FY21 GRANT OPPORTUNITY:
CARES ACT MINI-GRANTS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

GRANT GUIDELINES

Mission of the New Jersey State Library
The CARES Act mini-grants for public libraries is an initiative of the New Jersey State Library (NJSL). The New Jersey State Library, an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University, provides services for New Jersey libraries, the state legislature and government employees, Thomas Edison State University staff and students, and registered borrowers.

Goals and objectives of the grant program
This initiative fulfills the intent of the federal CARES Act. It supports the role of public libraries in responding to the coronavirus pandemic by improving access to technology for library patrons.

Overview of the grant program
Through this competitive grant program, NJSL will fund projects, with equipment and materials, that foster digital inclusion for library users and the community. The minimum grant amount is $1,000, the maximum amount is $10,000. The total amount of available funding is up to $165,000. Eligible applicants are public libraries -- municipal, county, joint municipal or association. To support the greatest number of libraries, only one grant per public library will be awarded.

Access to the internet and tools of technology is imperative for all residents. This initiative supports public libraries in New Jersey as they work to close the digital divide and ensure equity of access to technology for all. Areas of focus for a project may be, but are not limited to, connectivity, device access and/or digital literacy.

Applicants may decide how to best meet the application goal of fostering digital inclusion by developing projects and purchasing equipment and materials that address the digital divide.

FY 21 Grant Opportunity: CARES Act mini-grants for public libraries. Funded by IMLS Award LS-246548-OLS-20
Grant deadlines and amount to be awarded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Applicants:</th>
<th>Municipal, county, joint municipal or association libraries. To support the greatest number of libraries, only one grant per public library will be awarded.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application due date:</td>
<td>4:00 P.M. on April 19, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of grant awards and amount:</td>
<td>Estimate approximately 16 grant awards in amounts between $1,000 and $10,000. NJSL reserves the right to grant fewer or more grants depending on the requested application amounts.</td>
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<td>Award notification date:</td>
<td>On or about May 3, 2021</td>
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<td>Project period:</td>
<td>Estimated May 3, 2021-August 31, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final report due date:</td>
<td>September 15, 2021</td>
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Eligible Expenses: (including but not limited to)

- Projects designed to encourage connectivity, device access, digital literacy and inclusion for the public library’s patrons
- Equipment designed to assist the library’s patrons with getting connected to and using the Internet
- Materials that will foster digital inclusion and digital literacy
- Printing, for example, publicity flyers, brochures, postcards, etc.

Examples of Ineligible Expenses: (including but not limited to)

- Expenses that are incurred prior to the grant contract start date
- Food, beverages or incentives for participants and staff
- Subscription plans that run beyond the end date for the grant
**Technical Assistance:**

Applicants with questions in advance of the due date may contact:

Kathleen Moeller-Peiffer  
Deputy State Librarian for Library Support Services, New Jersey State Library  
kmoellerpeiffer@njstatelib.org  
Phone 609-278-2640 ext. 157

or

Eileen Morales  
Grants Manager, New Jersey State Library  
emorales@njstatelib.org  
Phone: 609-278-2640 ext. 105

**Application Review:**

Applications are reviewed by a three-member evaluation panel. Panelists abstain from commenting or recommending if they have:

- any recent relationships, financial or otherwise, with the applicant organization or any persons connected with the proposal; or
- played a meaningful role in the development of the project.

**Appeal Procedure:**

Applicants whose projects are not awarded a grant may submit a written request for an informal, fair hearing before the State Librarian. A hearing will be held only if it is alleged that the State Library has violated a statutory or regulatory provision in the awarding of a grant. An appeal that challenges the final evaluation score of the application will not be heard.
Acknowledgement and Publicity:

As a requirement of receiving this grant, the grantee must:

- Acknowledge the funders on all promotional materials about the grant and use the proper accreditation statement and logos: *This project is supported with funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the New Jersey State Library.* The IMLS logo is available here: https://www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award/grantee-communications-kit/imls-logos. The NJSL logo is available here: https://www.njstatelib.org/about/publicity-acknowledgement-guidelines-grantees/.

- Submit a press release about the award (including the above acknowledgement statement) to a local or regional New Jersey newspaper. For some additional publicity ideas, please visit the “When to Use Acknowledgements” section of this page: https://www.njstatelib.org/about/publicity-acknowledgement-guidelines-grantees/.

- Sign a grant contract that outlines additional requirements on the use of funds.
**Reporting and Monitoring:**

Grantees must submit final fiscal and program reports to the State Library, with copies of vendor invoices. The final report form will be sent to grantees upon the issuing of the grant contract.

The report must describe the project that was implemented, and provide data on how the project fostered digital inclusion.

Final report forms in PDF format must be submitted via email to the New Jersey State Library at grants@njstatelib.org.

NJSL staff may make telephone calls to monitor the progress of a project.

**Application Instructions and Evaluation Criteria:**

It is responsibility of the applicant to submit a fully completed application in PDF format via email to the New Jersey State Library by 4:00 P.M. on April 19, 2021. Send to grants@njstatelib.org.

A completed application consists of

- FORM A: APPLICATION TITLE PAGE & CERTIFICATION (filled out and signed)
- FORM B: PUBLIC LIBRARY/BRANCH RESOLUTION TO APPLY (signed)
- FORM C: NARRATIVE (filled out)
- FORM D: BUDGET SUMMARY FORM (filled out)

Please pay particular attention to the signature lines on Forms A and B
GUIDANCE FOR APPLICATION FORM C: NARRATIVE

In no more than five (5) pages, clearly address each of the topics listed in Form C, the application Narrative section. The evaluation panel will score the applications based on the responses in the Narrative. Use the prompts below to help formulate your answers:

1. **Project title**: A succinct phrase or sentence that captures the essence of the project. The title will be used in grant award publicity.

2. **Project description**: Describe the proposed digital inclusion project and note the necessary supplies for the project. Clearly articulate how the program supports digital inclusion, digital literacy, connectivity or device access for the community and plans for installing any equipment. Applicants should be creative in their approach and consider programming related to digital inclusion changes/upgrades at their location. If there are items needed that are not covered by grant funds, applicants should demonstrate a commitment of funds beyond the grant award. Applicants should demonstrate their consideration of the project’s accessibility for their intended users.

3. **Library partnership and project personnel, including roles and responsibilities.** Describe how the project will fit into the team members’ current roles at their library. Projects which involve one or more partners should describe partners (including their roles and the added benefit to the project).

4. **Project activities with dates**: Outline the project activities, including the dates they will be accomplished during the grant period. Include such benchmarks as program planning meetings, purchase of supplies, program dates, etc.

5. **Budget narrative**: Itemize and justify the requested funds, based on the categories listed on Form D, the Budget Summary Form.