

CLRC Catalyst Grant – Soule Branch

The Onondaga County Public Library is submitting an application for a CLRC Catalyst Grant to fund an Inclusive Community Gaming series at Soule Branch Library. This program will provide reliable, accessible activities for adults with disabilities and their caregivers, an underserved population in Soule's neighborhood. Tabletop and video games will be purchased for circulation and in-house use, and weekly programs will be provided for patrons of all ages to enjoy community play. Funds will also cover an Event Coordinator fee for a one-time promotional event with staff from Play the Game, Read the Story. The budget for this grant will not exceed \$1,000.

CLRC Catalyst Grant Application

ELIGIBILITY:

Any library (including school and public libraries) or library system that is a member of CLRC is eligible. The library applying for the grant must not have received a **Catalyst Grant** within the past calendar year

DEADLINE:

Grants will be awarded quarterly. Applicants must submit a pre-application and have a consultation with a member of the CLRC staff before submitting a full application.

Deadlines for submitting a pre-application and requesting a consultation are

March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1

Full application deadlines are

March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31

GRANT AMOUNT:

Grants will be awarded in amounts of at least \$300 and at most \$2,000 as funds allow.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

The project should be completed one year from the date of receipt of funds. Extensions may be given if a progress report and reason for the extension is explained in advance of the one-year deadline.

PROJECT COMPLETION:

If your project is funded, you must complete a final report and will present a talk and/or poster at CLRC's Annual Meeting following the completion of the project.

Your Name: Sarah O'Neill

Your Title and Affiliation: Adult Services Librarian, Soule Branch, Onondaga County Public Library

Collaborating Partner Name: Play the Game, Read the Story

Project title: Play Together: Inclusive Community Gaming

Short project description

I'm planning to create a collection of table-top and video games that can be checked out for short-term use within the library only, for both drop-in play and scheduled events. The collection will be composed of a variety of intergenerational, accessible, and entry-level games: games suited to a wide range of ages, abilities, and skill levels. This collection will support library programming, including weekly drop-in game sessions for adults with disabilities and special events for all ages and abilities.

What is the main issue this project will address and/or what added value will this project bring to your library and the community it serves?

At Soule Branch Library, many of our patrons are retired adults, adults on a fixed income, and developmentally disabled adults. It seems that adults with disabilities are a particularly underserved population in this area. Specifically, there are two caregivers who bring their clients into Soule Branch regularly who have said they're experiencing a post-pandemic gap in day-time programming for them. They expressed a need for reliable, accessible activities (particularly games) and they know other local caregivers need them too. My main goal with this project is to provide disabled adults and their caregivers with weekly programming in their community that engages them in low-stress activities and fun exercise during the day. The format will be drop-in and patrons will be able to choose from our

collection of table-top games, video games, coloring books, and our existing puzzle collection. My secondary goal with this project is to foster intergenerational and educational gaming amongst all our patrons. A diverse game collection will allow us to provide both the space and the materials for social game time for all ages and abilities.

What specifically will you do to complete the project described above?

If I receive this grant, I will start right away by purchasing the materials and securing the services (the Event Coordinator from Play the Game, Read the Story) proposed in my budget. I will collaborate with the Youth Services Librarian here to schedule the one-time promotional event for mid-March 2024. Then I will schedule the recurring, weekly drop-in program for adults with disabilities to start late-March or early-April 2024. I will begin promoting the weekly program in February by doing outreach to local services for adults with disabilities (such as Exceptional Family Resources and Advocates Incorporated). I will also advertise it through the OCPL Events Calendar and Soule Branch Library Facebook page, and reach out to OCPL Central, local library groups, and local news outlets to ask if they will advertise it. In the future, I will continue hosting special events that utilize our new game collection. In September 2024, I will send out a follow-up survey and then I will compile the results in October 2024.

What impact will the completion of this project have on your library? Please also speak to broader impacts (e.g., on other libraries, communities, etc.) if applicable.

Completing this project will create a whole new collection of materials for drop-in/self-guided play at Soule Branch Library. It will also open-up opportunities for the Adult Services and Youth Services Librarians to create programming that will encourage adults, teens, and children to play, strategize, collaborate, and win together. It will also create a precedent for recurring gaming sessions and special events that can be repeated in the future. As for broader impacts: this could relieve feelings of isolation and stagnation that are pervasive in the disabled adult population in this area. It could also foster a sense of community by encouraging cooperation and spontaneous play within the library with fellow library patrons.

How would you measure the success of your project?

I would define success as consistent attendance numbers to the weekly drop-in game sessions and positive feedback/constructive input. I will measure this by recording patron attendance and any notable interactions or patron feedback to all game-related programs in the library. I will also send a follow-up survey to patrons and partnering groups in September 2024. The survey would ask about program participation, collection use, and general feedback/suggestions. I will probably use PLA's Project Outcome toolkit (www.projectoutcome.org) to create the survey and analyze the results.

Amount of funding requested: \$1,000

Budget

Item	Amount
Tabletop Games	\$535
Video Games	\$175
Coloring Books	\$115
Event Coordinator Fee	\$175
Total	\$1,000

Budget details

Funding will be used for materials and services. Materials include table-top games with low complexity that are designed for a wide range of age groups. It also includes video games designed for physical activity and coloring books (to give patrons another option). Services include the cost to hire the Event Coordinator from Play the Game, Read the Story to run a one-time promotional event at Soule Branch Library to demonstrate some games to patrons and staff.

Could you accomplish this project with partial funding?

Partial funding would mean removing the video games and some of the table-top games and coloring books. This would leave us without a physical activity for patrons to choose.