NEWS RELEASE  
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UAlbany Research Center Receives Federal Funding  

The United States Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is awarding the University at Albany’s Center for Technology in Government (CTG) almost a half million dollars to research how libraries can better serve their communities and act as catalysts for collaborations among local government, citizens, and other stakeholders in technology innovations and smart city initiatives.

The three year project, led by CTG Associate Research Director Mila Gascó, is one of only 31 grantees selected out of a pool of more than 115 applicants. Applicants were vying for more than $5 million IMLS made available to fund projects that will address significant challenges and opportunities facing the library and archives field.

“We are delighted to announce today’s grant recipients whose projects are designed to have lasting benefits for the library and archives fields,” said IMLS Director Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew. “These grants highlight how IMLS helps steer the nation's investments in libraries and ensure that librarians are equipped to provide citizens access to the information, resources, and services they want and need.”

The CTG project will address two specific questions:

- To what extent do public libraries, building on their expertise, knowledge, and background, contribute to communities’ understanding of and participation in smart city initiatives?
- What are the existing and potential benefits, costs, risks, challenges, and unintended consequences for public libraries increasing their involvement in their communities’ smart city initiatives?

The project will build on the results of a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program (LB21) grant that CTG received back in 2013, which included a set of recommendations for public libraries to help them best contribute to and influence the opening of government within their communities. The new project will use a multi-method research approach and will produce literature and current practices reviews, case studies, and a national survey. It will also develop a report and a toolkit to guide libraries who are seeking to advance their role as community anchors and catalysts in smart city initiatives. The project team aims to increase and sustain relationships and collaborations between libraries and other organizations such as city governments and community organizations.

“The Center for Technology in Government at the University at Albany is honored to have been selected by the Institute of Museum & Library Services to receive a National Leadership Grant for Libraries,” says Theresa A. Pardo, PhD, Director of CTG. “This project will create new understanding of public libraries as community catalysts for collaborative engagement among local governments, citizens, and other stakeholders in smart city initiatives.”

More information about the grant and fellow recipients can be found on Page 9 of this PDF.

About CTG: The Center for Technology in Government is an applied research center at the University at Albany, world-renowned for its work with governments around the world to improve public service through innovations in technology, policy, and management.

About IMLS: The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s approximately 120,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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