

**State Library of Ohio
Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)**

**Request for Proposals
American Rescue Plan Act
Outreach Grant Projects
Proposals Due: August 1, 2021**

Introduction

The State Library of Ohio is pleased to announce the availability of [Federal American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\)](#) stimulus funds to support outreach and recovery initiatives across the state. The purpose of this grant program is to assist communities as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as address economic and community needs, resulting from the pandemic, through equitable approaches. This grant initiative is just one of the many ways the State Library of Ohio is supporting libraries of all types with ARPA stimulus funds and assisting Ohioans as they continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Priorities and Funding

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

1. Reaching and serving library users and potential users with new pandemic response efforts or building upon pandemic response efforts previously established.
2. Providing innovative and creative services to users and potential users, by reaching those users at a variety of locales, through a variety of methods.
3. Providing rapid emergency relief to libraries across the country, allowing them to safely respond to the pandemic and implement public health protocols.
4. Supporting library services that meet the needs of communities throughout the state, including costs such as technology, training, materials, supplies, and equipment.
5. Enabling libraries to reach residents with internet hotspots, accessible Wi-Fi, and other digital inclusion efforts, particularly in support of education, health, and workforce development needs.

General Guidelines

Outreach and Education Proposals may request between \$5,000 and \$24,999 in federal funds, with no local match requirement. Proposals must demonstrate the need for a program or educational initiative to enhance the development of library staff and/or library users. Examples include, but are not limited to, diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives; literacy—digital, or otherwise; cultural competencies; connecting people to information/resources; etc. These proposals must illustrate an alignment with responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and with [Goal 1 of the LSTA Five Year Plan](#). Grants will be reviewed and proposed to the State Library Board at the September 2021 meeting.

Community Connections Proposals may request between \$25,000 and \$49,999 in federal funds, with no local match requirement. Proposals must demonstrate a willingness for libraries to meet users where they are in the communities they serve. Examples include, but are not limited to, story walks; curbside service accessories, such as awnings, signage, or stanchions; community material return bins; small satellite collections in other community locations, etc. These proposals must illustrate an alignment with responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and with [Goal 2 of the LSTA Five Year Plan](#). Grants will be reviewed and proposed to the State Library Board at the September 2021 meeting.

Outreach Initiatives Proposals may request between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in federal funds, with no local match requirement. Proposals must demonstrate a large-scale, well-coordinated, outreach endeavor on the part of the library. Examples include, but are not limited to: bookmobiles/vehicles/book bikes; 24/7 Library vending service; after-hours lockers for reserve items; etc. These proposals must illustrate an alignment with responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and with [Goal 3 and 4 of the LSTA Five Year Plan](#). Grants will be reviewed and proposed to the State Library Board at the September 2021 meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: If an eligible institution has an innovative project which would require a higher federal amount, or if a potential project is better-suited within a different category or would potentially cross multiple categories, the applicant is encouraged to contact the LSTA Coordinator (LSTA@library.ohio.gov) to discuss their idea and/or the possibility of a waiver to request additional federal support.

Proposal Format

Application proposals should provide a clear description of the project and related activities to be funded by ARPA. The description should address all proposal elements delineated in Section VII.

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

- Include Project Summary, Abstract, Proposed Budget, and Program Description. Appendices may be included as appropriate.
- Identify grant category (Outreach & Education, Community Connections or Outreach Initiatives).
- An electronic signature may be added using your finger, stylus, or mouse when completing the online application form. **Only one signature is required.** This single electronic signature verifies the awareness and support of the applying library's Fiscal Officer, Library Director/Administering Official/Principal and Library Board/Provost/Superintendent.
- Use 12-point font and number all pages.
- Be submitted digitally via this ARPA webpage under the [Outreach Grant Application](#) tab.

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

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 limited to library networks, professional associations, and regional library systems identified in "Libraries in Ohio," [LSTA Five-Year Plan 2018-2022](#).

Partners

The State Library strongly encourages partnership projects. Having either formal or informal partners will strengthen the proposed 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.

Proposal Elements

The application proposal should consist of the following:

- 1. Project Summary:** Complete a [Project Summary](#) using the required form. It should not exceed one page and should be single-spaced.
- 2. Abstract:** 200 words or less. Consider framing the first sentence as, "We intend to do _____ (what) for _____ (which audience) with this project."
- 3. Program Description/Narrative:** The following key elements must be addressed in the grant narrative. The narrative should address all four components explained below. The program description section should be no longer than 5 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? How is the project related to the recovery from COVID-19? Does the project align with the applicant's strategic plan? How will the project assist the applying 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](#)?

Project Overview

What problem does the institution want to solve or how will a problem/need be addressed? The problem/need must be connected with responding to COVID-19. This section should be clear, succinct and persuasive. Include measurable objectives and activities that will indicate progress toward addressing the stated need. What are the barriers to completing the project? Include how library staff will be trained or prepared to support the project, how the target audience will be made aware of the project? What is required for implementation? How will the project continue after the contract period?

Expected Outcomes

What are the anticipated project benefits? In what ways will the target audience be impacted? How will the implementation of this project help prevent the future spread of COVID-19? How will success be documented and measured? Describe the method that will be used to gather information and determine whether 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. 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. In many cases, before and after data is important to measure the effectiveness of the project. 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

Will the project continue and/or expand once the grant period has ended? If so, the proposal should include a plan for funding/supporting 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.

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. This information should be included as an Appendix.

4. Proposed Budget: Complete the Budget using the required [ARPA 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. 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 (if applicable). 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 may be found in the General Guidelines and [LSTA Grant Budget FAQ](#).

Allowable costs include but are not limited to:

- Contractual services.
- Equipment and/or technology necessary to support the success of the project.
- Library materials that support the project's focus.
- Projectors, Smart-Boards, PA loop systems
- Vehicles, vans, book bikes
- Outdoor charging stations, Story-Walks, pop-up shelters/stages for programming
- Secure Lockers
- 24/7 Libraries
- Material return drop boxes
- Curbside library service stanchions/signage

Non-allowable costs include:

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

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

***For additional information about non-allowable costs, contact the LSTA Coordinator via LSTA@library.ohio.gov.

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

General Information

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.

"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.

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.

Proposals must be submitted digitally at <https://library.ohio.gov/arpa/#OutreachGrantApplication> by 11:59 p.m., August 1, 2021.

Due to the anticipated volume of submissions, DRAFT proposals will not be reviewed for this initiative.

Notification of funding will be provided after the convening of the State Library Board meeting on September 16, 2021.

Awarded grant projects will begin November 1, 2021 and must be completed by July 31, 2022.

Questions regarding the application proposal process should be addressed to:

Cindy Boyden
LSTA Coordinator
LSTA@library.ohio.gov

OR

Evan T. Struble
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