

**Title:** The History and Development of Tribal Libraries in the United States

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**Abstract:**

Tribal libraries in the United States have become sites of cultural and language renewal, gathering places, and places to collect, preserve, and share Indigenous knowledge. After more than forty years of development, tribal libraries have become important sites of decolonization and places where sovereignty and self-determination are paramount. Tribal libraries are relatively recent tools that Native (and non-Native) people have begun to employ to collect, preserve, and transmit Indigenous knowledge for current and future generations. Despite the important role these institutions play in many Native communities, their presence is relatively unknown in the scholarly community. This research traces the history and development of tribal libraries using qualitative research methodologies informed by Indigenous approaches to knowledge. Interviews with early designers of tribal libraries were conducted to tell the story of tribal library development. Analysis of archival documents provided additional information on the development of tribal libraries. This paper gives an overview of the basis of tribal library development in the United States. An understanding of the historical and current intersections is crucial to provide context to design and support future information systems from Indigenous positions.