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**Introduction**

# Overview

The National Less Commonly Taught Languages Resource Center’s (National LCTL Resource Center; NLRC1) recognizes the pressing national need for access to high-quality language teaching and learning materials in today’s global society. Michigan State University (MSU2) seeks funding for the NLRC, a Title VI Language Resource Center. The mission of the NLRC is to support and develop LCTL education by 1) offering high-quality opportunities for professional learning, 2) creating open and innovative instructional resources, and 3) forging strategic collaborations at the inter-institutional level. The NLRC’s ability to function as a Language Resource Center and to carry out its proposed projects will be supported by MSU’s demonstrated commitment to the following: 1) second language education and research, 2) instruction in LCTLs, 3) collaborative teaching and research, 4) research-based outreach, and 5) technology infrastructure support.

# World Language Education and Research

Instruction in second and additional3 languages, cultures, and literatures at MSU is carried out by two departments: the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures (LiLaC) and the Department of Romance and Classical Studies. Over twenty languages (commonly taught and LCTLs) are taught regularly, with up to thirty additional languages taught on demand.

1 This proposal (and related proposal documents) will use NLRC to abbreviate “National LCTL Resource Center.” To prevent confusion with other Language Resource Centers, the National LCTL Resource Center will be written out wherever possible on its website and future publications/presentations.

2 See Appendix D for a list of key acronyms

3 With the exception of names of programs that contain the phrase “foreign language,” this proposal (and related documents) will use “second”, “additional”, and “world language” interchangeably instead of “foreign language,” in keeping with best practices as recommended by MSU’s globally inclusive efforts.

MSU’s commitment to world language education is evidenced through continued support for the Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA), founded in 2008 with support from the Provost and the College of Arts & Letters to support language teaching and learning on campus and in the community. CeLTA will serve as the National LCTL Resource Center’s administrative home, as has successfully been done for other language-related grants such as the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership ($2.5 million, 2019-2023; $1.2 million, 2016-19) from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Language Proficiency Flagship Initiative ($1.4 million, 2014-18) from the National Security Education Program. Housing multiple grants within one administrative structure creates synergies and opportunities for mutual support.

CeLTA, and thus the NLRC, is a college-level center housed in the College of Arts & Letters, which has a long-standing commitment to language education and research. The College of Arts & Letters housed the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), a Title VI LRC from 1996-2018, which was a leader in language advocacy, professional development for language educators, and materials development for commonly taught and less commonly taught languages. The Dean of the College of Arts & Letters brings a long history of proactive leadership in language education and currently serves as the Principal Investigator for the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership. In addition, the Dean is working directly with language faculty in exploring ways to strengthen the language departments through internal grants and collaborative opportunities. The MSU personnel who would serve as key personnel for the NLRC are also individually committed to research and dissemination efforts, including two edited volumes (currently under review) that center on the topics of language program vitality in the United States and collaboration and innovation in sharing LCTLs across institutions.

A further commitment to language teaching, learning, and research was the development of an online master’s degree in the teaching of world languages, which is also administratively housed in CeLTA. The fully online Master of Arts in Foreign Language (MAFLT) program has been the largest master’s program in the College of Arts & Letters since summer 2014, and the largest graduate program overall since spring 2018. The MAFLT program’s students and alumni represent over 40 states, 22 countries, and over 20 languages taught. The MAFLT program offers unique affordances for meeting the professional development needs of LCTL teachers in that it is sufficiently language-agnostic and yet allows for customization by language. Language teachers can take MAFLT courses from anywhere while continuing to teach. Comparable programs may be too local, too limited to public K-12 settings, too focused on English, or specific to more commonly taught languages.

CeLTA also houses the Community Language School (CLS), which offers non-credit courses, summer camps, and cultural events to any learner of any age, including preschoolers (ages 3-6), children (ages 6-9), pre-teens (10-12), teens (ages 13+) and adults (18+). CLS serves the local community with face-to-face classes in East Lansing and online to learners nationwide. Another CeLTA initiative is the Online Language Teaching (OLT) Initiative, a project that has trained over 300 language educators in effective, principled online language instruction.

CeLTA’s Language Program Consulting provides consulting services to other institutions as a fee-based service for language programs, departments, centers or other academic units. Lastly, CeLTA (and, thus, the proposed NLRC) is physically located in a well-equipped building dedicated to language teaching and learning, which was completed in 2012.

MSU continues its robust support for research in second/additional language learning through an extensive commitment to the Ph.D. program in Second Language Studies, as part of

the Applied Linguistics Graduate Program, with ten tenure-track core faculty positions, nineteen graduate assistantships, and twenty-eight current students. This highly selective program continues to attract a large number of international students from a wide variety of language backgrounds. The leadership team of the NLRC has strong connections with the Second Language Studies program, with one core faculty member (Van Gorp) and two affiliate faculty members (Kronenberg, Heidrich Uebel).

CeLTA also has strong ties to other units that support its work and share similar goals, such as the Asian Studies Center, African Studies Center, the Center for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, the International Business Center (IBC/CIBER), and the Open Educational Resources (OER) program at the MSU Libraries. During monthly coordination meetings, leadership from the various institutions align goals and support each other’s work. The NLRC would expect increased synergistic effects should it be granted funding.

# Instruction in LCTLs

In response to its own internal interests and to the national need to focus on LCTLs, MSU’s Title VI National Resource Centers (NRCs) and the College of Arts & Letters collaborated in creating the dedicated position of LCTL coordinator over fifteen years ago. The coordinator is responsible for developing LCTL programming and supervising LCTL instructors. For example, a LCTL program initiative has brought 110 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) to MSU under the coordinator’s supervision since 2008. MSU has had a consistently high number of Fulbright FLTAs in any given year (with as many as thirteen), due in large part to MSU’s strong support of LCTL teaching. MSU has also been awarded grants to

run Fulbright FLTA orientations taking place nationwide from 2010-2020. CeLTA personnel have been deeply involved with the FLTA orientation and on-campus program since 2010, delivering workshops and supervising teaching demonstrations for these initiatives. Furthermore, within the LCTL Program, a LCTL Leadership team was formed when a tenure system Assistant Professor (Van Gorp, who will serve as Head of Research for the NLRC Leadership team) joined as a co-LCTL Coordinator in Fall 2021. The addition of the tenure system LCTL Coordinator aims to strengthen the research agenda of the LCTL program by opening and supporting new avenues for research and grant acquisition.

# Collaborative Teaching and Research

MSU encourages a culture of collaborative teaching and research, drawing on its background of integrative, interdisciplinary education. One example of this culture of collaboration among different units and departments at MSU is a proposal to MSU’s Strategic Partnership Grant Center development program to create a *Center for Open Educational Resources in the Less Commonly Taught Languages* (*Open Center for LCTLs*). If accepted by the MSU Foundation, the proposed Center will be the first in the U.S. to provide opportunities specifically for LCTL educators to develop and conduct research on openly licensed LCTL teaching and learning materials. The Open Center for LCTLs will also facilitate the development of innovative teaching practices to leverage the efficacy of OER for language learning, foregrounding principles of the co-construction of knowledge among language educators and learners. This collaborative and interdisciplinary undertaking leverages the strengths of five MSU colleges and units: MSU Libraries, CeLTA, the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and

Cultures, the College of Education, and the Asian Studies Center. This would complement the efforts of the NLRC.

As part of the Less Commonly Taught and Indigenous Languages Partnership, CeLTA personnel have been assisting inter-institutional faculty working groups to develop openly available materials and online courses. Currently, a Portuguese course which was developed by faculty at MSU, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), and the University of Chicago is being piloted at UIUC; with 17 students enrolled from four institutions across the Big Ten Academic Alliance, this level of participation and enrollment is a testament to the possibilities of collaborative efforts.

Over the years, MSU’s LCTL program has supported instructors of varying levels of pedagogical experience, which includes extensive training and collaborative resource creation. Part of these internal resource development efforts has resulted in the Downloadable Online Open Resources (DOORs) project, now available to the public, which will be expanded as part of the NLRC (see section I.B.2.b.1.).

# Research-based Outreach

As a land-grant institution, MSU’s mission places a strong emphasis on community outreach and the wide dissemination of innovative instructional techniques and research. In line with MSU’s position as a Research I university, all outreach efforts are based on empirically supported methods emphasizing the integration of teaching and research. The NLRC will continue this tradition by conducting research that will inform materials development and professional development activities. By including a position of Head of Research as part of the NLRC Leadership team, the NLRC wants to safeguard and promote the interface between

research and teaching, develop research-based pedagogy initiatives and support peer-reviewed publications. The comprehensive needs analysis project will influence the development of the three focus areas of the NLRC, including the topics and types of professional development (e.g., new courses developed as part of the Online Language Teaching [OLT] Initiative), the themes and kinds of resources (concomitant training and dissemination to encourage the use of the resources), and the areas of focus in strategic collaboration. Several of the NLRC projects will also include research avenues, which will be discussed under the project descriptions below.

# Technology Infrastructure Support

MSU has an extensive technology infrastructure that would support the NLRC in accomplishing its proposed projects. The NLRC can rely not only upon its in-house staff, but also upon the considerable pool of technological expertise and technology resources from the university.

CeLTA has a total of over 5,000 square feet of physical space built in 2012, which is highly configurable. CeLTA has its own dedicated computer lab solely devoted to language teaching and learning, as well as other spaces with mobile technologies and furniture. The NLRC will be able to take advantage of this lab for research, workshops, and outreach activities.

# Summary

CeLTA is well-placed to house the NLRC with its focus on LCTL education. The MSU College of Arts & Letters has housed and managed several large grant initiatives focused on improving students’ language proficiency and language advocacy, including the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), a Title VI LRC from 1996 till 2018. As an independent unit, CeLTA interacts with the two main language departments and has supported

the professional development of faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students at MSU, as well as language learners and teachers outside MSU. Since it was founded in 2008, CeLTA has become a hub for many innovative and transformative language teaching and learning initiatives at the College of Arts & Letters. The National LCTL Resource Center intends to elevate LCTL instruction via a three-pronged approach intentionally linking high quality professional development, open and innovative instructional materials, and strategic collaborations at the inter-institutional level. The NLRC’s 11 projects will serve a range of stakeholders directly (LCTL teachers and instructors, LCTL coordinators, administrators, parents, community members) and indirectly (students).

I. **Plan of Operation**

# Plan of Management

* + 1. **Overview**

The NLRC will be housed in CeLTA to enable close collaboration among key personnel. The NLRC’s plan of operation emphasizes not only meeting the objectives of each project, but also evaluating the usefulness of each project so as to ensure quality products and professional development activities (cf. Evaluation Plan, Section IV; Evaluation Data, Appendix E).

Moreover, the NLRC’s hands-on leadership team will work together with all stakeholders to ensure successful completion of all projects. Several key personnel currently and have previously collaborated on a number of varied projects, ranging from project coordination and delivery on multi-year collaborative initiatives to presentations and publications, which allows the leadership team to hit the ground running.

While utilizing resources and expertise from units throughout the university and collaborating where appropriate with other institutions and organizations, the NLRC will play a leadership role by initiating, designing, and coordinating activities that respond to national needs. Indeed, the projects proposed for the NLRC resulted from convening MSU language faculty, Title VI center faculty and staff, and faculty from other Colleges (e.g., Education, MSU Libraries) to discuss national priorities, as well as extensive conversations with LCTL instructors and administrators across the Big Ten Academic Alliance and beyond in the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership project. This has resulted in projects that are needs-oriented and in which faculty members themselves are invested. Additionally, these conversations have also made clear what we do not yet know or need more data on. Hence, one of the major projects is a nationwide needs analysis. Once the products are completed, the NLRC will see that products are appropriately evaluated and disseminated.

Serving as Director of the NLRC is Dr. Felix Kronenberg. Dr. Felix Kronenberg is currently Director of the CeLTA, a tenured Associate Professor of German in the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures (LiLaC), and a Co-Principal Investigator on the Andrew

W. Mellon Foundation LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership project.

Under the leadership of the Director, the Center’s activities will be supported by a team of personnel, including an Associate Executive Director, a Head of Research, a Head of Technology, a Head of Outreach, faculty project leaders, project team members, graduate assistants, and an hourly student assistant. Alongside key personnel, the Center will have access to the College of Arts & Letters functional support team that includes an office operations manager, a fiscal officer, an HR specialist, and an academic operations specialist. The NLRC will use federal funding to hire a graduate assistant (20 hours/week) and a student hourly

assistant (10 hours/week) who will help with the daily operation of the center as well as specific project support dedicated to center initiatives. In addition, CeLTA will dedicate 10 hours/week of one of its graduate assistant lines to support the NLRC, for a total of 40 hours/week of student support.

The Associate Executive Director (30% annual effort) will coordinate the daily operations (e.g., organizing and disseminating materials, managing conferences and professional development opportunities, overseeing budgets and publicity, preparing documents for the office support team, and supervising student assistants) as well as contribute to the research and evaluation of the center. She will be the main contact between the Center and the functional support team.

The Head of Research will work closely with the project leaders to ensure all resources and initiatives are research-based and will lead efforts in dissemination of the research findings from the different initiatives. He will also help the Associate Executive Director with overseeing the internal evaluation of NLRC activities.

The Head of Technology assists all stakeholders with educational technology-related initiatives and questions and is the primary lead for Online Language Teaching Initiative responsibilities (recruiting faculty and participants, managing course development and revision, advertising courses and initiatives).

The Head of Outreach will assist with such outreach operations as collaborative professional development and learning community tasks.

Faculty qualifications are given in Appendix A (Curricula Vitae of Key Personnel and Organizational Chart). In addition, the center personnel and project leaders will be guided by the NLRC Advisory Board, described below.

# Advisory Board and Project Leader Responsibilities

The Advisory Board will consist of active K-16 scholars and practitioners across disciplines related to language education. Advisory Board members will be selected in consideration of the NLRC’s project areas and goals and will provide guidance to the NLRC efforts and its project leads as they coordinate projects in their areas of focus. Given their involvement with LCTL initiatives on MSU’s campus, Dr. Siddarth Chandra (Director of Asian Studies Center, Professor) and Dr. Rajiv Ranjan (Assistant Professor of Hindi/Urdu) have already agreed to serve on the NLRC Advisory Board. To fill other positions, the NLRC also plans to invite instructor and student representatives from various types of institutions (e.g., members of community colleges, small institutions) and contexts (a K-12 expert) to serve on its Advisory Board. Representatives external to MSU will be compensated on a per-meeting basis to recognize the value of the diversity of voices and the time that the individuals are sharing with the project. The NLRC will work to fully establish the Advisory Board as quickly as possible - ideally within the first 4 months. The NLRC Advisory Board will meet several times per year (2- 3 meetings/year) virtually or in person at conferences like ACTFL or NCOLCTL.

The NLRC key personnel will meet as a team at least twice per month, allowing for an exchange of information to avoid duplication of efforts, facilitate collaboration, and guarantee that personnel are aware of the status of all projects. Additionally, the project area leads will communicate regularly with project leaders to ensure that all projects are being carried out efficiently and in a timely fashion.

The NLRC resources developed based on the needs analysis, diverse representation on the Advisory Board, and the NLRC’s focus on strategic inter-institutional collaboration will increase access to LCTLs for students of all kinds across the nation.

# Description of Projects

* + 1. **Mission**

The mission of the National Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) Resource Center is to support and develop LCTL education by 1) offering high-quality opportunities for professional learning, 2) creating open and innovative instructional resources, and 3) forging strategic collaborations at the inter-institutional level. See Figure 1, below, for a visual representation of the core focus areas and projects under each area.



*Figure 1: The National LCTL Resource Center’s core areas of focus and projects*

The NLRC’s eleven proposed projects build upon the considerable strengths of Title VI and other grant successes and the institutional strengths at MSU to fulfill the NLRC’s mission to support and develop LCTL education. This cohesive set of initiatives has many elements in common, among which are the following:

1. *Less Commonly Taught Languages*. Each of the NLRC’s projects will benefit from MSU’s position as a leader in LCTL instruction and enable the NLRC to strengthen LCTL initiatives nationwide.
2. *National Needs*. By focusing on both a pedagogical and strategic needs analysis (see Section I.B.2.d.2), communication and collaboration with professional organizations and leaders in the LCTL field, building strong communities of practice among LCTL instructors, research informing materials and professional development initiatives, and continuous self-assessment, the NLRC will make certain that it identifies and meets national needs and demands in every project.
3. *Dissemination*. Common to all NLRC focus areas and projects will be an emphasis on dissemination of research-based products to the widest possible audience. The NLRC website, mailing list, social media channels, important stakeholder conferences like ACTFL and NCOLCTL, communication on like-minded organization channels such as ACTFL Special Interest Groups, NLRC’s professional development opportunities, and publications will act as primary platforms for disseminating all NLRC’s products.

# Project Areas

Eleven NLRC’s projects situated in three complementary areas of focus aim to support and develop LCTL education for both students and instructors. All researchers will seek the

permission of MSU’s Institutional Review Board where relevant; no research involving human subjects will be initiated until permission has been granted.

## High-Quality Professional Development (Area Lead: Giupponi)

**Area Goal**: To enhance instructional capacity in LCTL education by offering high-quality, focused professional development opportunities to LCTL educators, informed by identified needs in the field.

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| Table 1: Summary Table of Focus Area “High Quality Professional Development” | | |
| **Project** | **Target Audience** | **Deliverables** |
| Online Language Teaching (OLT) Initiative | Mostly university level language educators | -Courses taught throughout each year (including summer), with preference given to LCTL instructors  -One new course developed each year (topic based on the needs analysis) |
| The ViVID Project: Virtual Video-based Inquiry for the Development of LCTL Teachers | K-16 LCTL  Instructors | -Cohorts of LCTL instructors form communities of practice  -Customized guides and rubrics for telecollaborative peer mentoring |
| Learning Community | Mostly university level instructors | -Sustained conversation between peers throughout each academic year, sharing practical teaching resources and relevant readings related to topics |
| Collaborative Professional Development | K-16 Language Educators | -Financially support a variety of professional development opportunities for the NLRC or like- minded organizations as needs arise |

* + - * 1. *Online Language Teaching (OLT) Initiative (Giupponi)*

**Background**: The demand for online language instruction has grown dramatically in the last decade. An increase in asynchronous online LCTL offerings is positive from a strategic standpoint, as collaboration and coordination among institutions can leverage this modality to reach more students and higher levels of proficiency. These opportunities for and efforts toward strategic collaboration (see section I.B.2.c.) must go hand in hand with training on how to maximize the opportunity that online language instruction affords. One of the biggest obstacles for LCTL instructors who want to start teaching online is the fact that many of them may not

have experienced online learning first-hand. As a result, they lack a conceptual framework for carrying out their instruction in a different medium, and their competence may be limited to transposing their F2F teaching strategies and techniques to the online medium, which would lead to less than optimal results.

The Online Language Teaching (OLT) Initiative was launched in 2019 to address these needs. The initiative (https://olt.cal.msu.edu/) consists of a number of short, fully online courses,

as well as a best-practices blog. The online, asynchronous nature of the course exposes participants to all the affordances and constraints of an online environment for language teaching and learning, allowing them to experience a student’s perspective firsthand. This includes engaging in a variety of technology-mediated tasks and key discussions, which are meant to be a sampling of the possibilities of online learning. Participants enjoy a small, seminar-style, cohort- focused curriculum similar to what would be found in a graduate course, receive extensive and personalized instructor feedback and interaction, and work primarily on tasks and projects that are relevant to their own contexts. The program draws from a sizable pool of experienced online instructors at MSU as the instructors for these courses. Since its inception and with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the OLT initiative has trained over 300 instructors across the nation in OLT Fundamentals as well as advanced techniques and pedagogies. The OLT Initiative has produced several research avenues, including the patterns of technology integration practices of post-secondary language instructors after Emergency Remote Teaching.

**Project**: As the financial support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation phases out, federal funding will allow the OLT program to offer 3 courses each spring, summer, and fall semester (with a general maximum of 12 participants per course), which would impact a possible additional 400 participants. The additional exposure that a Title VI Center affords the OLT

program would ensure that the most instructors possible could be trained. Without federal funding, many LCTL instructors would not be able to access the courses because of the course fees.

Currently, the advanced course curriculum includes the following topics: *Oral Communicative Tasks, Creating Engaging Materials,* and *Post-Pandemic Language Teaching.* One additional advanced course will be developed each year, with topics being pulled from the needs analysis. A new advanced course focused on technology-infused differentiated instruction strategies and promoting diversity in the curriculum is currently in development. The course offerings each year will respond to enrollment demand and the findings of the needs analysis.

The experiences of instructors, the impact of OLT training, and the response of the OLT program to the needs analysis are promising paths for further research related to this project.

Additionally, an OLT LCTL Innovation Award will promote excellence in online language teaching methodologies and approaches by recognizing innovative OLT practices in LCTL instruction. The award ceremony would happen yearly at the Shared LCTL Symposium; this initiative would support the dissemination of specific innovative practices and generally promote excellence in LCTL instruction. The selection criteria and process for selecting winners for the OLT LCTL Innovation Award will be reviewed by the NLRC Advisory Board and the Master of Foreign Language Teaching (MAFLT) program (as the financial sponsor for the award).

* + - * 1. *Virtual Video-based Inquiry for the Development of LCTL Teachers (ViVID) Project (Lanier, Poole, Sommer-Farias)*

**Background**: One of the most significant barriers to expanding linguistic capacity in the U.S. lies in the shortage of qualified language teachers. Also, as the American Academy of Arts and

Sciences Commission on Language Learning reported in 2017, language teachers are not currently “given the same opportunities for professional training and advancement as teachers in other ‘core’ subject areas” (p. 16). The challenges of recruiting and educating language teachers are magnified for teachers of LCTLs. LCTL teachers are frequently recruited into teaching from other fields, many receive little training in pedagogy, their options for materials and curricula tend to be very limited, and the languages they teach are linguistically and socioculturally difficult for U.S. learners. Furthermore, they are often isolated in their teaching contexts, with few peers who teach the same language and little access to professional development that is specific to their needs.

**Project**: The Virtual Video-based Inquiry for the Development of LCTL Teachers (ViVID) Project will select a cohort of in-service K-16 LCTL teachers each year to engage in a process of reflective teaching and peer mentoring based on virtual exchange of self-recorded teaching videos. In return for a monthly stipend, fellows in the cohort would be asked to record videos of their teaching at regular intervals throughout the school year, to share these videos and related materials with their peers on a web-based platform that supports detailed tagging and commenting, to respond to these videos using customized self-assessment and peer observation rubrics, and to participate in semi-structured interviews with project facilitators. The intended facilitators are all experienced language teacher educators with doctoral degrees in applied linguistics who are knowledgeable in relevant exploratory research methods and well versed in online teaching and other forms of telecollaboration.

The ViVID process is designed to build a virtual community of practice among a diverse group of participants and enhance their pedagogical skills and practices as they analyze them within that supportive community. The project will contribute to LCTL teacher training in ways

that extend far beyond that community. For the facilitators, developing these practices of virtual telecollaboration and video-based reflection would also extend their effectiveness as teacher educators. Also, examining the teaching videos, annotation of the videos, synchronous and asynchronous discussions, and interviews would provide the basis for much-needed research into teacher cognition among practicing LCTL teachers, virtual community building, and the effects of peer mentoring on teachers’ self-perceptions and efficacy. With appropriate media release and consent procedures, ViVID project leaders also plan to incorporate the videos, peer mentoring guides, and authentic examples into training modules that would then be delivered to other LCTL teachers in traditional or virtual modalities. These would be available as OERs.

* + - * 1. *Learning Community (Van Gorp, Cornell)*

The NLRC’s learning community, a cohort-like model opportunity for sustained pedagogical discussion and open to LCTL instructors nationwide, will be modeled after several successful faculty learning communities based in CeLTA in recent years, including its AY 2021- 22 learning community dedicated to re-imagining physical spaces during the pandemic. The learning community will provide relevant accessible readings, hands-on activities, and discussion opportunities for its participants. Participants will work on creating and adapting resources to fit their own teaching contexts. A unique characteristic of the learning community is that it creates an opportunity for sustained, developing conversation among a core group of recurring participants; thus, it will meet monthly for a total of 8 sessions per academic year for all four years. The group will meet virtually to maximize attendance and access. Similar to the OLT course development outlined above, the first theme for the learning community discussion will be informed by the national LCTL instructor survey (conducted by CeLTA in 2021). In subsequent years, the learning community theme will be informed by the pedagogical and

strategic needs analysis (a Year 1 NLRC project, see section I.B.2.d.2.) as well as stakeholder and participant feedback.

* + - * 1. *Collaborative Professional Development (Cornell)*

The NLRC’s collaborative professional development initiative will financially support various professional development activities to benefit LCTL instructors across K-16 education and promote topics relevant to the instruction of LCTLs throughout the duration of the NLRC. This flexibility in funding potentially multiple (types of) professional development opportunities allows the NLRC to respond to needs in the field as they arise as well as strategically maximize the investment of NLRC personnel hours by supporting activities that are organized by like- minded organizations. The NLRC can also promote such opportunities through its dissemination channels and through various existing relationships. The final choice of events that will be supported will depend on the outcome of the needs analysis, but current promising avenues include the Language Collaboratory Professional Development Series and online summer OER workshops.

One avenue for collaboration is the Language Collaboratory Professional Development Series. The Language Collaboratory was established in the Fall 2020 as a partnership that promotes the advancement of intercollegiate dialogue on the teaching of languages and cultures. It represents collaboration between the language centers and institutes at the University of Iowa, the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota, Michigan State University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In this example of collaborative professional development, the NLRC would be able to fund sessions by external speakers focused on LCTL instruction by providing speaker fees of $200 and assisting in publicity efforts. Supporting the invitation of

high-profile external speakers would build a more robust professional development program that can serve a broad range of LCTL instructors.

Another avenue for collaborative professional development lies in organizing and funding OER workshops/outreach with community colleges and small colleges in Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. The idea came from MSU’s Strategic Partnership Grant (SPG) proposal to create a Center for Open LCTLs, a collaboration with the MSU Libraries, the Asian Studies Center, LiLaC, and the College of Education. The NLRC intends to collaboratively expand on this idea by collaborating with the stakeholders in the SPG proposal, which would provide outreach through online summer OER workshops. These workshops would also be organized in collaboration with other Title VI Language Resource Centers.

## Open and Innovative Instructional Resources (Area Lead: Van Gorp)

**Area Goal**: To generate and widely disseminate a diverse range of high-quality, open access, and innovative teaching and learning materials for LCTLs, based on identified needs in the field.

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| Table 2: Summary Table of Focus Area “Open and Innovative Instructional Resources” | | |
| **Project** | **Target Audience** | **Deliverables** |
| LCTL Downloadable Online Open Resources (DOORs) | Available to all, topics largely appropriate for Grades 9-16 | -Expansion of model instructional activities in English for the Intermediate level  -Creation of open access activity sets in several languages other than English  -Creation of training content for LCTL DOOR materials |
| Local LCTL Assessment (LoLA) | Available to all, broadly targeted at Grades 9-16 | -Creation of test specifications and an OER test- template kit for online, computer-adaptive LCTL placement and diagnostic tests |
| Teach-a-LCTL (Community/Family Resource Guides) | Targeted for families, community leaders, and those working with adolescent learners (Grades 5-12) | -Creation of two resource guides for those teaching LCTLs to adolescents in a family or community |

* + - * 1. *LCTL Downloadable Online Open Resources (DOORs) (Steider)*

**Background**: DOORs are Downloadable Online Open Resources that “open doors” for language instructors by providing them with language agnostic instructional activities that they can easily transform to use in their classroom. They were designed especially for instructors of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), who may struggle with a lack of resources for teaching their language. The LCTL program at Michigan State University began the first iteration of the LCTL DOORs program in 2014, as it was moving many of its least commonly taught languages to hybrid and online courses. The program began creating meaningful, interpretive reading and listening activities in English that could be graded automatically by the online course management system. These activities were then converted to various languages. The key point here was *converted*, not translated: the instructors first had to decide if the activity made sense in their language and then convert it to be linguistically and culturally relevant. After several years of creating, piloting, and modifying these activities, MSU’s LCTL program expanded to include the creation of teacher-corrected homework and in-class activities in the presentational and interpersonal modes. Through support from the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership, the novice-level English activities were refined and transitioned from an internal resource to a public-facing website (https://doors.cal.msu.edu/), which launched in March 2022.

**Project**: In order to quickly expand LCTL DOORs and provide LCTL teachers with the most ready-made resources, this project will begin by hiring native speakers to proof complete target language DOOR activity sets, including Vietnamese, Thai, Turkish, Tamil, and Persian, which will then be uploaded for open access by all instructors of those languages. Subsequently, the project will expand the materials available on LCTL DOORs in several ways. The MSU LCTL program has some language materials (e.g., in Uzbek, Hindi, Bengali) that have some activities

converted into the target language, but still need a number of activities converted from English. As the NLRC assesses which languages are not represented in the MSU materials and are in demand (based on the results of the needs analysis and conversations the NLRC personnel will have), the project will create new language sets.

Concurrently with these other activities, the model activities (in English) will be expanded beyond the novice level into the intermediate (Low, Mid and High) level by project personnel. In order to help instructors get the most out of the materials, the DOORs project team will create training materials, including an openly available LCTL DOORs Teacher Guide, which will offer samples of how various languages have sequenced their first year of instruction with DOORs activities, how to incorporate culture throughout the syllabus, and demonstrate how DOORs activities can be presented using learning management systems and various educational technologies.

Funding will be used to hire native speakers on an hourly basis to check and convert materials. Native speakers will proof any existing DOORs activities in their language(s) and will transform additional DOORs activities into their language(s). Funding was calculated assuming 10 hours of work per week throughout the academic year. The NLRC graduate/student assistants will be responsible for uploading the target language materials on to the DOORs website.

* + - * 1. *Local LCTL Assessment (LoLA) (Winke)*

**Background**: Assessment in LCTLs can be notoriously difficult. In addition to having fewer (if any) standardized testing options than commonly taught languages, LCTL programs can run into difficulty with assessments not being aligned with their curriculum. For example, when LCTL programs use some of the predominantly used textbooks, such as a popular online textbook for Russian used across many programs in the United States, the ACTFL proficiency tests do not

seem to accurately reflect what is being taught at lower levels, making the tracking of learning development problematic. As part of the STARTALK Critical Language Assessment Program (CLAP) in 2021, project director Dr. Paula Winke led a synchronous, online workshop in assessment with elementary through university level instructors in Arabic and Russian. They were given broad templates to design performance assessments based on their own curriculum, such as a self-assessment template, a group orals template, and a process-oriented exam template. The proposed project for the NLRC will expand upon this success, both in terms of scope and audience.

**Project**: The Local LCTL Assessments (LoLA) project will develop test specifications and a test-template kit for online, computer-adaptive LCTL placement and diagnostic tests. This would be available for any LCTL, but would broadly be targeted at any program in grades 9 through 16 that would need diagnostic or placement information on students entering their programs.

The LoLA project would provide LCTL instructors and program coordinators or developers access to assessment templates, training on how to develop items for their own assessments, and tools to evaluate items and performances over the years for tracking growth. The items on the assessments would be developed and written locally by language program staff, to keep the test content tied to their own curricula and their own program's learning goals.

Ultimately, the test specifications would be in English, and would be downloadable from the NLRC website.

In the first year of the NLRC, this project would oversee the development of the test specifications and the template. Dr. Winke would oversee a pilot with three to four programs in the second year. (MSU personnel have already been in conversation with LCTL-serving programs at peer institutions, such as the Wisconsin Intensive Summer Language Institutes,

about opportunities for piloting the LoLA materials.) The project would then be open to the public in the third year, with trainings on the test specifications and templates offered in both years 3 and 4. The main goal for years 3 and 4 would be to get the entire program up online and to continually incorporate feedback. In the final year, the test specifications would be made available on multiple platforms (e.g., Google Forms, Qualtrics, etc.) to make it as broadly usable for as many LCTL programs as possible. The final goal would be for the templates and accompanying materials to be published with document identifiers (DOIs) in an Open Science, open-access database such as Humanities Commons, so that the materials are publicly accessible and independent from any university and from any LRC in the future. The LoLA page on the NLRC website would provide context to the project, host training materials, and link to the materials on the open-access, long-term site.

Modest federal funding will be used to compensate some of the effort put forth by the project lead, Dr. Winke.

* + - * 1. *Teach-a-LCTL (Community/Family Resource Guides) (Shanker)*

**Background**: The K-12 educational system in the United States offers plenty of opportunities for students to study commonly taught languages like French, Spanish & German. However, a large number of students either come from families which speak a LCTL or wish to learn/continue learning a LCTL for the following reasons:

To seek out opportunities to continue/expand learning the language spoken in their homes and with family

To increase communicative effectiveness within immigrant or diaspora communities

To visit/continue visiting, interacting and maintaining relationships with people from other countries, including their countries of origin

To expand one’s worldview, cultural and linguistic awareness.

K-12 teacher training programs focus largely on teaching the more commonly taught languages. One resulting consequence is that the onus of teaching a LCTL falls on a parent/guardian or community member. As a result, middle and high school students are forced to seek out other means to learn or maintain their languages. It is a given that academic success in general rests on the overlapping spheres of the school, home, and community. The home and community contribute to supporting and advancing the global mindset of students by establishing linguistic and cultural connections through societal structures and ideologies. Given that adolescence is a key period for youth to develop linguistic and cultural identities, it is important for students of LCTLs to continue to develop their LCTLs and connect with their speech communities.

The Community Language School (CLS) at MSU offers language and culture programming to a wide range of audiences from preschoolers through adults and annually serves 400 students. Since its inception in 2008, the Language School has been pursuing its main goal of providing opportunities for members in the community to learn a language and its culture.

CLS has extensive experience working with and creating training resources for volunteers and pre-service teachers to help fulfill its mission.

**Project**: For parents/guardians or community members to take on the role of language educator helping middle and high school students learn or maintain their language, they need support and coaching. Teaching a language, especially a LCTL as a non-language teacher, comes with its unique set of challenges ranging from lack of training in best practices in language teaching, unfamiliarity with engaging technology tools to ability to identify age-appropriate materials.

To support the transition to language educator, the Teach-a-LCTL project team proposes to create two resource guides for anyone wishing to teach a LCTL to adolescents within the family structure or community. The resource guides will contain templates of lesson plans and best practices that will support parents/guardians and community members to identify relevant language objectives and motivating topics, and meaningful ways to include listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. One resource guide will focus on materials for Novice (low-high) level learners, the second will focus on Intermediate (low-high) level learners. Existing openly available materials, such as activities from LCTL DOORs and other resources for supporting heritage language use in the home, will be evaluated for use with this demographic and referenced in the resource guides.

Leveraging the experience from the MSU Community Language School, project personnel will collaborate with the World Language K-12 Teacher Education program at MSU on this project. Students enrolled in the program and working towards their teaching certification in world languages will be recruited and mentored to create the resource guides.

In sum, the resource guides designed will be made available as Open Educational Resources with the purpose of sharing with other families and community organizations. The creation of these resource guides will not only cater to the needs of learners of LCTLs, but also ensure that language learning is inclusive, equitable and affordable for everyone.

* + - 1. ***Strategic Collaborations at Inter-Institutional Level (Area Lead: Kronenberg)* Area Goal**: To expand access to LCTL education for various types of institutions and stakeholders by aggregating existing LCTL sharing models and creating new ones, sharing

expertise, and pursuing inter-institutional strategic collaborations to strengthen dependability and sustainability of LCTL offerings.

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| Table 3: Summary Table of Focus Area “Strategic Collaborations at Inter-Institutional Level” | | |
| **Project** | **Target Audience** | **Deliverables** |
| LCTL Strategic Collaboration | University language programs | -Work with partner institutions to offer shared LCTL courses  -Gather, design, and share models of sharing |
| Language Program Consulting | Available to all, broadly targeted at universities and community language centers | -Provide consulting services |

* + - * 1. *LCTL Strategic Collaboration Pilot (Kronenberg)*

**Background**: Enrollment fluctuations and trends are one of the biggest challenges for building sustainable LCTL programs. Strategic collaboration, including course sharing and joint programming, between institutions and organizations can lead to more consistent, sustainably larger enrollments and provide institutions with more language diversity. Strategic collaboration is notoriously difficult, especially in the for-credit arena, but it is a crucial step in stemming the tide of closures of smaller language programs and opening up more opportunities for students across various types of institutions.

MSU and CeLTA have a lot of experience in this area, through the Big Ten Academic Alliance’s CourseShare program, the Community Language School, and the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership. MSU personnel have been advocating for strengthening LCTLs as drivers of institutional diversity (see the article by Fritzsche, et al., in the Winter 2022

edition of *The Language Educator*) and have been laying the groundwork for shared courses

across institutions that are not already part of large consortial agreements and for coordination of LCTL curricula across institutions.

**Project**: Funding will be used to support LCTL shared course pilots throughout the project period, starting with one pilot course in Spring 2023 (Year 1), two course support equivalents each year in years 2 and 3, and one course equivalent in year 4. The supported LCTL courses would be offered to and shared online with identified partner institutions. While the full cost of one or two courses each year can be supported on this budget, the NLRC would work to support more courses than are listed. The NLRC would aim to develop models where partners in the shared LCTL courses would also provide some financial support for the course (but at a cost that is lower than hiring their own instructor), which not only allows for expansion of the project and languages offered, but also ensures that the sharing institution has a mutual commitment to the partnership. Throughout the pilot process, data and feedback would be collected to help design and refine sustainable models of sharing. By exploring collaborative models and piloting them with MSU LCTL courses, the NLRC hopes to showcase successful models of how shared LCTL language programs/courses can be supported.

Starting in Year 2, the NLRC also plans to convene a strategic dialogues group, consisting of language program leaders and administrators. MSU personnel have already started identifying key stakeholders with whom the NLRC could work, and CeLTA is working on a pilot project with a smaller private university. Receiving national recognition would greatly help forming such a group and advance meaningful collaborations at the administrative level.

Furthermore, additional work on curricular coordination (including possible shared certificates, minors, etc.) would be explored.

The NLRC will publish resources, models, and information about these dialogues on the NLRC’s project website and in other relevant publication venues for Higher Education Institutes (e.g., The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Language Educator).

* + - * 1. *Language Program Consulting (Kronenberg)*

**Background**: Many language programs and units do not have internal access to support and professional development services in specialized areas. This is particularly true for smaller programs, less-well funded institutions and organizations, and in LCTL programs. CeLTA’s Language Program Consulting (LPC) has been providing such services to other institutions as a fee-based service for language programs, departments, centers or other academic units. LPC provides dependable, transparent, consistent, high-quality consultancy services that cover many expert areas, including curriculum design, language learning space design, online and hybrid language teaching solutions, technology, accessibility, community-based language education, program evaluation, unit governance, and strategic planning.

**Project**: As a part of the NLRC, CeLTA would be able to offer 20 hours per year of consulting services for free for LCTL programs, departments, and institutions in the U.S. Preference will be given to minority serving institutions and those that can document a particular need. This service would be funded through CeLTA at MSU, but offered through the NLRC nationwide. This service will be updated with data and insights from the strategic needs analysis. The NLRC will track usage and themes of consulting sessions to better serve constituents in the future.

## Bridge Initiatives (Area Lead: Heidrich Uebel)

**Area Goal**: To bridge the three focus areas of the National LCTL Resource Center by conducting a needs analysis to inform the activities of the center and by providing a critical avenue for dissemination of project and center information, for collaboration amongst LCTL instructors and administrators, and for exchange of ideas.

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| Table 4: Summary Table of “Bridge Initiatives” | | |
| **Project** | **Target Audience** | **Deliverables** |
| Shared LCTL Symposium (SLCTLS) | Mostly university | -Run annual conference, which will be used to disseminate NLRC project information and provide space and opportunity for collaboration for LCTL instructors and administrators |
| Needs Analysis | K-16 | -Conduct a nationwide pedagogical and strategic needs analysis for LCTL instruction  -Disseminate the findings through publications and conferences |

* + - * 1. *Shared LCTL Symposium (SLCTLS) (Heidrich Uebel)*

**Background**: The Shared LCTL Symposium (SLCTLS) is an annual event jointly organized by the University of Chicago and Michigan State University. The two universities both received funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to work on LCTL initiatives and organized a kick-off meeting for their respective projects in the fall of 2016. Since then, they have organized a forum for LCTL educators and administrators to talk about the challenges and affordances of sharing LCTLs across institutional borders and making LCTL education more available to all.

This is accomplished not only by the official SLCTLS program (panelists, keynotes, etc.), but also by providing space for stakeholders to meet. For example, the CourseShare coordinators at the Big Ten Academic Alliance had never been invited to meet together and discuss ways to

improve their processes. In addition, SLCTLS has seeded several discussions about broader strategic collaboration within the Big Ten Academic Alliance that have resulted in efforts toward shared minors. SLCTLS also resulted in the creation of the Language Center Alliance (https://languagecenteralliance.org/) in 2019, which provides a forum for leaders of North

American language centers/units to share ideas and look for areas of collaboration. Participant attendance and the costs of running the meeting have been generously supported by the Andrew

W. Mellon Foundation.

**Project**: As SLCTLS transitions to a more sustainable format (without payment of participant travel and lodging costs), funding is needed starting in Year 2 to pay for speaker fees, catering, and other meeting hosting costs. It is hoped that by covering hosting costs, and thus not charging a registration fee, participants would be more likely to attend. SLCTLS will serve as an avenue of dissemination for the NLRC and a continued opportunity for those interested in sharing LCTLs across institutions to engage in dialogue.

* + - * 1. *Needs Analysis (Heidrich Uebel, Van Gorp)*

The NLRC will conduct a pedagogical and strategic needs analysis to identify the needs for LCTL instruction nationwide. By diving deeply into the many relationships that MSU has with a variety of institutions and organizations, including other LRCs, and considering the results of CeLTA’s nationwide LCTL survey (conducted in 2021), the NLRC will develop and deploy an initial survey to discover hurdles and needs from multiple LCTL education stakeholders. With preliminary findings from the survey in hand, the NLRC team will conduct follow-up interviews and initiate informal conversations in order to get an intimate sense of how LCTL education needs are manifesting and what solutions would be most welcome to stakeholders. It is the goal

of this needs analysis to create deliverable solutions and to guide the evolution of the project areas. While the results of the survey and its follow-up conversations are as yet unknown, the NLRC would be prepared to offer guided workshops and consulting sessions on particular topics that emerge from the needs analysis through its professional development project or language program consulting, and could utilize the face-to-face time at conferences or at the Shared LCTL Symposium to offer additional opportunities, individual mentoring, etc.

# Center Objectives and Purposes of Authorizing Legislation

The NLRC’s model for bringing together second language acquisition and LCTL professionals who have complementary strengths and who represent a wide variety of institutional types and levels creates a rich cross-fertilization environment that will result in high- quality research, innovative products, and professional development activities to support more— and improved—teaching of LCTLs in the US. All of the NLRC’s proposed projects meet one or more of the LRC authorized activities. By building on past Title VI successes, by utilizing the strengths already in existence at MSU, and by capitalizing on MSU’s generous support, the NLRC is well-positioned to become a strong national presence in the fields of LCTL learning and teaching.

# Efficient and Appropriate Use of Resources

The NLRC will draw on the abundant human and material resources available at MSU, a large land-grant Association of American Universities (AAU) institution. Through CeLTA, the NLRC has appropriate space and access to necessary physical equipment (e.g., copier, furniture); general resources are amply available at MSU and are further described in Section III of this document (see p. 37). The university will supplement the federal assistance (see *Itemized Budget*

*and Narrative*) and has the physical, technological, and human support systems to create a scale of operations essential to this agenda.

# Ensuring Equal Access

MSU is committed to principles of equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and affirmative action. University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to age, color, gender, disability, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. The university is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. The quality and effectiveness of the university’s affirmative action program are validated through review by external agencies, as well as by internal monitoring processes, which include an annual report to the MSU Board of Trustees.

As a part of the greater MSU community, and in accordance with Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act, the NLRC will provide equal access to the center’s programs, and equal treatment by the center’s staff to members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented.

Drawing on Universal Design for Learning principles, the NLRC will make information available in multiple formats as far in advance as possible. The NLRC will also include purposefully inclusive messaging in its materials signaling that it welcomes and encourage requests for accommodations. The leadership team will make space for hybrid and virtual engagement options whenever possible in order to make the Center events as accessible as possible. The NLRC will draw upon the wealth of resources from both MSU’s and CeLTA’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committees in order to make sure its efforts are aligning with best practices in DEIA.

**II. Quality of Key Personnel**

# Center Director

Dr. Felix Kronenberg is Director of the Center for Language Teaching Advancement and a tenured Associate Professor of German in LiLaC. He is a Co-Principal Investigator of the LCTL and Indigenous Languages Partnership, an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation sponsored project in two phases (2016-2019, $1.2 million; 2019-2023, $2.5 million) to improve the teaching of LCTLs. Previous positions included work at Pomona College in the Department of German and as head of the Language Center (2005-2009), assistant and later tenured associate professor and Director of the Language Learning Center at Rhodes College (2009-2018).

Dr. Kronenberg’s research interests are interdisciplinary and include language education, program administration, learning space design, sociomateriality, language diversity, innovation in language education, and technology. He has published extensively in the areas of technology and language education and language learning spaces. His current work includes a monograph under contract with Bloomsbury Academic on learning spaces in the digital age and an edited volume on Language Program Vitality in the United States with Springer. He has given multiple keynotes internationally and nationally as well as numerous invited presentations and workshops. Dr. Kronenberg served as past-president of the International Association for Language Learning Technology (IALLT) and as president of the South West Association for Language Learning Technology. Most recently, he initiated and finalized a partnership agreement between the International Association for Language Learning Technology and the Arbeitskreis der Sprachenzentren (AKS), Germany’s language center organization. He is an advisory board member of the Learning Spaces Collaboratory and has been a fellow for the National Institute for

Technology in Liberal Education. He has also worked as a consultant to more than a dozen language departments and language centers.

# Other Key Personnel

The key faculty and administrators whose time commitments to the NLRC are listed below represent a unique pool of professionally active individuals with a broad spectrum of experiences and expertise. All are thoroughly committed to collaboration across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. Biographical sketches and an organizational chart are provided in Appendix A.

The NLRC demonstrates a wide range of language expertise in affiliated personnel who will be instrumental in conducting the proposed projects. In addition, the NLRC will draw on the language backgrounds and expertise of faculty and students in relevant programs at MSU.

# Time Commitment of Key Personnel

Below is a chart showing the time commitment of personnel on Center projects.

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| --- | --- |
| Felix Kronenberg, Director, NLRC | 10% |
| Emily Heidrich Uebel, Associate Executive Director, NLRC | 30% |
| Koen Van Gorp, Head of Research, NLRC | 10% |
| Luca Giupponi, Head of Technology, NLRC | 10% |
| Caitlin Cornell, Head of Outreach, NLRC | 5% |
| **Other Contributing Personnel** (in alphabetical order) | |
| Amanda Lanier, Program Director, Graduate Programs in Foreign  Language Teaching | 10% |
| Frederick Poole, Assistant Professor, MAFLT | 10% |
| Sandhya Shanker, Outreach Coordinator, CeLTA | 5% |
| Bruna Sommer-Farias, Assistant Professor, MAFLT | 10% |
| Danielle Steider, LCTL Coordinator, Department of Linguistics,  Languages, and Cultures | 5% |
| Paula Winke, Professor, Department of Linguistics, Languages, and  Cultures | 5% |

# Non-Discriminatory Employment Practices

All key personnel positions for the NLRC (e.g., Director, project leaders) are filled, as the Center makes use of staff and faculty already employed at Michigan State University. No new faculty or staff positions are being created for this grant, but a graduate student and a student assistant will both be hired (see Appendix B for position descriptions). As explained in Section I.E., MSU strictly pursues nondiscriminatory employment practices. In accordance with this strong MSU tradition, and with Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act, the NLRC will ensure that any personnel it may need to hire during the grant are selected for employment without regard to age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight. First, CeLTA recognizes that partners in LCTL education are necessarily diverse. The NLRC leadership team will not only actively seek out the rich diversity that undergirds LCTL instruction in K-16 contexts, but will also carefully consider the barriers erected by oppressive systems that so often thwart the success of diverse populations in K-16 education. For example: understanding that the ways information is disseminated in higher education often constricts access for people of marginalized identities, the NLRC will post any positions in spaces and forums with high visibility (e.g., the institutional Handshake platform which MSU uses to promote and process the hiring of students). By honestly examining employment needs vis a vis the de facto requirements established systems often use which reinforce societal oppression (e.g., default application requirements like CVs of a minimal length which require labor to shorten/reformat), the NLRC intends to avoid incurring additional and unnecessary labor which overburdens applicants of marginalized identities. CeLTA’s internal DEI committee will be able

to assist and advise the NLRC in its equitable (e.g., anti-racist and disability-inclusive) hiring practices.

**III. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness**

The *Itemized Budget and Budget Narrative* for the operation of the NLRC for each year of the four-year grant cycle is presented immediately after the project narrative. This budget is recommended in view of the comprehensive nature and scope of the proposed projects and activities. MSU will provide funds that go beyond the usual contributions of general supplies; they include monetary contributions for the NLRC salaries, and material and human resource support, thereby maximizing the use of human and material resources already available through MSU. Criteria used in selecting projects ensured that faculty strength is utilized effectively.

Because initial capital expenditures are not necessary, the bulk of the budget is for human resources to carry out the various projects. Further, the NLRC has made an effort 1) to complement, not duplicate, strengths of other LRCs, and 2) to discern opportunities for collaboration with other Title VI NRCs and LRCs.

**IV. Evaluation Plan**

Every two years (Years 2 and 4), the NLRC will hire an outside evaluator(s) to act as an external auditor(s) and ensure that the NLRC is meeting the objectives that it sets. In preparation for the evaluator site visit and evaluation process, the NLRC will provide the evaluator(s) with a self-study guide, which will contain the original proposal, data from individual projects, and data that measures the impact of the center as a whole (see Table 5, below, for an overview and Appendix E for more detailed information). The NLRC will also provide a list of any changes that have been made to any projects since their original proposal. In order to get a full picture of

the center activities and for ample time to ask questions, the evaluator would be invited to MSU for a two-day site visit, in which they would be able to schedule individual and group meetings with the project leaders, the area leaders, the Associate Executive Director, and the Director.

Evaluators will be selected from those that are familiar with the work of language centers and the mission of Title VI Language Resource Centers. MSU personnel have had preliminary discussions with leaders at Yale University Center for Language Study and ACTFL about this outside evaluation process.

Deliverable from outside evaluator: External report/evaluation describing the quality of the projects as they have been implemented. At the two-year mark, the evaluator will make recommendations for improvement for the rest of the funding cycle. The NLRC will also request that the evaluator consider whether or not the type of data that have been collected and the reports are a good representation of what has transpired at the center. This will allow the NLRC to continue to improve the evaluation process itself. At the end of the four-year funding cycle, the evaluator will make recommendations for additions to the final report of the center and will include recommendations for the future.

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| Table 5: Overview Table of Evaluation Measurements | | | | |
| Project Area | Project | Performance Measures | Research\* | Project Lead |
| High-Quality Professional Development (Area Lead: Giupponi) | Online Language Teaching (OLT) Initiative | * Offer OLT courses * Develop new OLT courses * Impact of OLT courses | Yes | Giupponi |
| The ViVID Project: Virtual Video-based Inquiry for the Development of LCTL  Teachers | * Run ViVID project with annual cohorts * Disseminate information from ViVID * Measure impact of ViVID | Yes | Lanier |
| Learning Community (LC) | * Run LC with annual cohorts * Measure impact of LC | Not anticipated | Van Gorp |
| Collaborative Professional Development | * Support collaborative PD events * Measure impact of PD events | Not anticipated | Cornell |
| Open and Innovative Instructional Resources  (Area Lead: Van Gorp) | LCTL DOORs | * Expand LCTL DOORs English content (additional levels, content) * Add LCTL DOORs target language content * Create training content for use of LCTL DOOR materials * Disseminate project * Measure impact of LCTL DOORs | Possibly | Steider |
| LoLA (Assessment Templates) | * Develop assessment templates * Pilot assessment templates (including publication of test specifications and test-template kit) * Measure impact of LoLA project | Yes | Winke |
| Teach-a-LCTL (Community/Family Resource Guides) | * Track analytics/usage from website * Publication of two resource guides * Presentations/workshops to train on/disseminate project materials | Possibly | Shanker |

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strategic Collaborations (Area Lead: Kronenberg) | LCTL Strategic Collaboration Pilot | * Run LCTL sharing pilot courses (including convening strategic dialogues group) * Disseminate information from project (including sharing models of sharing) | Yes | Kronenberg |
| Language Program Consulting | * Provide consulting services | Not anticipated | Kronenberg |
| Bridge Activities (Area Lead: Heidrich Uebel) | Needs Analyses | * Design and conduct initial needs analysis * Apply results to projects * Disseminate information from needs analysis | Yes | Heidrich Uebel, Van Gorp |
| SLCTLS | * Run annual SLCTLS event * Measure impact of SLCTLS | Not anticipated | Heidrich Uebel |
| National LCTL Resource Center Measures | Overall Center Measures | * Design and develop dissemination channels * Publicize resources associated with the center and its projects * Track engagement with the center | Not anticipated | Heidrich Uebel |
| \*any research initiatives would be reviewed and approved by the MSU Institutional Review Board | | | | |

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**V. Adequacy of Resources**

MSU holds the distinction of being both a land-grant and an AAU Research I institution.

As such, it is committed to intellectual leadership and to excellence in both developing new knowledge and sharing that knowledge with its students and the public. As a land-grant institution, MSU strives to discover practical uses for theoretical knowledge and to speed the distribution of information to residents of the state, the nation, and the world.

The NLRC’s mission as an LRC aligns with MSU’s AAU and land-grant mission and allows it to tap into the teaching, research, outreach, and technology resources of the university. MSU provides the NLRC nearly 5,000 square feet of shared space in the heart of campus, which includes several offices, a dedicated conference room, a computer lab, and flexible space that can be used for meetings and workshops. The computer lab space is equipped with 31 desktop computers on individual height-adjustable, rolling tables as well as a projector and projection screen.

Many of the NLRC’s projects will be shared across virtual platforms. The NLRC main space boasts equipment that facilitates remote collaboration, like portable monitors and physical video conferencing equipment that would enable hybrid engagement. MSU’s technological resources also provide ample support for the NLRC projects, including website hosting and support, videoconferencing, survey, and learning management software, and both college-level and university-level IT human resources. The MAFLT and OLT programs both have extensive online and web-based materials targeted at teacher development that can be used as a basis upon which to build project materials.

**VI. Need and Potential Impact**

The NLRC is dedicated to being responsive to national needs in LCTLs learning and

teaching, and in materials which support such learning and teaching. It will assess national needs through interactions with its Advisory Board and the national LCTL teaching community (via the needs analysis, conferences, and professional development); it will also pay close attention to and participate in the discussions carried out by professional organizations, the NRC and LRC community, and federal government constituencies. The NLRC will strive to meet the specific needs of these constituencies by designing, developing, and implementing a broad spectrum of activities that focus on LCTLs. A need exists to ensure that there is sufficient national capacity for the teaching and learning of all languages but given current geopolitical situations and trends in world language enrollments, there is a particular need to ensure that there are trained professionals with the pedagogical skills required to provide competent instruction in LCTLs.

That competency must be based on increased research and access to quality resources in the area of LCTL learning and teaching. The NLRC addresses these needs through its three focus areas of high-quality professional development, open and innovative instructional resources, and strategic collaboration. The projects selected for inclusion in each of these focus areas are ones in which MSU has both the student and faculty capacity to support the stated objectives. The language- agnostic nature of the materials as well as the central tenet of producing open-access materials will enable the broadest possible usage of NLRC materials. By pairing access to open materials with a focus on professional development and inter-institutional coordination, the NLRC is well- positioned to significantly contribute to strengthening, expanding, and improving LCTL programs in the United States.

The National LCTL Resource Center has amply demonstrated the institutional support, solid history of grant facilitation, including over 22 years with a Title VI LRC, and qualified personnel available at MSU. The likelihood of the NLRC achieving tangible results is very high and the NLRC is dedicated to maximizing its impact in the national LCTL landscape.

**VII. Likelihood of Achieving Results**

In addition to the methods and procedures described for running the projects (Section I.B.2.) and evaluating the center and its activities (Section IV and Appendix E), the NLRC is confident in its ability to meet its goals for reasons given below:

* + 1. The NLRC’s personnel consists of talented and experienced individuals who are committed to the center’s success and to their own professional development. The key personnel of the NLRC have complementary strengths that will allow them to function well as a team;
       1. The NLRC’s Director is a well-respected researcher, administrator, and educator, and has demonstrated the ability to ensure successful completion of his own projects and grants and to provide the leadership necessary for successful completion of others;
       2. The NLRC’s Associate Executive Director has demonstrated capability and efficiency managing activities on several grant projects totaling over $4 million. She has successfully coordinated disparate activities on multiple project arms across numerous institutions, collaborated closely with colleagues, supervised graduate and undergraduate workers, and produced and disseminated research associated with the grants;
       3. The NLRC’s Head of Research is a highly regarded researcher and teacher educator in second language teaching and assessment. He has a track record in grant acquisition, and successful project completion and dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and outreach activities. He has an extensive record of service to the field of applied linguistics and language testing, and experience with implementing educational innovations in K-12 education;
       4. The NLRC’s Head of Technology has successfully and collaboratively built the OLT Initiative with CeLTA and the MSU English Language Center and has served as Technology Director of another large grant initiative. His research and development work focused on online course and program development, online faculty development, quality in online instruction, and program evaluation will strengthen the NLRC activities;
       5. The NLRC’s Head of Outreach is an educator whose research and service initiatives focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion elements in relation to language teaching and learning. Of particular relevance to her role on the NLRC leadership team: she has considerable experience organizing a collaborative professional development scheme among 5 Big Ten institutions and has facilitated, alongside CeLTA’s director, a learning community focused on reimagining physical space for language learning;
    2. MSU has demonstrated a strong commitment to the development and support of LCTL initiatives, creating a core of experienced and dedicated LCTL educators across a broad spectrum of programs and units;
    3. Proposed projects are developed by faculty in their areas of expertise, ensuring that motivated and qualified personnel will implement the projects;
    4. MSU has successfully housed multiple large, long-term grant initiatives, including the Language Proficiency Flagship Initiative, the Less Commonly Taught and Indigenous Languages Partnership, and 22 years of CLEAR, a Title VI LRC.

**VIII. Description and Final Form of Results**

The NLRC’s activities will result in products and services designed to support, strengthen, and improve the teaching and learning of LCTLs in the US. Projects will utilize empirically proven methods and best practices in research, develop open and innovative instructional materials, train teachers through high-quality professional learning opportunities, and forge strategic models for inter-institutional collaboration. The NLRC will continue to build on a foundation of collaborative activities and dissemination strategies both at MSU (including MSU’s NRCs) and with the other LRCs.

Dissemination of the NLRC’s activities will be through diverse channels; the audiences the Center strives to reach are varied and therefore diverse methods of contact are necessary.

While the NLRC website will serve as a hub for disseminating the products of all NLRC initiatives, other methods of dissemination include a mailing list, social media channels, written publications, conference presentations and exhibits, and professional development activities. The NLRC will work with its collaborative networks to promote its activities through their networks and through professional organizations in LCTLs. Through the NLRC’s website and social media, as well as through the common LRC web portal, information about the NLRC, its products, and its services will be made known to a wide audience. Conference presentations and

booth space at state, regional, and national conferences (e.g., NCOLCTL, ACTFL, MIWLA, Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) will put the NLRC in contact with active members of professional groups.

**IX. Priorities**

The NLRC’s proposed projects, as well as MSU’s Title VI, LCTL, and other grant initiatives track record, show that the NLRC will be unique among LRCs to focus on language agnostic LCTL materials, which benefits the LCTL instructional community as a whole. In this grant proposal, many projects will support teachers of any LCTL in their professional development through direct participation in professional learning opportunities including the Online Language Teaching Initiative or the Virtual Video-based Inquiry for the Development of LCTL Teachers (ViVID) project. The proposed materials development projects, such as the LCTL assessments (LoLA) and downloadable open online resources (LCTL DOORs) can be adapted by teachers of any LCTL, whereas the Teach-a-LCTL project goes beyond language teachers by providing parents and community members with the tools to LCTL learning of their adolescents.

Addressing the competitive preference priority of promoting equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities by partnerships with community colleges, tribal colleges, MSIs, or HBCU’s, the NLRC’s activities have been designed and/or selected for inclusion based on experiences working with a variety of institutional types. Through CeLTA’s previous experience in inter-institutional collaborations with MSIs and tribal colleges, key personnel understand that the NLRC will need to continue to focus on engaging in active, intentional community building. This will be informed by the pedagogical and strategic needs analysis, which will focus on understanding and responding to additional unique needs of students and

instructors across community colleges, tribal colleges, MSIs, or HBCU’s. In order to immediately begin delivering projects that are valuable to a variety of educators, initial themes of professional development activities, the learning community, and the OLT initiative course development will respond to needs already identified among LCTL instructors, as shown by data from a national survey of LCTL instructors (conducted by key personnel on this grant).

Subsequent years would be informed by the pedagogical and strategic needs analysis and feedback from the NLRC’s stakeholders. In addition, the NLRC will focus on creating opportunities for instructors to learn about the Center’s materials and projects (e.g., through targeted advertising), identifying teachers to participate in professional development, and inviting instructor and student representatives to participate in project feedback. This bottom-up approach, including a focus on building relationships, needs analyses, feedback, and inclusion allow the NLRC to foster broader and deeper collaboration with LCTL instructors at myriad types of institutions nationwide.

**X. Conclusion**

The NLRC’s strong commitment to LCTL instruction and its goal of enhancing access to resources, creating new resources and new knowledge, and fostering connections between diverse LCTL stakeholders across educational institutions, puts the NLRC in a strong position to make a real difference for LCTL instructors and students. The NLRC’s core project areas in

high-quality professional development, open and innovative instructional resources, and strategic collaboration at the inter-institutional level will serve LCTL instructors and administrators to strengthen LCTL instruction for students across the nation. With the resources, support, and expertise available at MSU, the NLRC provides an opportunity to significantly advance the quality of nationwide LCTL instruction in unique and innovative ways.