



State Library of Ohio  
Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)  
Request for Proposal

Open Grant Program

## I. Introduction

The LSTA Open Grant program will allow libraries to address a specific customer need or develop an innovative program idea. This program will allow applicants to apply a new method to solve a problem, build a program or service, and assist the library in carrying out its mission and plan while helping the State Library address LSTA goals. All projects must focus on the needs of a specific target audience.

The LSTA Open Grant program allows applicants as much flexibility in the development of their projects as possible. The Open Grant encourages libraries to be flexible, innovative, and creative.

Proposals may request no more than \$4,999 in federal funds. No match is required for Open Grant proposals. No more than four Open Grants will be funded per quarter.

## II. Priorities and Funding:

The LSTA grant process is a competitive one. Submission of a proposal does not guarantee funding. Projects will be funded on the basis of:

1. Relationship to LSTA Goals as listed in the [LSTA Five Year Plan 2018-2022](#).
2. Sufficient detail to understand the problem, need, or opportunity.
3. Sufficient detail to understand how the proposal will be implemented.
4. Benefit and improvement to the library, public, and community.

## III. General Guidelines

- 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 moneys, not for ongoing operational costs.
- A library may receive no more than two Open Grants per year.
- Any purchases of devices, computers and software must meet minimum Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. Grant recipients requesting materials that provide Internet access must be Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant.

## 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 Section VI of the RFP.

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

- Include Title Page, Program Description and Budget.
- Be signed by the administering official and the fiscal officer.
- Be in a font size no less than 12.
- Be no more than 1-2 pages, not including the budget form and title page.
- Be submitted online as a complete package to: [lsta@library.ohio.gov](mailto:lsta@library.ohio.gov).

Failure to conform to the Proposal Format will result in the proposal being returned.

## 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 2013-2017](#).

## VI. Program Description

The proposal should consist of the following:

1. **Title Page** – Provide all required information in the format indicated on the [Title Page Guidelines](#).
2. **Goal/Activities** –State why you want to undertake this project. Indicate the activities which will be undertaken to implement the project.
3. **Assessment** – Following the termination of the project you will need to report back to the State Library. In broad terms state how you plan to assess the program and its impact on the library and the community. **IMLS requires the use of standardized questions for all instructional activities and programs. Questions to be used as well as the format for reporting on your narrative can be found in the [Instructional Surveys](#) document.**
4. **Budget** – Complete the Budget using the required [Budget Form](#). Only the LSTA column needs to be completed. Provide origin of costs for all potential purchases. For additional information on the budget, see section VII: Budget below and the [Budget FAQ](#).

## VII. Budget

Allowable costs:

- 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. See information on Indirect costs at the end of this section.

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

Non-allowable costs:

- Salary and fringe benefits for current staff
- Ongoing operational costs (subscriptions, utilities, maintenance, etc.)
- Entertainment costs (no food or beverages)
- EBooks
- Databases
- Classroom/Teacher collections – all collection development materials must remain with the awarded institution.
- Fundraising, grant-writing or advocacy
- Construction or renovation costs
- Promotional items and giveaways

Indirect Costs: The federal government now allows all sub-grantees to request indirect costs as part of their application. The indirect costs may only be applied to the federal portion of your request and the federal request may not exceed \$4,999, including indirect costs. On your application, please indicate one of the following:

- Waive the indirect cost.
- Request a de minimus amount up to 10%, indicating the percentage requested
- Request your previously negotiated federal indirect cost rate and include documentation of the amount.

Additional information on the Budget can be found in the [Budget FAQ](#)

## **VIII: General Information**

The complete application package should be sent electronically in one file to [LSTA@library.ohio.gov](mailto:LSTA@library.ohio.gov). Preferred formats are Word or PDF. Do not send proposals via Google Docs.

Requests may be submitted at any time. If you do not receive acknowledgement of receipt of application within two business days, please email [cboyden@library.ohio.gov](mailto:cboyden@library.ohio.gov) to confirm receipt.

All requests will be reviewed by a committee of State Library staff. If the proposal adequately addresses all elements of the application, the proposal will be recommended to the State Librarian for funding.

Funded proposals will begin the first of the month following the acceptance of the proposal and will terminate no later than twelve months following the award.

Questions regarding the proposal process should be addressed to:

Cindy Boyden  
(614) 644-6863  
(800) 686-1532

[cboyden@library.ohio.gov](mailto:cboyden@library.ohio.gov)