



Announcing the 2025 Catalyst Fund Award Recipients



Lyrasis, a nonprofit member organization serving the global landscape of academic and public libraries, scholarly research, archives, museums and galleries, is pleased to announce the 2025 recipients of the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund. The Lyrasis Catalyst Fund is an award program that provides support for new ideas and innovative projects from the Lyrasis membership. Through the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund, now in its ninth year, Lyrasis has directly invested more than \$1,000,000 in its members to support and promote projects with the potential for community-wide impact.

This year, we reviewed projects under two themes — a traditional innovation theme and a public library theme.

The Lyrasis Membership selected five projects to be funded for the benefit of the community at large. The five projects awarded in the 2025 Lyrasis Catalyst Fund are:



Next-Generation Learning: Interactive Tutoring in Rural Communities, Brandon Township Public Library. Awarded \$11,500

Project Goal: The BTPL Tutoring Program is a proven initiative addressing educational disparities in a rural community with limited access to academic support services. To expand impact and increase accessibility, BTPL proposes an enhanced and scalable K-12 tutoring model that would double weekly tutoring sessions, offer summer tutoring sessions to combat summer learning loss, introduce hybrid options to provide both in-person and virtual support for rural students facing transportation barriers, and integrate Interactive Learning Kits to create technology-enhanced tutoring experiences.



Implementing CMS: Increasing Access and Visibility of a HBCU's Archives and Museum, Tuskegee University. Awarded \$23,975

Project Goal: The Tuskegee University Archives and Legacy Museum (TUALM) seek funding to manage holdings, provide access and increase visibility of the vital collections housed at our repositories using CollectionSpace and the CollectionSpace public browser. This collection management software (CMS) will assist the archives and museum in managing all steps of the collection process while sharing with the public to highlight the vital collections of the Black experience of Tuskegee University and its surrounding areas.



Recruiting a Testing Pool of Users with Disabilities, University of Tennessee Libraries. **Awarded \$3,000**

Project Goal: This project aims to identify the biggest challenges faced by our university students, staff, and others, in our attempts to meet the 2026/2027 deadline imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA now requires that all state and local government entities (including schools, universities and libraries) meet strict accessibility standards in all their web-based and mobile content. With the increasing shift to online learning, it is vital that public universities work very carefully and intentionally to ensure that the online educational experience is inclusive for all students..



Automated Handwritten Text Recognition of Manuscript Document Collections, Lehigh University. **Awarded \$29,600**

Project Goal: While recent repository improvements have made digital assets more discoverable than ever, digitized handwritten manuscripts are significantly less discoverable due to a lack of searchable full text. We propose to build open source repository tooling that will allow libraries and heritage institutions to extract searchable text from images of manuscript documents, thus unlocking a vast world of digitized material currently invisible to researchers.



Voices of the Colored Libraries: An Interactive Journey through History, Wilmington Institute Free Library. **Awarded \$28,000**

Project Goal: Led by Wilmington Public Library Delaware in collaboration with the Are You A Librarian documentary project and Johnson C. Smith University and researcher and scholar Tracie Hall, this proposal seeks to preserve the histories of segregated libraries that served African American communities. These libraries were crucial in providing educational resources during segregation, yet their histories remain undocumented and at risk of being lost. With many records deteriorating, this project aims to capture oral histories, develop a digital archive and create an interactive GIS-based story map to ensure long-term preservation.

Sandy Nyberg Award

Implementing CMS: Increasing Access and Visibility of a HBCU's Archives and Museum **Awarded \$23,975**

This year the Sandy Nyberg Award, named for Sandy Nyberg's pivotal role in the Catalyst Fund and her dedication to grants throughout her career, is awarded to the Tuskegee University and the project, Implementing CMS: Increasing Access and Visibility of a HBCU's Archives and Museum, with an award of \$23,975.

Lyrasis welcomes inquiries about the process year round. If interested, please reach out to catalystfund@lyrasis.org.

