

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

STEM Projects

I. Introduction

The State Library of Ohio is pleased to announce the availability of LSTA funds to support STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) initiatives across the state. The purpose of this grant program is to assist libraries in preparing youth to be active learners and provide youth who will be the workforce of tomorrow with a competitive edge in a globalized, high-tech marketplace. “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” (Goal 1 Ohio LSTA Plan 2013-2017).

Fundable STEM and STEAM projects will be innovative and adaptable projects which will include creative, educational, programmatic and/or instructional elements designed to increase skills and knowledge for student success.

II. Priorities and Funding:

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

1. Relationship to LSTA Goal in the Five Year Plan 2013- 2017;
2. Clear and succinct answers to questions in the RFP;
3. Sufficient detail to understand the problem, need, or opportunity;
4. Sufficient detail to understand how the proposal will be implemented;
5. Benefit and improvement to the library, public, and community;
6. Partnerships: Project partners and collaboration with other agencies is strongly encouraged;
7. Sustainability: In order to be considered for funding, a project must indicate a plan to secure future funding.

III. General Guidelines

- Proposals may request no more than \$50,000 in federal funds. If a library has an innovative project which would require a higher federal amount, they are encouraged to contact the LSTA Office to discuss their idea and the possibility of a waiver to request additional federal support.
- A financial match of 25% of the total project cost is required from the institution. In-kind contributions do not qualify as matching funds. *For example*, if the total project cost is \$66,666 the federal request would be \$50,000 and the local match would be \$16,666. For a project total of \$32,000 the federal request would be \$24,000 and the local match would be \$8,000.

- LSTA grant recipients must complete all reporting requirements as outlined in the contract. Failure to complete these requirements may impact a library's consideration for future LSTA awards.
- LSTA funds are intended to be used as seed money, not for ongoing operational costs.
- A library and/or consortia may submit more than one proposal, but only one proposal per institution will be funded per cycle. "Institution" is defined by the administering official authorized to sign the project application and contract. The **administering official** is: for schools the superintendent, for public libraries the president of the board of trustees, for academic libraries the appropriate dean or provost and for special libraries the administrative officer.
- All local matching funds must be available and committed at the time of signing the contract with the State Library of Ohio.
 - All matching funds must be a cash match. No in-kind contributions are allowable as match.
 - Matching funds may come from a library's operating budget, Friends or PTOs, other grant awards, gifts, partners, etc.
 - Other federal funds may not be counted as match.
- Any purchases of devices, computers and software must meet minimum American with Disabilities Act guidelines. Grant recipients requesting materials that provide Internet access must be Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant.
- The project coordinator must have an MLS/MLIS or have a Library Media Specialist Certification. A potential project coordinator may contact the LSTA Office to determine if other educational certifications may be substituted.

IV. Proposal Format

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

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

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

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

V. Eligibility/Requirements

- Public libraries must be eligible to receive Public Library Funds (PLF).

- School libraries must be located in a school that is accredited by the state.
- Academic libraries must be part of an accredited institution of higher learning.
- Special libraries must be willing to share their resources.
- Library Consortia are those library networks, professional associations, and regional library systems identified in “Libraries in Ohio,” *LSTA Five-Year Plan*.

VI. Partners

Although not required, the State Library strongly encourages partnership projects. Having either official or informal partners will strengthen your project. An official partner is a library or non-library entity that will contribute specific deliverables to the project. A deliverable may be a cash amount or personnel, training space, transportation, supplies, materials, printing or other items to be used in implementing the grant. A [Partnership Statement](#) will assist applicants in developing partnership 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. Informal partners often write letters of support for the project.

VII. Proposal Elements

The proposal should consist of the following:

1. **Title Page** – Provide all required information in the format indicated on the [Title Page Guidelines](#).
2. **Project Summary** – Complete a [Project Summary](#) using the required form. It should not exceed one page and should be single-spaced.
3. **Abstract** – 200 words. Consider framing the first sentence as, “We intend to do _____ for _____ with this project.”
4. **Program Description:** The following key elements must be addressed in the grant narrative. Your narrative should address all four components explained below. More information can be found in the application guidelines.

Library Users and Need:

The application must demonstrate an understanding of the target audience, including the demographics and barriers to library use. Who is the intended audience for this project? How was the need determined? Is the project related to the library’s strategic plan? How will the project assist the library in meeting its mission and goals? How will this project assist the State Library in meeting the goals and activities of the LSTA Five Year Plan?

Project Description:

What problem do you want to do to solve or how will you address the problem/need? This is a two to three page overview of your entire project; it should be clear, succinct and persuasive and it should be written for reviewers who may not be familiar with your library or library type. Include measurable objectives and activities that will indicate progress toward addressing the

stated need. Include how library staff will be trained or prepared to support the project, how the target audience will be made aware of the project, and what will happen after the funding period has ended.

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

All LSTA grants are encouraged to have partners. A partner is a library or non-library entity that will contribute specific deliverables to the project. If your project includes partners include the name of the organization and describe their contribution to the project, including roles and responsibilities.

Expected Outcomes:

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

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

Sustainability:

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

5. Budget -- Complete the Budget using the required [Budget form](#).

Funds for library materials and/or equipment must be clearly aligned with the purpose of the project and must be essential for the project/service to be implemented. The project and budget should be focused on the development of skills, not the purchase of equipment/materials. Funds requested must be for reasonable, necessary, and allowable costs to achieve the projects goals; the application must provide rationale to support how the proposed expenditures were determined and why each is needed to achieve the project goals. Equipment specs and vendor quotes must be submitted with the application. Specific information on budget categories and requirements can be found in the Application Guidelines and [Budget FAQ](#).

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

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

Non-allowable costs:

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

Appendices: Include appendices such as bid specs, letter of support, [Partnership Statement](#)

IX: General Information

The complete application package should be sent electronically in one file to lsta@library.ohio.gov.

Proposals must be received by 11:59 p.m., September 9, 2015.

Questions regarding the proposal process should be addressed to:

Missy Lodge

(614) 644-6914

(800) 686-1532

mlodge@library.ohio.gov