

Grant Proposal:  
Carnegie Library of Erehwonburg,  
Digital Photography Project

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# 1 Executive Summary

Many of our patrons look to the library for help with technology. More and more of our patrons are using digital photography, and the library currently lacks the resources to assist patrons and provide them with important technology tools for digital photography.

Patrons can benefit from library programs that give them skills and allow them access to equipment for digital photographing, editing, and printing. Additionally, the equipment will allow patrons and library staff to scan old photos of local places, people, and events—and collect new ones. These will represent an important contribution to local history and will figure prominently in a new joint project of the library and the Erehwonburg Historical Society to create a digital library website devoted to local history.

Sony's reputation for excellent digital photography electronics and its prominent position in Western Pennsylvania have led us to seek the equipment and funding for this project. We are requesting \$1250 worth of Sony digital photography equipment and \$2047 in monetary donations for additional equipment and staff training. CLE will also offer \$948 out of our operating budget to support the project.

# 2 About the Carnegie Library of Erehwonburg

The Carnegie Library of Erehwonburg<sup>1</sup> (CLE) is located in Allegheny County in Western Pennsylvania, 15 miles from Pittsburgh. It serves a population of approximately 22,000 residents in the closely knit borough.

Our mission is to serve as a vital commons for the community, providing patrons access to knowledge, entertainment, and community life. We actively work to preserve the history of Erehwonburg and to contribute to its future.

Andrew Carnegie provided funds for the original construction of the library building in 1899; CLE remains in this building today in the historic downtown of Erehwonburg. Erehwonburg supports the library through an annual allocation of property taxes, making up about 90% of CLE's operating budget. CLE also derives operating funds from a small endowment fund as well as active fund-raising.

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<sup>1</sup>The library and its town are fictional.

CLE regularly has over 1500 visitors in a week, and circulates 8.5 items per capita annually. We have more than 150 lectures, instruction classes, storytimes, and other programs annually, attended by 1800 visitors. We also host several community groups including three book clubs, a knitting club, and a genealogy interest group. We are located across the street from Erehwonburg's high school and two blocks away from one of the elementary schools and regularly see more than 50 students come into the library after school on weekdays.

## 3 Digital Photography Program

The following sections outline our proposal for a digital photography program. **3.1 Needs Assessment** describes our understanding of patron needs that led to our seeking funding for this project. **3.2 Program Goals** enumerates our goals for the outcomes of the project, **3.3 Program Design and Objectives** lays out the activities we have planned to support these goals, and **3.4 Evaluation Methods** describes the processes we will use to evaluate the success of the activities. Finally, **3.5 Budget** relates the equipment and funding we are seeking to implement the project.

### 3.1 Needs Assessment

As a public library, we have traditionally been involved in bringing content to our patrons from publishers and producers. Personal computing and the Internet are expanding the possibilities for individuals to create and share their own content. Technology is making creating content easier all the time—from the written word to movies, music, and pictures.

As personal computing and the Internet have spread, the public has relied on local libraries to provide access to these technologies and training in their use. Although many of our patrons' households have a personal computer (75%) and Internet access (55%, 30% broadband), there are still many patrons whose only access to a computer and the Internet is through the public library. And even patrons who have their own computers often learn how to use them by attending instruction sessions at the library: of 322 people attending computer instruction sessions at our library last year, 37% had a computer at home.

Given these facts, it's natural that patrons often come to the library for

help using computers, and increasingly for guidance in creating and managing digital content. In the past year, we've had a rising number of questions about digital cameras and digital photography. Although we do have staff members who are fairly proficient with a digital camera, we aren't always very well prepared to handle these questions, and we don't have equipment or software at the library to demonstrate or teach with.

We found in a recent survey that about a third of patron households have a digital camera, and more than half have digital pictures from photo CDs, a camera phone, or from friends and relatives. We also asked respondents about whether they felt they were able to use their camera as well as they would like to, and nearly half of them said they couldn't. We also asked about whether their computers were well-equipped for organizing, viewing, editing, and printing those photos. Most said they weren't; they described lacking the right software, storage media, memory and processing power, and printers to make the best use of their digital photos.

Patrons who have digital cameras could benefit from advice and training at the library, as well as having access to computers and software that can allow them to creatively explore the possibilities of digital photography. Patrons who don't have digital cameras could also benefit from hands-on experience with a camera and access to equipment for digitizing photos made on film.

## **3.2 Program Goals**

We propose a program in which we can pursue the following goals:

- Provide training to patrons on how to use digital cameras and photo editing software
- Provide equipment for use by patrons and staff for creating and editing digital photos
- Encourage an environment of collaboration and sharing in the community, centered around photography of community events and landmarks and historical photos

### **3.3 Program Design and Objectives**

To meet these goals, we will need equipment and funding. The equipment includes a computer with photo editing software, a scanner, a printer, and digital cameras. Funding will go toward staff training to be applied in the use and instruction of these technologies. Excellent training is available locally at reasonable cost at Pittsburgh Filmmakers' School of Film, Photography and Digital Media. (See **3.5 Budget** for details.)

Sony has been heavily involved in the development of digital photography electronics, and has been dedicated in its commitment to Western Pennsylvania. A donation of Sony equipment and funds to proceed with this project would provide extremely valuable services to our patrons.

To take advantage of this technology and training, we have planned a number of library activities.

#### **3.3.1 Picture Fair**

In conjunction with the Erehwonburg Historical Society, we propose to hold a Picture Fair, an afternoon in which community residents can bring in pictures of Erehwonburg, old and new, along with letters, postcards, flyers and other materials on the history of the borough. We will help patrons print and scan materials and encourage them to donate materials (or digital copies) to the Historical Society, which maintains an archive of local history materials in the library.

We will hold this event in conjunction with the annual Railroad Days festival celebrating local history. The event will be organized by library staff along with members of the Historical Society and of a genealogical discussion group (which meets monthly in the library). Contributed digital materials will go into a pool of materials for consideration in another joint project of the library and the Historical Society, a local history digital library website (for which we have just received funding).

#### **3.3.2 Instruction Classes**

The library already holds more than 40 instruction classes annually, including 25–30 focusing on computers and technology. We plan to add several classes focusing on digital photography:

- Several sessions of “Introduction to digital cameras”, in which a larger

group (10–15) learns the basics of using a digital camera. Participants can bring their own digital cameras to explore their functions, and the session leader will demonstrate on the library’s camera.

- “Sharing your digital photos”, also for larger groups, to learn about best practices for sharing photos by email, on various media such as CDs, and on the Internet using photo-sharing websites such as Flickr.
- “Photo editing” for smaller groups (under 5), for conveying the basics of using the library’s digital photography workstation for scanning, editing, and printing photos, with hands-on experience for each of the participants

In addition to holding these classroom sessions, staff training will allow us to more reliably be able to answer patron questions about digital cameras and digital photography as they come up.

### **3.3.3 Pictures of Library and Community Events**

The digital cameras will replace our aging Polaroid cameras for taking photographs of library events and other events around the community. This will also allow us to use the photographs on our website.

We regularly lend out our current cameras to community groups holding events to take pictures, and we expect to continue to do so with the digital cameras. (We do not expect to lend the cameras to the public in general because of theft concerns.) Since the photos will be digital, it will be much easier for the library to get copies of the photos of community events to display in the library and place in the Historical Society project as well.

### **3.3.4 General Use**

The digital photography workstation will be available for general use by patrons, with library staff assistance if necessary, for scanning, editing, and printing photos. If necessary, we may need to institute a sign-up system and time limits for reserving and using the workstation. We plan on charging a fee for printing photos to cover paper and ink costs.

### **3.4 Evaluation Methods**

To evaluate the success of the project, we propose the following measures.

For the classroom instruction sessions, we already have a survey system in place, and we expect to use it to evaluate these sessions as well. We have found that in the past two years, we have had a very high satisfaction rate among participants in instruction sessions.

We will be counting the participation in the Picture Fair and will distribute an optional survey at that event as well. We will be monitoring how often and by how many patrons the digital photography workstation is used during regular library operation as well.

An analysis of past spending shows that using digital cameras rather than Polaroids for photographing library events will allow us to save approximately \$100 in film expenses annually (and take many more pictures).

### **3.5 Budget**

Below is an itemized budget of equipment and monetary contributions sought. CLE can offer funds from our operating budget toward several items; see below.

<b>Equipment donations</b>	<i>Value</i>	<i>CLE funds</i>
Sony Cybershot DSC-W50 digital cameras (3)	\$750	
Cases, spare batteries, and charger	245	
256MB Sony Memory Sticks (3)	120	
Sony DPP-FP50 digital photo printer	100	
Sony 4 × 6 photo paper	35	
<b>Cash contributions</b>	<i>Value</i>	<i>CLE funds</i>
Adobe Creative Suite 2	899	
PC workstation	1500	750
Flatbed scanner	200	
Staff training	396	198
<b>Net contributions</b>	<i>Sony</i>	<i>CLE</i>
Equipment	1250	
Cash	2047	948

Requirements of our county-wide library technology consortium require us to purchase the PC workstation through their procurement and provisioning process.

Because the PC workstation will likely be of use to us beyond digital photography, we are willing to pay for half of its cost out of our annual technology allocation. We anticipate that we may additionally be able to use it for programming, instruction, and patron use for the creation and editing of many kinds of digital content, including music and movies as well as photographs.

And because we believe firmly in staff professional development, we will support half of the expense of the digital photography training course. We have an annual allocation for professional development in our operating budget.

CLE will also provide publicity for the project and its activities as part of its ongoing publicity for library programs. We will be sure to highlight Sony's generosity in all of our program announcements.

## **4 Conclusion**

Sony's generous donation of its excellent digital photography electronics and funding could help jumpstart Erehwonburg residents' abilities in digital photography. Digital photography of local people, places, and events will enrich the library and local history collections and provide opportunities for contribution to the shared heritage of Western Pennsylvania, of which Sony has been an important part.

We thank you for your consideration.

## **5 Appendices**

### **5.1 Proof of status as a 501c(3) organization**

### **5.2 Operating budget and financial statements**

### **5.3 Annual report and strategic plan**