File #:	14-5192	Name:	CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE DIGITAL MEDIA AND LEARNING COMPETITION TO DEVELOP AN EMBEDDED LEARNING INITIATIVE PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
Type:	Grant Application	Status:	Agenda Ready
File created:	4/11/2016	In control:	City Council Legislative Meeting
On agenda:	5/10/2016	Final action:	
Title:	Consideration of a Grant Application to the Digital Media and Learning Competition to Develop an Embedded Learning Initiative Program for Young People.		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:			

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 4, 2016

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER   /s/

DOCKET TITLE:
Consideration of a Grant Application to the Digital Media and Learning Competition to Develop an Embedded Learning Initiative Program for Young People.

_____

ISSUE: Council consideration of a grant application to the Digital Media and Learning Competition to develop an embedded learning initiative program for Alexandria youth to be administered by the Office of Historic Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

(1) Submit a grant application (due by May 13) to the Digital Media and Learning Competition supported through the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, requesting $125,000 in funding; and

(3) Execute all necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: For well over a decade the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation invested heavily in exploring how digital media could best be used in education, especially to address select learning related needs of underserved youth. Research revealed a "summer deficit" existed between children of different socio-economic backgrounds during the time that one school year ended and the next began. Children from enriched families and neighborhoods returned to school in the fall ready and prepared to learn. Those who came from more challenged environments had a measurable disadvantage and too often had to relearn basic skills and knowledge from the previous year.

To address this deficit, the foundation initiated **Summer of Learning** in the City of Chicago, which crafted innovative opportunities for young people to follow their interests into real life professions. The program was so successful, it was soon extended in a yearlong program, **Cities of Learning**, seeding comparable programs in other cities including San Francisco, Houston, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. In 2015 the Foundation determined that the program had progressed beyond the incubation stage, so Cities of Learning became a distinct entity, renamed **Collective Shift** and administered by an offshoot of the foundation known as Digital Media and Learning Competition. This past November, Collective Shift launched their first funding initiative LRNG, dedicated to the redesign of social systems for the connected age through Learning Playlists. LRNG is a collaborative system that works with businesses, cities, schools, libraries and museums to reimagine learning concepts so that all youth have the opportunity to understand, achieve and succeed.

DISCUSSION: In accordance with cultural diversity goals and objectives outlined in the *Alexandria City Council Strategic Plan, as revised June 2010*, the Office of Historic Alexandria proposes to develop a new digital learning program focused on career paths found in current and historical periods that would incorporate formal and informal learning platforms for Alexandria youth. The design of this new initiative would be to support a young person's interests with the associated knowledge and skills, and to support those interests with meaningful community resources. It is anticipated that innovations achieved through collaboration of community partners and digital media will support advanced learning modules for participants through a series of tasks, experiences and formative assessments, and influence possible career choices in the future.

The first module proposed is *How to Think Like a Costume Designer*. The learning program will begin with deconstructing costumes of period clothing that would have been worn by those living in Alexandria during the post-Revolutionary through the Civil War era. Utilizing available media and research resources, participants would consider what a costume expresses about a specific role, class and/or social position, materials, trade, etc. Students would pursue a similar line of inquiry to explore what contemporary clothing says about themselves, their family and others. Using different clothing items worn by slaves, freemen and immigrants to Alexandria during the period will connect research issues related to immigration, cultural integrity and assimilation. Skills developed through this Playlist include: reading of period/historical literature and research the clothing of the time by class, materials, and method of manufacture; interviewing costume designers from local theaters and discussing what related jobs are possible; identifying what skills are needed for those jobs; and to design and produce an article of clothing from a specific period.

The DML grant term is for a period of nine months from the award date, which is expected by July 1, 2016.

FISCAL IMPACT: The DML grant requires no City contribution towards total project costs. No additional City funds are required.

ATTACHMENTS: None

STAFF:
Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager
Lance Mallamo, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria