

State Library of Ohio
Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)
Request for Proposals
2020-2021 Competitive Grant
Outreach and Partnerships Projects
Proposals Due October 2, 2020

I. Introduction

The State Library of Ohio is pleased to announce the availability of LSTA funds to support outreach and partnership initiatives across the state. The purpose of this grant program is to assist libraries in providing new and innovative ways of providing services to users and potential users, and in reaching those users at a variety of locales, through a variety of methods. "The State Library has the responsibility to encourage and assist the efforts of all types of libraries to develop mutual and cooperative solutions to library services problems and community needs. The best way to address community issues is to work together to create a bond between libraries and other organizations in the community to arrive at mutually beneficial solutions," (Goal 2 of the [LSTA Five Year Plan 2018-2022](#)).

II. Priorities and Funding:

The LSTA grant process is a competitive one. Funded projects will be selected on the basis of:

1. Relationship to LSTA Goal 1, Learning: Engaging and empowering learning experiences, or LSTA Goal 2, Community: Community Anchor Institutions, in the [LSTA Five Year Plan 2018-2022](#);
2. Clear and succinct answers to questions in the RFP;
3. Sufficient detail to understand the problem, need, or opportunity;
4. Sufficient detail to understand how the proposal will be implemented;
5. Benefit and improvement to the library, public, and community;
6. Partnerships: Project partners and collaboration with other agencies is strongly encouraged;
7. Sustainability: To be considered for funding a project must indicate a plan to secure future funding.

III. General Guidelines

Proposals may request no more than \$50,000 in federal funds. If a library has an innovative project which would require a higher federal amount, they are encouraged to contact the LSTA Office to discuss their idea and the possibility of a waiver to request additional federal support.

A financial match of 25% of the total project cost is required from the institution. In-kind contributions do not qualify as matching funds. *For example*, if the total project cost is \$66,666 the federal request would be \$50,000 and the local match would be \$16,666. For a project total of \$32,000 the federal request would be \$24,000 and the local match would be \$8,000.

LSTA grant recipients must complete all reporting requirements as outlined in the contract. Failure to complete these requirements may impact a library's consideration for future LSTA awards.

LSTA funds are intended to be used as seed money, not for ongoing operational costs.

A library and/or consortium may submit more than one proposal, but only one proposal per institution will be funded per cycle. "Institution" is defined by the administering official authorized to sign the project proposal and contract. The **administering official** is: for schools, the superintendent; for public libraries, the president of the board of trustees; for academic libraries, the appropriate dean or provost; and for special libraries, the administrative officer.

All local matching funds must be available and committed at the time of signing the contract with the State Library of Ohio.

- All matching funds must be a cash match. In-kind contributions are **not** allowable as match.
- Matching funds may come from a library's operating budget, Friends or PTOs, other grant awards, gifts, partners, etc.
- Other federal funds may **not** be counted as match.

Any purchases of devices, computers and software must meet minimum American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Grant recipients requesting materials that provide Internet access must be Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant. All recipients will be required to sign federal assurances encompassing the following areas: Drug Free Workplace, EEO, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as part of the IMLS Certification.

The Project Coordinator must have an MLS/MLIS or have a Library Media Specialist Certification. A potential project coordinator may contact the LSTA Office to determine if other educational certifications may be substituted.

IV. Proposal Format

Proposals should provide a clear description of the program and related activities to be funded by LSTA. The description should address all proposal elements delineated in Sections VIII.

To qualify for review, proposals must conform to the following:

- Include Title Page, Project Summary, Abstract, and Budget as well as clear and succinct answers for all questions in the Program Description. Appendices should be included as appropriate.
- Be signed by the administering official and the fiscal officer.
- Be in a font size no less than 12.
- Be numbered on all pages.
- Be submitted via email as an attachment to: LSTA@library.ohio.gov.

Failure to conform to the Proposal Format will result in disqualification.

V. Eligibility/Requirements

- Public libraries must be eligible to receive Public Library Funds (PLF).
- School libraries must be located in a school that is accredited by the state.
- Academic libraries must be part of an accredited institution of higher learning.
- Special libraries must be willing to share their resources.
- Library Consortia are those library networks, professional associations, and regional library systems identified in “Libraries in Ohio,” [LSTA Five-Year Plan 2018-2022](#).

VI. Partners

The State Library strongly encourages partnership projects. Having either formal or informal partners will strengthen your project. An official partner is a library or non-library entity that will contribute specific deliverables to the project. A deliverable may be a cash amount or personnel, training space, transportation, supplies, materials, printing or other items to be used in implementing the grant. A [Partnership Statement](#) will assist applicants in developing partner relationships as well as clearly define roles and responsibilities. A project may also include informal partners. An informal partner is a library or non-library entity that will assist in planning and promoting/marketing the project but will not be contributing specific deliverables. An informal partner may provide a letter of support for the project. One component of innovative outreach may be working with other organizations, businesses, and social or public service outlets to form new or further develop exciting partnerships within the community to better reach and serve all residents.

VII. Proposal Elements

The proposal should consist of the following:

1. **Title Page** – Provide all required information in the format indicated on the [Title Page guidelines](#). The Title Page should denote the grant category (Literacy, Data Management & Analytics, Outreach & Partnerships, or STEM/STEAM).
2. **Project Summary** – Complete a [Project Summary](#) using the required form. It should not exceed one page and should be single-spaced.
3. **Abstract** – 200 words or less. Consider framing the first sentence as, “We intend to do _____ for _____ with this project.”
4. **Program Description:** The following key elements must be addressed in the grant narrative. Your narrative should address all four components explained below. Your program description section should be no longer than 10 single-spaced pages.

Community, Library Users & Need:

The proposal must demonstrate an understanding of the target audience, including the demographics and barriers to library use. Who is the intended audience for this project? How was the need determined? Is the project related to the library's strategic plan? How will the project assist the library in meeting its mission and goals? How will this project assist the State Library in meeting the goals and activities of the [LSTA Five Year Plan](#), specifically Goals 1 and/or 2?

Project Overview:

What problem do you want to solve or how will you address the problem/need? This section should be clear, succinct and persuasive and it should be written for reviewers who may not be familiar with your library or library type. Include measurable objectives and activities that will indicate progress toward addressing the stated need. Include how library staff will be trained or prepared to support the project, how the target audience will be made aware of the project, and what will happen after the funding period has ended.

Following the narrative, include a table or timeline of project activities with the expected completion dates and who will be responsible for ensuring the activity occurs.

Expected Outcomes:

What are the anticipated project benefits? How will you document and measure the success of the project in meeting the needs identified in "Community, Library User & Need"? Describe the method that will be used to gather information and determine whether or not the library has achieved project goals. Quantitative measures include outputs or the countable products of the grant; for example, the number of workshops taught number of attendees, number of website views, etc. In many cases, before and after data is important to measure the effectiveness of the project. Qualitative measures, or outcomes, illustrate the project's impact on the target audience. They describe changes in the target audiences' skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude and/or status of life condition brought about, in part, as a result of the project. Gathering qualitative data may involve surveying, testing, or talking with users. Pre- and post-testing are encouraged for certain types of projects as indicators of increased knowledge or skills.

All projects that include instructional activities or programs for which evaluations are distributed are required to use IMLS LSTA questions. Standard questions must be used for each event and must be reported in a standardized format to the State Library in the final narrative report. Questions and format can be reviewed in [Instructional Surveys](#).

Sustainability:

How will you continue and/or expand the project once the grant period has ended? Your proposal should include a plan for funding the project after the grant has concluded. A plan for seeking support from other funders to continue or expand project goals is important. Include the name of possible future funders and/or where you may seek additional funding.

5. Budget : Complete the Budget using the required [Proposed Budget Form](#).

Funds for library materials and/or equipment must be clearly aligned with the purpose of the project and must be essential for the project/service to be implemented. The budget, as the project, should be focused on the development of skills, not the purchase of equipment/materials. Funds requested must be for reasonable, necessary, and allowable costs to achieve the projects goals; the proposal must provide rationale to support how the proposed expenditures were determined and why each is needed to achieve the project goals. The Budget should include a breakdown of federal and local funds. Include an Appendix, providing vendor

information, items to be purchased, format, cost per item, and origin of costs (such as links to the vendor website or screenshots from vendor "cart"). Specific information on budget categories and requirements can be found in the General Guidelines and [Budget FAQ](#).

Allowable costs include:

- Contractual services.
- Equipment and/or technology necessary to support the success of the project. The acquisition of equipment should not be the primary focus of the project.
- Library materials that support the programs that are the project's main focus. The acquisition of library materials should not be the primary purpose of the project.
- Indirect costs.

The federal government restricts the use of promotion costs. Before placing these costs in your budget, please contact the LSTA office to determine if the cost is allowable.

Non-allowable costs include:

- Salary and fringe benefits for current staff
- Ongoing operational costs (subscriptions, maintenance, etc.)
- Entertainment costs (no food or beverages)
- Fundraising, grant writing or advocacy
- Construction or renovation costs
- Promotional items and giveaways

***For additional information about non-allowable costs, view [Budget FAQs](#) or contact the LSTA Coordinator via LSTA@library.ohio.gov.

6. Appendices: Include appendices such as vendor information, letters of support and [Partnership Statement\(s\)](#).

XI: General Information

The complete proposal package should be sent electronically as an attachment(s) to LSTA@library.ohio.gov.

Proposals must be received by 11:59 p.m., October 2, 2020.

If awarded, grant terms will be January 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021.

Notification of funding will be provided after the December 2020 State Library Board meeting.

Questions regarding the proposal process should be addressed to:

Cindy Boyden
LSTA Coordinator
LSTA@library.ohio.gov

***Proposal first-drafts may be submitted to LSTA@library.ohio.gov for review up until September 18, 2020.