



Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Five Year Plan 2013 -2017

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Vision: A Smarter Ohio

The vision of the State Library of Ohio is a Smarter Ohio where every Ohioan can access the necessary resources to be engaged citizens, excel at their jobs, participate in the workforce, and pursue their passions and interests.

Mission:

The State Library of Ohio ensures a smarter Ohio by managing the delivery of services through three channels:

- Directly, by building and managing quality collections and providing hands-on service to state government
- Cooperatively, through collaborative efforts and information sharing networks within the library community
- Virtually, through online and on-the-go access to expert assistance, digitized resources, and a vast selection of electronic materials

The State Library of Ohio is completing a new strategic plan. This plan will coincide with the state biennium funding cycle and will be used in the preparation of the SFY14-15 budget. Results of assessments and surveys conducted for the strategic plan and for the LSTA Plan showed overlapping needs and priorities. These documents will complement each other to improve the lives of Ohio residents.

Libraries in Ohio

Public Libraries: Public libraries are those libraries established under Ohio Revised Code Sections 3375.06, 3375.10, 3375.12, 3375.15, 3375.22, 3375.30 or 1713.28 to serve the residents of a designated service area. There are 251 public library systems under Ohio law, which fall into one of six types of public library. Types of libraries include 19 Association, 3 County, 57 County District, 19 Municipal, 149 School District and 4 Township libraries. Local boards of trustees oversee all public libraries. All 251 public library systems are eligible to apply for LSTA funds.

Academic Libraries: There are 14 public universities, 24 state university regional campuses, 23 community and technical colleges, and 49 private colleges and universities offering higher education opportunities to Ohioans. Governance patterns within colleges and universities vary with ultimate authority usually residing with a board of trustees or directors. Statewide, higher education matters are coordinated by the Ohio Board of Regents. All college and university libraries are eligible to apply for LSTA funds.

School Libraries: There are 614 public school districts. School library media centers are funded through the school district's budget which is currently supported by the local property tax and state foundations funds and can be supplemented through the Education and Consolidation Act of 1988. Additionally, there are approximately 1,000 private, chartered and community schools

located in the state. All public school districts, joint vocational schools, community schools and private schools with a library on-site are eligible to apply for LSTA funds, as are the 58 Educational Service Centers, the 23 Information Technology Centers, the 7 Special Education Regional Resource Centers (SERRC), and the 4 Area Instructional Media Centers.

Special Libraries: There are approximately 450 special libraries in the state. Three chapters of the Special Library Association represent special libraries, including medical, business, and corporate and state agency libraries. Those special libraries that meet the LSTA eligibility requirements may apply for LSTA funds.

Institution Libraries: The 28 institutions operated by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections and the 4 institutions under the Ohio Department of Youth Services are eligible for LSTA funds if they have a staffed library.

Statewide Library Networks

Ohio has three distinct statewide information network providers with which the State Library works closely and which are eligible to receive LSTA funds. They are:

OPLIN: The Ohio Public Library Information Network, founded in 1995, is currently a line item in the State Library's budget but funded through the Public Library Fund. OPLIN provides broadband Internet connections and related information services to Ohio public libraries. The network links 250 public library systems in Ohio to the state's telecommunications backbone. Though the eventual consumers of their services are often members of the general public, their actual *customers* are in fact limited to the public library systems of Ohio.

OhioLINK: Serving more than 600,000 students, faculty, and staff, the Ohio Library and Information Network (OhioLINK) is a networked consortium of 90 public and private universities and colleges throughout the state. In addition to providing access to the collective catalogs of member institutions and delivery of those materials, OhioLINK provides access to a number of bibliographic citation databases and PowerPages. The OhioLINK Digital Resource Commons (DRC) provides storage and distribution of digital materials for participating institutions.

INFOhio is an Ohio Education Computer Network (OECN) service providing cost-effective library automation, electronic resources, networked media booking and a union catalog for Ohio K-12 schools. The vendor for the library automation component is SirsiDynix. Use of the software began in 1994. Today, more than 2,400 Ohio schools in 480 districts serving 1.1 million students utilize the automation system, and 1,650 were automated using LSTA funds. INFOhio also assists library districts in aligning Core Competencies and Standards to educational resources.

Chartered Regional Library Systems: There are four Chartered Regional Library Systems (RLS) in Ohio. Upon becoming chartered, the system is governed by a Board of Trustees whose powers are analogous to those of a public library board. The laws governing RLS are outlined in Ohio Revised Code 3375. Chartered Regional Library Systems are funded by state funds as a line item

in the State Library's budget and through local funds contributed by members. The RLS provide a number of member-determined services including continuing education (especially technology) and technical support. The Chartered RLS are eligible to apply for LSTA funds.

Professional Associations: Ohio has a number of professional associations such as the Ohio Library Council (public libraries), Academic Library Association of Ohio, Ohio Educational Library Media Association, and three chapters of the American Association for Information Science (special libraries). All of the associations are eligible to apply for LSTA funds.

State of Libraries in Ohio

Ohio is a large and extremely diverse state, with a population of 11,544,951 (2011 census estimate). Residents reside in urban communities, suburbs, small towns, and on farmland. Ohio is also a microcosm of ethnic diversity, economic disparities, and inconsistency in educational opportunities. Despite being a library-rich state, disparities exist within the library communities. There are some needs that transcend geographic and socio-economic profiles, yet each library and community is autonomous and has its own set of self-described needs. One-size solutions are seldom effective in such an environment, thus making the use of LSTA funds extremely important to equalize library services across the state and equalize access and services for all Ohioans. As part of its mission, the State Library encourages libraries to work together on statewide programs and services. The State Library believes that by working collaboratively to identify and expand current efficiency and cost savings strategies, customers will be the beneficiaries of improved library services.

The economic downturn has hit Ohio hard. While historically, the Ohio legislature has had an excellent reputation of funding public libraries, state funding for public libraries has been substantially diminished, both by the legislature reducing the amount received by public libraries (now 1.97% of tax revenues) and by lower tax revenue being generated across the state. The Ohio Library Council estimates that the Public Library Fund (PLF) has decreased by approximately 25% since 2007. More public libraries have turned to levies for additional funding. Although the majority of levies have passed, they make up only for the lost state income and do not offer additional funding support. In the last two years, Ohio's academic institutions have had to manage budget cuts in the 5%-10% range. Massive restructuring at OhioLINK has forced the curtailment of some activities and support for academic institutions. In the past ten years, approximately 25% of school media specialists have lost their positions. This loss results in media centers being staffed by clerks or volunteers, media centers with limited hours and no information literacy or research skills being taught, and in the worst case scenario, the school media center being closed completely. All of these scenarios are leading to a crisis in which students do not receive the support and information literacy training they need in the school environment. They turn to the public library which is not equipped to deal with the needs of students, and students graduate from the K-12 environment and go on to college without the skills needed to do academic research. The lack of school media specialists is leading to a recognized crisis at all levels and in all types of libraries.

The declining state budget and the resulting impact on Ohio's libraries, as well as the decreased amount of LSTA funds have influenced the development of the Five-Year Plan. With decreasing dollars and increasing needs, it is essential that the State Library allocate all federal and state dollars where they will have the most impact on Ohio's communities.

Plan Development

In preparing the LSTA 2013-2017 Plan, the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012, conducted by Pelz Library Group, was used as a foundation. The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012 indicated that the use of LSTA funds "has been far reaching and has become deeply engrained in the lives of Ohioans." The Evaluation found much strength in the current LSTA program, but also noted that in some cases, we have become complacent and should evaluate ongoing programs and services for ways to better align them with current trends and needs.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) "Creating a Nation of Learners" strategic plan 2012-2016 was published as the State Library began developing the Ohio LSTA Plan. It became another foundation document. Because the State Library of Ohio tries to align closely with the priorities of the State of Ohio and IMLS, it seemed appropriate for the goals of the Ohio Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 to be paraphrased from the IMLS goals with the objectives and activities being Ohio-centric. Ohio staff was part of the State Program Report (SPR) pilot in 2001 and has committed to being a pilot for the introduction of the new IMLS benchmarks and the revised SPR. This has impacted the development of the Plan, particularly Goal 5.

Parallel to the development of the LSTA Plan, the State Library is undergoing a strategic planning process. Survey findings from OrangeBoy, Inc. indicated all types of libraries are looking toward the State Library for direction and support as they attempt to address both shared and unique challenges. These results mirrored the results of a survey conducted in preparation for writing the Five-Year Plan. LSTA survey respondents indicated they looked to the State Library and LSTA funds to support statewide initiatives and programs. Respondents would like to see projects related to digitization, assistance to the economically impacted, and continuing education for library staff made available through the State Library and LSTA funding. Many of the goals in the Strategic Plan are similar to those in the LSTA Plan.

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 service problems and community needs. The LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 will assist in providing direction for the use of LSTA funds to address those needs and create solutions. At the end of five years, Ohio will have accomplished the overarching goal of empowering Ohio residents by building and providing better library service.

Goal 1: Learning: Engaging and empowering learning experiences: The State Library of Ohio supports programs and experiences that assist libraries in preparing individuals to be active learners and full participants in the local communities and the global society.

The concept of “life-long learning” is not new. However, recent studies place the learner in the center of all activities. It is no longer about the library or the community, the learning itself or the learning institution; it is about the individual. At the state level we may not see the impact the federal dollars make on the individual; instead, the State Library helps empower the local library to make an impact on their community and the individuals within. As a statewide leader in providing services and information to all types of libraries, the State Library brings together library organizations and networks, state agencies, and community partners that might otherwise remain isolated. This allows for greater communication, sharing of services and cost-efficiencies. The State Library will use various strategies to bring together libraries and others in order to build capacities to better serve Ohioans.

In a rapidly changing society, the library has a role in assisting the learner through all phases of his or her life, from preparing to enter school ready to learn, to transitioning from K-12 to higher education or work, to learning new skills and engaging in new experiences. Library services and programs geared to enhance the learner experience can be directly targeted to the learner through activities such as summer reading, virtual reference or programs to a targeted population. The learner experience may be enhanced indirectly because of education provided to library staff or library partners. Finally, the learner’s experience may be enhanced through the creation of information. The library is no longer a passive institution; it is a place of creation. Persons come to the library to make documents, develop content, and create new knowledge.

Ohio’s population is increasingly diverse. The Ohio Department of Development indicates that Ohio’s Hispanic community is about 250,000, accounting for 3.1% of the state’s total population. Ohio, specifically Columbus, has the second highest number of Somali residents in the U.S. The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 3.7% of Ohio’s population is foreign-born and 6.1% of the population speaks a language other than English in the home. For these populations, the library is the great equalizer and a trusted environment.

Disparities are increasingly evident within Ohio household income. According to the 2010 census, the median income was \$45,090. It is higher for whites (\$48,334) and Asians (\$62,462) but exceedingly lower for Blacks (\$27,172) and Hispanics (\$33,138). 15.6% of Ohioans live in poverty, with the figure jumping to 32.9% for Blacks and to 31.4% for Hispanics.

Age disparity is also increasingly apparent in Ohio. According to the 2010 census, 14.1% of Ohio’s population is over age 65. From 2000 to 2030, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that Ohio will see a gain of 849,000 people aged 65 and older. In 2011, the Ohio Department of Aging provided services to over 2 million eligible Ohioans. An aging population can require unique library services but at the same time, an aging baby-boomer generation presents different challenges for the library. This group may be aging but they are more active and technologically

literate than previous generations. Ohio's librarians must be more aware of cultural, socio-economic and age diversity issues. As libraries struggle to provide services and outreach to special segments of their community, and as they attempt to forge new alliances with state partners and other organizations, the State Library strives to assist with the development of activities and programs to serve diverse populations.

Although Ohio is rich in continuing education opportunities for librarians, the offerings are sporadic across the state. For many libraries, both cost and time away from the library factor into decisions regarding attendance. The last five years has seen a huge turnover in library directors as many became retirement eligible and this trend will continue. Therefore, it is imperative that the next generation of library leaders and administrators receive the best training possible in order to maintain the tradition of quality in Ohio's libraries. Additionally, without trained staff, libraries are not able to provide quality training to their customers. Training, particularly in technology resources, is a high need articulated by library customers. The State Library recognizes that the best training opportunities are offered to a broad audience so LSTA funding will only be used to support training activities that reach a statewide or regional audience.

The statewide KnowItNow (KIN) virtual reference service, in existence since 2004, is well administered and highly valued in the state. Since its inception, over 750,000 sessions have been addressed. In 2009, OhioLINK became a provider partner and in 2010, KIN partnered with INFOhio to become one of the "21 Essential Things for 21st Century Learning Skills." However, the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012 challenged the State Library of Ohio and the Cleveland Public Library to review their current model of operation. This shall be accomplished in this Plan.

According to the American Library Association, benefits to readers in a summer reading program (SRP) include: reading over the summer helps students maintain their skills, SRPs appeal to reluctant readers, and library SRPs can encourage reading as a lifelong habit and generate interest in the library and books. An array of research indicates that summer reading positively affects school achievement. SRP has been and will continue to be a focus of life-long learning activities coordinated by the State Library. In 2004, Ohio joined the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP). Under an umbrella theme developed by CSLP for each program year, artwork and materials are available for early learners (0-5 year olds and their parents/caregivers), children, teens, and adult programs. In 2011, 230 Ohio public libraries completed an evaluation of their 2011 SRPs with a total participation in SRP-related programming statewide of 504,242.

Engaging the learning experience begins at birth. The experiences and opportunities available to children from 0-5 years of age have enormous impact on their readiness to succeed as readers and learners. A November 2011 report by Age of Learning, Inc. indicated that American kindergarten teachers believe most young children are academically unprepared for school when they enter kindergarten. A wide range of research indicates that children raised by families in poverty, families with low parental education, or single-parent families may be at

higher risk for poor school readiness. The most recent KIDS COUNT data for Ohio (2009) shows that 21.6% of Ohio children live in poverty. This percentage has increased in recent years. KIDS COUNT data also indicates that 18% of Ohio children born in 2009 were born to mothers with less than a 12th grade education, and 44% were born to unmarried mothers.

Ohio Ready to Read (ORTR), a partnership of the State Library and the Ohio Library Council, is an ongoing statewide initiative created to help address the early literacy needs of Ohio's children and is aligned with the American Library Association's Every Child Ready to Read. Its goals are to inform, educate, and support. ORTR informs library directors, trustees, and children's staff about the importance of early literacy and their role in promoting early literacy. The program also informs local and state agencies that libraries have the resources and expertise to be strong partners. Finally, ORTR strives to educate library staff in early literacy skills that they can then teach to parents and caregivers. In Ohio, public libraries support at-risk children by working with parents, caregivers, extended family, Head Start programs, daycares, preschools, and other agencies invested in the success of young children.

The Library Programs and Development Consultants offer support and guidance to libraries as they develop programs and services for users and communities. Each consultant has a defined specialty area, yet they also are generalists and respond to any inquiry posed. Consultants answer a variety of questions received from individual librarians, trustees, library organizations, state agency staff and library-partner organizations. Questions range from the simple, to complex research questions, to those requiring site visits. Librarians across the state rely on the no-cost, unbiased information, and professional expertise provided by State Library staff.

Objective 1.1

Invest in projects that provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds and to underserved communities.

- The State Library will assist libraries in recognizing and determining diversity within their communities and provide direction on how to best serve those populations.
 - Staff will work with a minimum of five libraries per year and those libraries will implement services and programs focusing on the stated diverse population.
 - Identified diverse populations will benefit from the programs and services as indicated by local library evaluations.
- Templates will be developed to assist libraries in locating and navigating resources to determine diversity factors within communities.

Objective 1.2

Facilitate partnerships among libraries of all types and other education providers to improve the capacity of librarians and library leaders to offer learning opportunities and training to their customers.

- The State Library will utilize a web-based platform to increase sharing and communication among Ohio library trainers, resulting in cost and resource efficiencies by reducing the number of trainings created at the home institution.

- Templates will be created to facilitate the creation of training materials for all library staff, thereby increasing the number of trainings that can be offered by library staff and making it possible for any Ohio library staff member to create and run a training session.
- The State Library of Ohio will offer trainings for library staff via webinars, self-paced tutorials, pathfinders, in-person training sessions and archived webinars on a variety of topics as requested by the Ohio library community.
 - Library staff in Ohio will be able to obtain training on the topics necessary to do their jobs when and how they require it.
 - Library staff will be better able to serve their patrons and patrons will have the knowledge or skills they need to meet their information needs.
 - All levels of library staff will have sufficient knowledge to advance to the next level in their career progression.
 - A percentage of participants from all training will receive follow-up evaluations to determine if knowledge and skills gained are being used at the home institution.
- Continue support of Library Leadership Ohio in 2012, 2014, and 2016 with the goal of increasing leadership for Ohio libraries, thus resulting in better libraries in Ohio communities.
 - 90% of LLO graduates, past and present, will form a networked support community.
 - 90% of LLO graduates will support leadership development programs in their libraries as evidenced by surveys of supervisors and participants.
 - 80% of LLO graduates will see an increase in leadership responsibilities within their libraries, within the external library community and within their local communities as evidenced by surveys of supervisors and participants.

Objective 1.3

Improve services and access to materials and information for all residents through the provision of virtual reference services.

- A contract will be given each year to Cleveland Public Library to oversee the KnowItNow virtual reference service.
- An assessment of staffing and costs to determine how coverage can be optimally distributed will take place in 2013 with changes implemented in 2014 as needed.
 - Changes will result in either lower costs associated with after-hours coverage or enhanced services for the costs.
 - Patron transcripts will indicate that changes in coverage result in more effective and efficient service.
- Consistent training for new librarians staffing the service and refresher training for current librarians will be provided.
 - Provider librarians will meet all KIN Core Competencies as indicated through pre- and post-tests.
 - Based on patron transcripts, 80% of users of the service will indicate they received quality information that met their reference needs.

- An application for both iPhone and Android smartphone platforms will be developed and launched.
 - Patrons will receive needed information from KIN in a format convenient to them.
 - Use of the apps will increase during each year of availability.
- With K-12 students identified as a core user group of the service, outreach and marketing to Ohio's K-12 community both directly as well as in partnership with other organizations (e.g., OELMA, INFOhio, etc.) will be increased.
 - The type of and results of shared marketing will be kept and monitored.
 - Patron transcripts will indicate that users became aware of the service through marketing tools.
- Ways to reach a wider audience with the use and/or integration of various social media tools including Twitter, Facebook, and Google+ will be explored and implemented.
 - The type of and results of social media will be kept and monitored.
 - Patron transcripts will indicate that users became aware of the service through marketing tools.

Objective 1.4

Coordinate summer reading program (SRP) resources for public libraries across Ohio, including maintaining active membership in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) and distributing CSLP materials and other SRP resources to all Ohio public libraries.

- State Library staff will actively participate in the work of the CSLP organization, including the teen and early literacy manual committees, website committee, diversity committee, attendance at CSLP annual meeting, and coordination of Teen Video Challenge and other state-level CSLP activities for Ohio.
- Encourage more Ohio librarians to serve on CSLP committees, with a goal of 1-2 additional Ohio librarians participating at this level each year.
- Collaborate with other state agencies and statewide organizations as appropriate to support and promote participation in summer learning activities.
 - Maintain statewide SRP incentive programs with Ohio State Fair and Ohio State Parks/Ohio Department of Natural Resources and develop 1-2 additional statewide incentives, resources permitting.
- Annually, produce and distribute an evaluation tool for public libraries to report their SRP results, including numbers of participants and programs/activities and assessment of CSLP and statewide resources.
 - Strive for 100% participation by public libraries.

Objective 1.5

Support public libraries' role as providers of early literacy experiences and education in their communities, through resources, trainings, and other tools provided by the Ohio Ready to Read (ORTR) initiative.

- The State Library will continue to partner with the Ohio Library Council on all ORTR activities.

- Develop additional partnerships with stakeholders in the early childhood community to facilitate projects and to affirm the role of public libraries in early literacy education.
 - 100% of new partners will indicate that they are more aware of services provided by the State Library.
- Develop or adapt tools for libraries to perform outcomes-based assessments to measure the effectiveness of their early literacy programming.
 - Produce a model/pilot assessment with at least three participant library systems.
- Create or adapt trainings for librarians on Every Child Ready to Read 2nd Edition (ECRR2) concepts and on ways to effectively integrate ECRR2 and ECRR1 into their programs and other educational efforts.
 - 90% of those attending trainings will indicate that they incorporated concepts learned into their educational activities with young children.
- Develop and distribute resources based on an integration of ECRR2 and ECRR1, including updated “ORTR Grab & Go” multiuse display templates and expansion of the Ohio Early Literacy Crosswalk.
- Harness social media to expand the reach of ORTR; make ongoing connections with at least 250 librarians through these efforts.
 - Librarians will indicate how useful social media connections were and the impact they had on attitudes toward the ORTR program and the State Library.
- Encourage and train librarians to participate in the Ohio Professional Development Registry.
 - At least 25 public librarians will register as early literacy professional development providers on this registry during the Plan period.

Objective 1.6

The State Library will make available consultant services to all types of libraries to assist those libraries in developing and implementing services and programs that meet the priorities of the LSTA law.

- All Library Programs and Development (LPD) staff will respond within 72 hours to all requests received via mail, email, fax, phone, or in person.
 - Random follow-ups with those requesting assistance will indicate that they received the information they requested in a timely manner and it met their expectations.
- LPD staff will promote LSTA grants to libraries whenever possible.
 - 50% of grant applicants will indicate that they learned about the possibility from an LPD consultant.
- LPD staff will provide long-range planning services to public libraries as requested with a goal of providing the service to up to ten public libraries per fiscal year.
 - 90% of libraries will indicate in a follow-up communication that they completed their long-range plan and the services received from LPD were beneficial.
- LPD staff will be encouraged to present programs in their areas of specialty at local, regional, and state workshops and conferences with the goal of staff presenting to at least 20 groups annually.

- Attendees will indicate that their knowledge, skills or abilities increased after participating in a session given by State Library staff.
- Attendees at programs will indicate that they are more aware of the State Library and its programs and services.

Goal 2: Community: Community anchor institutions: The State Library of Ohio promotes libraries as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities and economic vitality.

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.

The library is often portrayed as the third place, a place outside of the home and school or work where people can come together. In many smaller communities, the public library serves in the role of community hub. In many of Ohio's communities, the public library is the last institution where you are greeted on the phone or when you come through the door by a live person who will personally address your question. The library is a unique community-based organization that can serve as an anchor institution for a community as small as a college campus or as large as a metropolitan area. Although libraries can and should serve as the hub institution they cannot and should not do it alone. Partnerships are essential for a vibrant and economically stable community. As stated at the 2012 Project Compass National Convening, "The library has become a vital center for digital literacy which emphasizes Curiosity, Collaboration and Compassion. We are not in the library business, we are in the community business. "

Data from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation publication "Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries," published March 2010, indicated that 30 million people used their public library in 2009 for support in job skills. This included 68% who completed an online job application, 76% who looked for jobs, and 46% who completed their resume. At the Project Compass National Convening, Susan Hildreth, Director of IMLS, stated that libraries are a part of the community's economic health. The economic health and well-being of Ohio is improving, yet there is still much to be accomplished. The Association of Workforce Boards advocates library and One Stop partnerships. Nationally, 68% of One Stops share electronic tools with their local libraries, 50% share space for some programs, and 45% familiarize their patrons with library programs. In Ohio, the relationships between area One Stops and the local libraries vary considerably. Many individuals prefer to come to the library as opposed to other agencies offering assistance because for those economically impacted, the library offers assistance equally and without prejudice. Although Ohio's unemployment rate fell in May 2012 to 7.4% from a high of 10.6% in June 2010, the economically impacted in the state is still at a crucial level. It includes not only those

unemployed but also those under-employed, food challenged, and those in risk of foreclosure, as well as other factors in trying to navigate financially challenging times.

The majority of social services applications today must be accessed and completed electronically. Low income families and those economically impacted are less likely to have access to technology. This creates another area in which these families may be disadvantaged and another area where their children may lack resources for their education. Many routine activities of daily living depend upon a minimum of computer skills. Those with no exposure to basic computer operations have a disadvantage when navigating the service provider environment. As we move forward in the 21st century, the digital divide becomes not access to devices but the skills and knowledge to use them. The library becomes a primary place for individuals to discover, navigate, evaluate and use the resources necessary to become a productive member of society.

The Serving Every Ohioan (SEO) Center, a branch of the State Library located in Caldwell, Ohio, coordinates several key programs across the state. The SEO collection is shared throughout Ohio and the WorldCat Resource system with a circulation of approximately 340,000. The Center also provides essential reference services and interlibrary loan services to small and rural libraries. SEO maintains and supports a shared integrated library system for 81 library systems at 178 locations in 43 Ohio counties. It is a cost-effective opportunity for public libraries to become a member of an established consortium. The number of participating libraries is anticipated to increase. As part of being a member of the SEO consortium, libraries have access to an OverDrive eBook Consortium. Users can also access the Ohio eBook Project collection (see 4.3) and vice versa. Finally, SEO operates a mobile training lab which is used by libraries of all sizes across the state. The need for additional computers for training programs is so great that the lab is booked as soon as the schedule is announced.

Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) is a way to encourage libraries as community hubs through the more traditional library role of reading. CTRO debuted in 2009 as an initiative to connect Ohioans of all ages through the experience of sharing books by Ohio authors. CTRO encourages libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation for Ohio literature. CTRO offers resources to facilitate book sharing and discussion, projects and experiences that extend and enhance readers' engagement with the written word, and information to promote awareness and exploration of the literary and informational texts. Each two-calendar-year program cycle features a booklist of 15-20 titles for readers of varied ages and interests. For each selected book, a readers' toolkit is produced including book and author information, suggested discussion questions and additional resources. CTRO is entering its third program cycle. As part of this Five-Year Plan, an assessment will be conducted on the actual impact of CTRO and the return on investment of this program.

Objective 2.1

Invest in projects that strengthen the role of libraries as core components of the broader community learning and service infrastructure.

- Libraries will be encouraged to become points for civic engagement.

- 75% of libraries surveyed will indicate that their facilities were used as a forum to reach out to the community or for actions that would benefit the community.
- Anecdotal evidence will indicate that users perceive the library as place to come for discussions on building a better community.
- Libraries will be encouraged to enhance economic capacity in the community.
 - A minimum of 100 libraries will partner with other agencies in activities that strengthen the economic capacity of the community, for example small business assistance, emergency preparedness, environmental concerns, and urban planning.
- Libraries will be encouraged to conduct assessments to determine their role in a changing community environment.
 - A model assessment tool will be developed in 2013 and used with 2 libraries. Pilot libraries and their communities will identify changes in policies, operations, programs or resources that would support the needs of their communities.
 - Beginning in 2014, a minimum of 10 libraries a year will use the assessment tool.
 - 95% of participating libraries will indicate that they made changes based on the assessment and that relationships with community organizations have improved.
 - 90% of community participants will indicate that their perception and attitude of the library is more supportive based on having participated in the process.
 - 90% of community participants and library staff will indicate the process has had a positive impact on the library and the community.

Objective 2.2

Partner with other agencies to leverage the resources of libraries advancing national priorities, including education, health, disaster preparedness, digital literacy, economic and workforce development, and programs for the economically challenged.

- Templates will be developed to assist libraries in locating potential partnerships within the local community and across the state.
- Templates will be developed to assist librarians and their customers in navigating the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) website and in locating resources within the department, the America's Services Locator and other state and federal agency websites.
 - 90% of librarians will indicate that they used the templates and found them beneficial in their work.
 - 80% of users requesting assistance will indicate that the templates assisted them in locating the information they needed and that their perception of the library as a service provider was positive.
- The State Library will collaborate with ODJFS to encourage relationships between One Stops and local libraries.
 - A survey to be conducted biennially will be used to determine partnerships developed and impact on the community.
 - Best practices will be posted on the State Library's website and shared with One Stops and ODJFS.

Objective 2.3

Libraries, librarians, and their customers will receive support through the Serving Every Ohioan (SEO) Center located in Southeastern Ohio.

- The SEO Center will continue to identify and obtain print and electronic resources for libraries whose own collections are inadequate for user needs.
 - SEO will coordinate a collection development committee with member library staff to identify both print and electronic collection development needs.
- As a partnership activity, SEO staff will pull and ship materials to state correctional facilities and public libraries upon request.
- The SEO Automation Consortium will continue as a primary means for public libraries to become part of an established consortium on a shared integrated library system for resource sharing.
 - The SEO Automation will increase the number of library systems by at least 10% of current membership over the life of the Plan.
- The Mobile Technology Training Center will be maintained as a means for libraries to provide access to training for staff and patrons.
 - The number of sites for the Mobile Technology lab will be kept as will statistics on the number of trainings and participants at each site.
 - Surveys of libraries using the mobile lab will indicate satisfaction with the service and anecdotal information on customer satisfaction, increased skills and perception of the library, SEO and State Library.
- Comprehensive statistics to measure SEO activities will be kept and reported to State Library administration, the SEO Automation Consortium members, and the Ohio library community.
- The impact of SEO services on Ohio libraries and users will be assessed through both the statistics and anecdotal information. Surveys of member libraries will be used for both strategic planning for ongoing services and satisfaction with services provided.

Objective 2.4

Continue to grow the Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) initiative to encourage readership and sharing of books and to promote appreciation of Ohio authors and literature, in partnership with Ohioana Library Association and Ohio Center for the Book.

- Build awareness of CTRO through continued and enhanced outreach to the library community and the Ohioana Library's partners and audience; develop additional avenues to increase program visibility and use, including increased communication with authors and publishers.
- Develop and implement a feedback/evaluation mechanism in 2014 to measure and assess use of CTRO by diverse users including libraries, schools, clubs, and individual readers, and to gather suggestions for improvement.
 - During the 2013 and 2014 program cycle, determine a methodology for assessing the overall impact and long-term sustainability of CTRO.
 - Based on the results of the evaluation, determine the investment of resources for CTRO for future years.

- Based on the results of the evaluation, with the CTRO advisory team and library and educational communities, produce CTRO booklists for future program cycles and write, publish, and promote readers' toolkits for all titles in each program cycle.
- Enhance online presence of CTRO through expansion of resources available via WebJunction and establishment of additional online entrance points, including the State Library website and social media.

Goal 3: Content: Discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage. The State Library of Ohio supports exemplary stewardship of library collections and promotes the use of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage.

The State Library of Ohio has a rich historical collection of interest to researchers and historians. Ohio Memory is a digital library project established in 2000 by an LSTA grant to the Ohio Historical Society (OHS). The State Library and OHS began collaborating on the project in 2008 and a new version of the Ohio Memory site was launched in 2009. Today it includes collections from more than 354 cultural heritage institutions representing all of Ohio's 88 counties. This project provides access to the historical treasures of Ohio, bringing together primary sources from all parts of the state in an online scrapbook that celebrates state and local history and encourages cooperation between archives, historical societies, museums and other cultural institutions. The State Library is committed to the continuation of Ohio Memory and to being a leader in digital initiatives, particularly those with history roots, statewide.

A Connecting to Collections survey conducted in early 2010 was made available to nearly 700 institutions. A total of 285 responses were received for a response rate of 40% and representation from 78 of Ohio's 88 counties. Institution types completing the survey included libraries (101 or 42%), historical societies (50 or 21%), educational institution/academic libraries (college or university) with 31 or 13%, and museums (31 or 13%). Other responding groups included historic houses/sites and local government entities.

While the results of the Ohio Connecting to Collections project shed some very positive light on the State's preservation activities, the survey discovered a number of trends which institutions must address to continue safeguarding their treasures. Cultural organizations in Ohio indicated that they regularly undertake a wide variety of preservation activities, yet few indicated that they had undergone any central or "core" activities of preservation program development, such as development of long-range preservation plans, preservation surveys of their buildings, collections, and preservation policies, or disaster plans.

The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012 noted the positive impact that the competitive LSTA grants focusing on digitization were having within their individual communities, across the state and nationally. They recommended that the State Library develop regional digitization sites and create a digitization knowledge base. As a precursor to the development of regional digitization sites, the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County distributed a survey to institutions that have conducted digitization activities to assess their digitization capabilities

and their capacity to provide services to other institutions. Eighty-seven institutions responded to the survey and although it revealed no conclusive sites as possible regional centers, it did underscore the range of preservation activities in the state and the need for coordinated efforts in planning for digitization and making digitization decisions.

The need for both digitization and standardization within digitization activities were highly ranked in surveys and discussions associated with the development of the Five-Year Plan. The development of the Digital Public Library of America, the Blueprint for a National Public Library Digitization Program, and the IMLS initiatives in this area will help guide Ohio activities in the next five years.

Objective 3.1

Promote distribution and access of information through digitization and reformatting of materials.

- The State Library will maintain its partnership with the Ohio Historical Society for the continued growth and sustainability of Ohio Memory.
 - Number of digitized materials from Ohio libraries added and made available through Ohio Memory and the percentage increase each year will be tabulated.
- The State Library will increase the amount of internal materials in its Ohio Memory collections by 10% per year.
 - The number of digitized materials from the State Library collection and made available through Ohio Memory will be tabulated.
 - Anecdotal feedback will indicate that users found the materials easily accessible and materials met their needs.
- The State Library will participate and provide leadership to groups interested in digital content and will encourage libraries to collaborate and partner with museums, historical societies, and other repositories of cultural heritage documents in their communities.
 - 100% of collaborating institutions will indicate their appreciation of the State Library's leadership and support and will endorse State Library efforts in the area of digitization.
 - The Connecting to Collections Policy site on Ohio Memory will be enlarged by 10% per year.
 - Types of policies on the Connecting to Collections Policy site on Ohio Memory will be augmented by a minimum of one type of policy per year.
 - Biennial surveys will indicate that librarians, museum officials, and historical society staff have utilized the site and found policies that have benefitted them and/or their collections.
- The State Library will review its current Long Range Plan for digitization in Ohio in 2013, including scanning and preservation standards, metadata, access points, location of data, and priority of materials to be digitized, and will revise as needed.
- In preparation for the State Library's bicentennial in 2017, materials will be scanned that illustrate and celebrate the Library.
 - State agency staff and legislators as well as the general public will understand and appreciate the significance and importance of the State Library.

Objective 3.2

Develop and implement a strategy to expand the public's access to the information, meaning and content found in library collections.

- The State Library will work with state and national partners to adopt minimum standards for participating in a digitization project.
 - Open standards will be used so that metadata can be harvested across platforms.
- The State Library will work with state partners to prioritize types of materials for digitization with LSTA support.
 - Partners will agree on priorities in 2013.
 - 85% of users of digitized materials will indicate that they were able to access information easily and that it met their needs.
- As IMLS develops standardized best practices, these will be adopted for digitization proposals funded through the State Library of Ohio.
- A plan for regional digitization hubs will be developed in 2013 with hubs operational by 2015.
 - 95% of institutions making use of a hub location will indicate that the facility and services met their expectations.

Goal 4: Access: Sustain access to knowledge. The State Library of Ohio works to sustain and increase access to information and ideas.

Access to information and library resources cuts a wide swath. Access can be thought of traditionally, as books and in obtaining them, either in print form directly from the library or through interlibrary loan and a delivery mechanism. Access can also take the form of electronic delivery of information through databases or digital content.

The Ohio Web Library, in existence since 2003, is well administered and highly valued in the state. The Ohio Web Library demonstrates the benefits of shared services as a tangible benefit to Ohio residents. The individual budgets of any of the Libraries Connect Ohio (LCO) partners, with or without LSTA assistance, could not provide the breadth of database access that is currently available to all Ohioans. Funding a statewide core electronic information collection has the impact of positively and simultaneously affecting school, public, and academic libraries by the most cost-effective means possible. The most dramatic benefit is seen in primary and secondary schools, where it is essential to start to build a citizenry capable of exploiting information. The addition of Mango Languages and Ancestry Library Edition in SFY2012 led to increased use of the databases and underscored the partners' commitment to assessing and meeting the needs of users. The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012 challenged the State Library of Ohio and the LCO partners to review their current model of operation. This shall be done within the first year of the Five Year Plan and adjustments made accordingly.

As libraries have automated and as the need for collaboration to affect efficiencies has grown, statewide resource sharing has become a greater priority. The State Library is a leader in the development of the resource sharing environment, in its broadest context. The statewide resource sharing system (SWRS), Ohio Libraries Share: Moving Ohio Resources Everywhere (OLS: MORE), provides a mechanism for libraries and their patrons to locate and request library materials within the state that are not owned by their local libraries. OLS: MORE can be used by any library, including those who participate in shared integrated library system (ILS) consortia or by stand-alone library systems. This system enables a dramatic increase in the number of materials available to library patrons by sharing materials between participating library systems. As of December 2011, 83 public, school, and special libraries were participating in this statewide resource sharing project. For calendar year 2011, the project represented access to more than 13.2 million library items that were made available to nearly 2.4 million residents and students in Ohio. One of the difficulties faced by this system is the disparate ILSs in use by participating libraries which contributes to an increased workload on staff. The State Library has invested financial and staffing resources to investigate, implement, and develop additional functionality and new applications in an attempt to make the resource sharing system more efficient. It is a priority of the State Library to continue working towards more seamless operation of the system and to allow for a greater sharing of library materials statewide.

The landscape for accessing materials is continually changing. Over the last two years, digital eBooks use has grown exponentially. The Ohio eBook Project (OEP) was launched in 2005 as a pilot project. Today it has 90 members, mostly small to medium sized public libraries whose patrons want access to eContent but who cannot afford or support eBooks on their own. The SEO Library Consortium also has an OverDrive eBook Consortium for their 81 libraries. Users of the Ohio eBook Project can access the SEO collection and vice versa, thus essentially providing an eBook consortium of 171 public libraries. As membership grows, so does the size of the collection and use. Currently, the OEP average circulation is around 69,000 per month.

Those with visual impairments require special assistance to access materials. The State Library partners with the Library of Congress' National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to provide service to eligible Ohioans. The Talking Book Program provides free recorded books, magazines and playback equipment to approximately 15,000 blind, visually impaired, physically disabled, and reading disabled Ohio residents. The State Library coordinates the Ohio program and partners with the Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled at Cleveland Public Library as well as with 61 machine sub-lending agencies.

Objective 4.1

Provide access to the selected electronic database content to all Ohioans via a combination of funding and methods developed with the other Libraries Connect Ohio partners (INFOhio, OhioLINK, and OPLIN).

- With guidance from the academic, K-12, and public library communities, purchase subscriptions to selected databases of high quality electronic information including at

least one subscription database of full-text magazines and journals and one online general encyclopedia.

- Periodically review the selection, generally at the end of contract terms, with guidance from the academic, K-12, and public library communities.
 - The core collection of databases will be assessed in early 2013 with new RFPs issued and a potential new set of databases will be available in late 2013.
- Using methods developed to suit the needs of academic, K-12, and public library users, provide authenticated access to the databases for Ohio residents.
 - 100% of students and faculty from Ohio academic institutions should have access to the databases through a dedicated website.
 - 100% of students, faculty, and parents of Ohio K-12 students should have access to the databases through a dedicated website.
 - 100% of the general public should have access to the databases through either a dedicated website or through access tools which can be incorporated into Ohio public library websites.
- Promote awareness and use of the selected electronic databases via a combination of methods developed with the other Libraries Connect Ohio partners.
 - Anecdotal evidence as well as more formal evaluations conducted by Libraries Connect Ohio partners will indicate that 85% of those queried are aware of the electronic databases and the funding partners.
- Create awareness by introducing the databases and their value to lifelong learning through a statewide public relations campaign and training for all audiences.
 - Librarians serving academic, K-12, and public libraries should have at least one training opportunity each year so they can use the selected databases efficiently.
 - 90% of those attending the training will show increased skills in using the database and knowledge about the databases and the funding partners as shown through pre- and post- tests.
 - 90% of those attending the trainings will be better able to use the databases to answer patron questions as evidenced in a follow-up assessment.
- At least one marketing item promoting use of the selected databases should be distributed within the academic, K-12, and public library communities.
 - 85% of students and general users surveyed will indicate that the promotional aids made them aware of the databases and that they have now used the databases to meet their informational needs.
- The State Library of Ohio, in collaboration with the LCO partners, will develop contingency plans should database funding by the LCO partners decrease. Contingency plans may include alternative funding options, prioritization of databases should contracts need to be broken, and a communications plan.

Objective 4.2

Facilitate and promote statewide resource sharing.

- Continue to research the development of a “next-generation” open-source statewide resource sharing platform (i.e. the Evergreen Fulfillment project).

- Upgrade the current OLS:MORE software to allow for enhanced features and better ease of use.
 - Volume of delivery will be tracked as a measure of ease of use.
 - Number of participating libraries will increase by 5% which will also increase the number of holdings available.
 - Number of requests sent and number of requests filled will be tracked as a measure of the enhanced features usability.
 - A satisfaction survey to libraries will indicate an 85% satisfaction with the system.
- Deliver the necessary training to library staff after the software upgrade is complete.
 - 90% of OLS:MORE libraries will participate in training opportunities. Pre- and post-tests will be used to determine their knowledge of and skills in using the new software.
- Update current training manuals, tip sheets, FAQs, and all other promotional and marketing material regarding OLS:MORE to reflect the software upgrade.
 - 95% of OLS:MORE libraries will use promotional materials at their home institution.

Objective 4.3

Provide library users access to eContent through the Ohio eBook Project (OEP) consortium.

- The State Library will continue in the role of project manager and act as liaison between Overdrive and individual OEP members.
 - Circulation in the OEP will increase by no less than 20% per year.
 - OEP members will indicate on an annual survey their satisfaction with the project and with the State Library.
- The contract will be renegotiated with OverDrive or another eBook vendor in 2013 and 2015.
- To continue to work with SEO eBook Consortium and OverDrive with the intent of merging the two systems.
- OEP members will be encouraged to purchase materials that will support the Core Curriculum for their local school districts.
- The State Library will work with library partners across the state to facilitate training on eReaders.
 - Templates and programming will be made available on the State Library website.
 - 90% of librarians will indicate an increased comfort level in using and demonstrating eReader technologies as evidenced by pre- and post-surveys and random follow-up evaluations.
 - Following training sessions by librarians, 85% of users will indicate an increased comfort level and knowledge in using eReader devices as evidenced by pre- and post-tests.

Objective 4.4

Continue to support the Blind and Physically Disabled Program.

- The State Library will maintain the Talking Book Machines and provide them to Blind and Physically Disabled patrons statewide.
 - Comprehensive statistics to measure Talking Book activities will be kept and reported to State Library administration, the Regional Library and members of the Talking Book Consumer Advisory Council.
 - New users to the program will increase by 10% during the life of the Plan.
- The State Library will contract with the Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled (OLBPD) at Cleveland Public Library to provide materials to Talking Book patrons.
- Quarterly meetings of the Talking Books Consumer Advisory Council will be held.
- Outreach with Sub-lending Agencies will occur annually either by training or other communicative efforts.
 - A biennial survey will indicate that sub-lending agencies are aware of the services and support provided to them by the State Library.
- Produce a READ poster related to the program annually.
 - Anecdotal evidence will indicate that individuals viewing the poster are more aware of the Talking Book program.
 - Anecdotal evidence will indicate that individuals viewing the poster are more aware of the needs as well as the abilities of those with visual impairments.
- Attend three conferences within the State of Ohio to increase awareness of the OLBPD program and the Talking Book Program at the State Library of Ohio.
 - Anecdotal evidence will indicate that attendees are more aware of the Talking Book program and will share that knowledge.
- Collaborate with the OLBPD to promote awareness of the program by distributing promotional materials to all public libraries in Ohio.
 - 95% of public libraries will indicate that they answered questions or distributed application materials based on having the display in the library.
- Collaborate with the OLBPD to promote the program by holding Family Fun & Learning Day activities in two to four locations over the life of the Plan (e.g. Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo).
 - 95% of attendees will indicate that their perceptions of those with visual impairments have changed after participating in the event.
 - 90% of attendees will indicate that they are more aware of the Talking Book services and programs and funding sources and support for the program.

Stakeholder involvement

The LSTA Advisory Council is comprised of 15 members, broadly representative of public, academic, institution, school and special libraries as well as users of library services. The directors of the three statewide information network providers and the director of the public library professional association are ex officio members of the LSTA Advisory Council. The LSTA Advisory Council meets once a year and members are contacted as needed by State Library

staff for input on programs or projects being considered for implementation using LSTA funds. For the development of the Five-Year Plan, State Library staff began working with the LSTA Advisory Council in April 2011.

The State Library Board provides input on State Library programs and services. The Board has reaffirmed their commitment to use LSTA funds for operational costs that support the goals of LSTA, for stateside initiatives and the competitive grant program, and the inclusion of new projects. The Pelz Library Group made a presentation to the State Library Board in December 2011 to discuss the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2008-2012 and their recommendations for the next Five-Year Plan. This provided the Board with an opportunity to share their thoughts on the future direction of LSTA funding in Ohio.

In February 2012, a survey was distributed to the Ohio library community and stakeholders requesting input on programs and services to be included in the LSTA Five-Year Plan. The 122 responses received were collated and used, along with the LSTA Evaluation Report and the 2011 LSTA Advisory Council suggestions, as the basis for discussion with the State Library Board in April 2012 and the LSTA Advisory Council in May 2012. State Library staff drafted a Plan which was made available on the State Library's website for comment. Notices were sent out to various listservs asking for feedback and comment.

Stakeholder input is continuously sought. As part of any library site visit, LSTA is discussed. The State Library makes a concerted effort to solicit the thoughts of Ohio librarians on the LSTA program; what they think of current priorities and projects and what they would like to see as the future direction of LSTA funds. Thus, all Ohio librarians and staff feel they have an investment and a role in the Ohio LSTA program. In particular, the LSTA special grant categories are a reflection of library community suggestions.

All LSTA grants are peer reviewed. A member of the LSTA Advisory Council chairs review teams. The additional three members of the team include a public library and school library representative and either an academic or special library representative. Team members are chosen based on past experience in writing an LSTA grant or on previous interaction with the State Library. In the previous Evaluation period, over 50 individuals reviewed LSTA grants and provided suggestions for the grant programs and the review process.

Aside from LSTA staff, other State Library staff, specifically Library Programs and Development staff (LPD), is involved in the LSTA process. LPD staff attends review team meetings as liaisons and notetakers. They are also assigned as project liaisons and make at least one site visit during the project year.

Communication and Public Availability

Drafts of the Five-Year Plan were shared with the State Library Board and the LSTA Advisory Council as well as with the library community as a whole. The final version will be mounted on

the State Library of Ohio's website and notification will be made to all customer groups through a variety of communication channels.

Ongoing communication will be maintained with LSTA stakeholders through the following methods:

- Sending press releases to all newspapers in a county receiving an LSTA grant.
- Sending letters to state legislators announcing the funding of a grant to a library in the legislator's district.
- Sending letters to federal legislators announcing the funding of a grant to a library in the legislator's district.
- Posting highlights of the LSTA State Program Report on the State Library website.
- Posting information on funded LSTA Projects on the State Library website.
- Sending press releases to all newspapers in a county with an exemplary/model LSTA project.
- Requiring all LSTA competitive grants must include an appendix detailing how the project will be publicized to the local community.
- Encouraging sub-grantees to post information on their project on WebJunction Ohio.

Monitoring

The monitoring process for sub-grantees consists of the following:

- Quarterly narrative and financial reports which are reviewed by LSTA staff and the liaison consultant.
- All libraries receiving a full grant for the first time are asked if they would like to receive an on-site visit from the LSTA staff orienting the library to the State Library LSTA grant process.
- All full grant sub-grantees receive a site visit by the liaison consultant. This site visit typically takes place at the end of the second quarter.
- All sub-grantees are required to submit complete fiscal back-up documentation for the project. Each quarter they must submit copies of all purchase orders, invoices, and cancelled checks.
- A termination and closeout financial report.
- A final narrative report providing output and outcome evaluation details, available at that time.
- A year-after evaluation report, due 12 months after the termination of the project, which provides in-depth details on outputs and outcomes.

Communication between sub-grantees and the LSTA office is encouraged so as to alleviate possible issues before they become problems. The need for and amount of communication varies from sub-grantee to sub-grantee.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013 – 2017 includes two components. The first is an immediate evaluation of the current LSTA competitive grant process. The second is a broad based evaluation plan discussing the methodology to be used to evaluate: progress made on meeting the goals and activities in the Plan, success and impact of goals and activities, and the need to adjust resources for a specific activity.

Evaluation of Grant Process

The LSTA Five-Year Evaluation noted that those completing the competitive grant survey indicated that they felt the LSTA process in Ohio was fair. However, the competitive grant program has not been reviewed since it was originally developed. With shrinking resources and a greater demand on all LSTA dollars, the start of this Five-Year Plan is an appropriate juncture to evaluate the current LSTA grant process, categories and definitions used.

LSTA staff, with input from the State Library Board, LSTA Advisory Committee, and Ohio library community, will begin immediately to review and revise LSTA grant categories and the sub-award process. New categories will reflect the priorities and needs articulated in the LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013 – 2017. Revised application materials will be released with the first round of grants funded from the 2013 award. Application tip sheets and/or trainings will be offered to potential LSTA applicants as an introduction to the revised LSTA grant categories and application materials.

During the development of the LSTA Five-Year Plan both the State Library Board and the LSTA Advisory Council articulated the need for all projects to include outcome-based evaluation and a mandatory partnership piece. These elements will be included in the revised application materials and all future evaluations of sub-grant applications and final project reports will be evaluated, in part, on these two elements. Additionally, LSTA staff has been involved with the Measuring Success initiative of the Library Services, State Programs office at IMLS. As standardized metrics are introduced by IMLS, all LSTA sub-awards and statewide programs will use the standardized metrics whenever possible. This will assist in the State Library's ability to determine the progress made programs and services that are a part of the Plan.

Evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan

Evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan occurs on an on-going basis in order to make sure that all goals and activities are implemented efficiently and effectively. Ongoing evaluation also allows the State Library to make adjustments in programs and projects as needed in order to assure their complete success as well as compliance with the LSTA law and requirements.

Although the State Library is reviewing the competitive grant categories and application materials, the evaluation methodologies for awarded sub-grants will remain the same. Sub-grants will be evaluated using the monitoring process outlined in the previous section.

Each objective in the Five-Year Plan includes several action steps and measures. Measures are outputs, outcomes, or a combination. These measurable targets will be used to assess the degree of success for each objective and the impact on the overall goal. How and when the data and information is collected is dependent on the individual objectives and action step. Ongoing activities and statewide programs and services are evaluated annually.

At the end of each fiscal year, State Library staff will evaluate ongoing activities and statewide programs. Action steps that were to be undertaken during that fiscal year will be examined and, if needed, adjustments made to the program for the following fiscal year. This information is reported to State Library administration, the State Library Board and the LSTA Advisory Council. This information may also be reported to IMLS via the State Program Report. This annual assessment allows State Library staff to track progress on reaching the goals of the Five-Year Plan as well as evaluate individual action steps and make adjustments if necessary.

An LSTA Report is an agenda item at all State Library Board meetings. LSTA is also a discussion item at the annual State Library Board retreat. At the retreat the Board receives an overview of the LSTA program and an update on specific activities or projects. Board members ask questions and may make recommendations on adjusting or modifying certain objectives or action steps to better align LSTA goals with the strategic direction of the State Library and to better serve Ohio residents.

The LSTA Five-Year Plan is reviewed annually by State Library staff to make sure that all program targets are being met. If adjustments are needed to either program targets, the programs themselves (based on changing needs within the state) or the LSTA program in general, they will be discussed with the LSTA Advisory Council and State Library Board. Changes will then be implemented following approval by IMLS.