industrial history in 1962
  - Park Branch – tie in to Civil Rights Movement history in 1962
  - Marina – tie in with Pan Pacific Exposition celebration
  - North Beach – tie into “Beat” culture
- The event includes live interactions with in-game characters

Game refreshes quarterly, with a new package of challenges representing new branches and neighborhoods.

More information about similar games can be found at the following links:

<http://www.thisgirltravels.com/2014/01/13/revquest-offers-intrigue-whole-family-colonial-williamsburg/> (A young participant's description of playing one of our games)

<http://www.ghostsofchance.com> (game archive)

<https://www.flickr.com/groups/ghostsofchance/> (photo stream of players)

<http://www.pheon.org/intro> (game archive)

## **PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program**

4. The goals and objectives of the project.
  - Celebrate the SFPL's branch libraries, the neighborhoods they serve and the history of San Francisco
  - Advance digital literacy through interactive engagement with game participants
  - Introduce residents, library users and tourists to new parts of the city
  - Entertain participants with a game that is part treasure hunt and maker fair
  - Strengthen partnerships with the Mayor's Office for Innovation and City Guides
  - Scalability – establish game design model for other library jurisdictions to emulate
  
5. The project timeline (activities).
  - October – December 2014 – Refine game concept and secure corporate sponsors
  - January – April 2015 – game development phase
    - Discovery – identify stakeholders, requirements and capabilities (40 hours)
    - Design – create game and graphic design, wireframes for app and site (80 hours)
    - Production – build out app and site (80 hours)
    - Test/tweak – debug, recode and rewrite (60 hours)
  - May-June 2015 – game launches
  
6. The evaluation of the project.
  - Survey of game participants – Net Promoter Score
  - Testimonials / Anecdotal feedback
  - Measure branch library usage – door count of targeted locations
  
7. The project budget.

The PLP grant funding will be used as seed money for design and marketing efforts to stimulate investment from other stakeholders, including both not-for-profit and for-profit institutions. Sponsorships will be used to build out the app and website and game design.

- Mobile platform
- Project management
- Graphic design
- Game design(ers)
- Writer(s)
- Researcher
- Actors (for launch)
- Costumes/makeup (for launch)