Technology Petting Zoo

Grant Writing Project

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[note that certain sections have been modified or omitted in this document]
Executive Summary

“Digital literacy is the ability to find, evaluate, utilize, and create information using digital technology” (Cornell, 2009). In order to support the development of 21st century digital literacy skills in its community of students, faculty and staff, my Library proposes to develop and host a Technology Petting Zoo, a hands-on technology fair which supports the curriculum and activities of the College… which serves students from a variety of ethnic, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. The Technology Petting Zoo, an interactive learning lab, will provide members of the community opportunities to explore emerging technologies that they will need to be successful in college, career, and private life. Additionally, the Technology Petting Zoo will raise campus awareness of the library and its resources by showcasing some of the technologies, tools, and types of assistance available to library patrons. Petting Zoo equipment will be available for individual and classroom use…after the event, and all relevant planning materials will be preserved for organizing future events. The Technology Petting Zoo will be a collaborative project, lead by a librarian with support and input from library staff and the eLearning department team. To complete this project, The College Library requests $5,000 in funding for a 12-month period in 2012.

Setting

The College [omission]

The Library – The Library opened in 1995 to support the programs and classes… A new library facility…is scheduled to open in 2013. In addition to its collection of books
and audio-visual materials, the library houses the only open computer lab on campus. Various technologies, such as video and digital cameras, voice recorders, flash-drives and a laptop are available for circulation. As well as providing traditional library services, including interlibrary loan, bibliographic instruction and individualized research assistance, the library has assumed the role of “go-to” location for student technology assistance, as the campus does not have a formal technology helpdesk. It is in this capacity and with the understanding and experience of the technology needs of the community this role has fostered, that the library proposes to organize the Technology Petting Zoo for students, faculty and staff. The Technology Petting Zoo is learner-centered, designed to support the information needs and success of its users, and encourages life-long learning, all of which is in keeping with the library’s mission.

The Patrons/Users - The Library serves students and staff, as well as members of the surrounding community. According to daily statistics, there are on average 500 visits to the library per day... the College serves more than 8,100 students per year. The student body is 52% female and 48% male, with 22% minority students, and the average student age is 28 years old. There are approximately 440 employees.

The Library Staff - Staff includes one full-time professional librarian (Library Director), one professional cyclical librarian (Exempt Librarian), one full-time Library Specialist (Cataloger), one half-time Library Specialist (Video-conferencing), one full-time Library Technician, and one part-time-hourly eLearning/Library Assistant. A full-time Copy/Media Services Technician position falls under the umbrella of the library, as does
a part-time-hourly position in that department. In addition, the library works closely with the full-time eLearning Designer on campus.

**Technology Petting Zoo Project Staff** – The Librarian and Technology Petting Zoo event coordinator has researched the feasibility and expectation of outcomes for the Technology Petting Zoo. She will work closely on this project with the eLearning Designer and Librarian, and the part-time eLearning/Library Assistant. Other Library and Media Services staff will be involved in supporting roles as necessary.

**Statement of Need**

[omitted] According to Goode, citing Fox in the article *The Digital Identity Divide: How Technology Knowledge impacts College Students* (2010), “studies continue to show that gender, race, socioeconomic status, primary language, geographical location, (dis)ability, educational level and generational characteristics are associated with disparities in access to and use of technology” (p. 498). Based on this information, a significant portion of ’s student population is likely to come from the ‘other side’ of the digital divide, and for a variety of reasons may have had limited opportunities to interact with newer technologies and web programs, such as digital video cameras including the Flip Video, eReaders such as the Kindle or the Nook, digital voice recorders, tablet computers such as the iPad, smartphones, online learning management systems such as Angel/Blackboard, virtual meeting spaces like Elluminate or Wimba, or photo/video/audio editing and sharing sites such as Audacity, Camtasia, Gimp and Flickr. Many of these tools are items that students and staff are likely to use in their studies, their work, and their private lives, for, as Griffey (2010) writes, “we are in the
midst of an ongoing information revolution…” and technology “gadgets… are a key component of this revolution” (p. 30). These ‘gadgets’ and web 2.0 technologies are the ‘animals’ in the Technology Petting Zoo.

As Chatman (1996) discusses in The Impoverished Life-World of Outsiders, individuals who are marginalized based on socioeconomic, age, educational level or other factors, often perceive themselves to be digitally excluded “outsiders” and will choose not to pursue important information or assistance-- no matter how needed-- in order to protect themselves from exposure and further exclusion. The Petting Zoo environment addresses this issue in that it is designed to be non-threatening and inclusive. Participants will be self-directed, exploring various tools and technologies according to their own interests and with the option to create or produce objects which have some personal relevance to them, a well-known effective practice in adult education (Quinney, p. 207). Friendly, knowledgeable support and information will be readily available from library and eLearning staff, but other than attending an introductory presentation, participants will not be required to consult anyone in order to explore the tools. Petting Zoo participants will thus have a low-risk opportunity to become familiar with the gadgets they are sure to encounter in their studies and work at school and in the world in general, as well gain an awareness of the gadgets and support that are available to them as patrons of the Library.

**Technology Petting Zoo** - A Technology Petting Zoo is an event or fair which invites hands-on exploration of various electronic tools, software, applications, and programs in a centralized location. Public libraries in Washington State…have recently sponsored
Technology Fairs, or Technology Petting Zoos, as opportunities for the public to learn about new technologies and web-based applications...The College’s Petting Zoo will be academically focused and custom designed to support the digital literacy needs of its unique communities. A wonderful extension component of this project is that the technologies featured in the event will afterwards be available in the library for individual use or for use as a portable lab for classroom instruction and other events.

**Project Goals** - The primary goal of the Technology Petting Zoo is to provide a quality training opportunity for the community to explore and become familiar with important contemporary technologies and tools without the pressure to perform or produce for an evaluated outcome. At the same time, this event will increase campus community awareness and use of the resources available in the L.

**Project Outcomes** - The expected outcomes from this event are improved campus digital literacy, greater levels of participant confidence in technology use, and increased awareness and use of L services and resources.

**Materials** – To organize an effective and successful event, the Technology Petting Zoo committee will need to create, borrow, purchase or contract for the following.

- *Facilitator* to provide initial introduction to and instruction before the interactive portion of the event.
- *Technology 'animals' (the gadgets)* - we hope to purchase rather than borrow or lease a majority of these technologies so that they will be available from the
library for other purposes, including instruction and future Zoo events. We expect that this will be the most significant expense for the event.

- *Event Space.*
- *Participant materials*, including informational brochures and technology specific guides for each ‘animal’.
- *Promotional marketing materials* such as posters and flyers.
- Presentation booth dividers, tables and other *space organizing materials*.
- *Evaluation materials*, including surveys and other feedback forms.
- *Supporting technologies* necessary for running the event.
- *Refreshments*.

**Planning/Implementation Schedule** – Careful and detailed planning will be crucial to the success of this event. The following necessary steps are designed into the planning process.

- *Permissions* – The event coordinator, , will obtain all necessary permissions from and L to host the event.
- *Event Steering Committee* – The event coordinator has formed an excellent, well-informed and motivated steering committee. The steering committee will collaborate on all planning for the event. The committee will expand to include others with important specialties as necessary.
- *Event Dates* – The steering committee will meet monthly for planning and collaboration. It is expected that the main Technology Petting Zoo event will take place within one year.
• **Event Space** – The Technology Petting Zoo event will be held in a central location on ’s campus. If the new Building-- which in addition to housing the new library will include a state-of-the-art event space-- is completed and available, the Zoo event will be held there. If the space is not available, the event will be held in another suitable space on campus.

• **Event facilitator and volunteers** – The steering committee will locate and secure the services of an expert facilitator/instructor to introduce the Technology Petting Zoo and provide motivation and instruction before the hands-on portion of the programming. In addition, the committee will recruit knowledgeable volunteers to oversee and assist at each of the Zoo booths.

• **Equipment** – The steering committee will research and procure all necessary equipments and technologies.

• **Refreshments** – We will coordinate the provision of refreshments with ’s Culinary program.

• **Materials** – A sub-committee will be organized to locate or create and organize all marketing, attendee, and assessment materials. This committee will present a marketing plan and schedule to the steering committee early in the planning stages.

• **Event set up** – The committee will carefully plan the event set up well before the day of the event. Necessary supporting equipment will be secured and the assistance of ’s facilities crew reserved. The space will be set up well before the Technology Petting Zoo begins in order to test all of the technology ‘animals’. This is an important step in preparing for the main event.
• **Event Day** – The steering committee members will be available during the event to host, oversee and document the event, direct volunteers, troubleshoot, and distribute and collect surveys and other feedback.

• **Clean up** – Clean up and dismantling services will be secured ahead of time with 's custodial and facilities crews. Committee members will be present to assist with general clean up and to make sure that materials and equipment are properly secured and routed to appropriate locations.

• **Evaluate** – After the event, the committee will meet to compile and discuss survey results and other feedback. Documentation will be shared, and then preserved. The event coordinator, , will create a final report on the event to share with stakeholders and perhaps to present at the Washington Library Association’s annual conference.

**Evaluation**

The Technology Petting Zoo committee will be responsible for collecting, evaluating, and creating a report for event feedback, which will come in the form of participant counts, surveys, products designed or created at the event, event photos and other documentation, as well as less formal reports and feedback from event participants, planners and staff. Using the event evaluation report, the event coordinator and steering committee members will analyze how well the event met the expected outcomes, paying particular attention to participant satisfaction and increased ‘animal’ circulation and use in the Library. The report will be made available to all project stakeholders and may be presented at the annual Washington Library Association conference. The event
data and analysis report will also be preserved for use in planning possible future Petting Zoo events.

**Budget - $5,000**

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<td>Assessment materials</td>
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Conclusion

Technology “knowledge is implicitly required for college success and career pathways” (Goode, 2010), but populations with demographics like ’s often come from the other side of the digital divide and do not have adequate access to technology to achieve this success, leading to digital exclusion. Digitally excluded populations may not formally pursue information that may be beneficial to them because they fear that doing so could result in exposure and further exclusion (Chatman, 1996). L’s Technology Petting Zoo is a low-risk, hands-on, relevant and educational way to encourage all members of the community to explore the necessary technologies for academic and career success at , while showcasing L’s many available resources and services. After attending L’s Technology Petting Zoo, participants will have developed greater confidence and more of the 21st century digital literacy skills they will need to cross the digital divide and to succeed in college, career, and modern life.
Appendix Materials

- Resumes of Steering Committee Members
- Letters of support
References


I certify that:

This paper/project/exam is entirely my own work.

I have not quoted the words of any other person from a printed source or a website without indicating what has been quoted and providing an appropriate citation.

Signature  Dawn Hawley