Mission of the New Jersey State Library

The New Jersey State Library connects people with information through its services to libraries, government and people with special needs. With a focus on innovation, future trends, exemplary models and technologies, NJSL provides support for New Jersey’s public libraries.

Purpose and Outcome of the Grant Opportunity

Limited literacy skills are a barrier for people trying to attain a myriad of life goals. From a young child not reading well by fourth grade, to an adult who can’t navigate an online job application successfully, the impacts of low literacy are profound. This is further compounded for people who are not fluent using the English language.

LSTA 22 funds are allocated to address literacy needs including but not limited to early literacy, family literacy, adult literacy, digital literacy and English language learning activities through a competitive grant program. Projects must be designed to provide training or other literacy-focused support or activities for adults, children and anyone with limited literacy skills.

Alignment with NJSL’s 2018-2022 LSTA Plan

Applicants should align proposals with Goal Three of the New Jersey State Library’s Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Five-Year (2018-2022) Plan:

- **GOAL 3: LIFELONG LEARNING** – All New Jersey residents have an opportunity to reach their full potential and to participate in and contribute to their communities.
Funding Available

NJSL estimates that $200,000 is available from funding from the IMLS Federal award titled LSTA Grants to States, Award LS-252474-OLS-22, CFDA Number 45.310. Up to $50,000 will be awarded for approximately 15-20 grants requesting $2,000 - $5,000. At least $150,000 will be awarded for approximately 10-15 grants requesting $5,001 - $20,000. NJSL reserves the right to grant fewer or more grants in amounts that differ from what the applicant requested. Grant funds are made available to awardees on a reimbursement basis and no matching funds are required.

Grant Period

The term of the grant period is estimated to be from September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023. There are no options for extensions beyond August 31, 2023.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are public libraries established pursuant to Chapter 33 or Chapter 54 of Title 40 of the New Jersey Revised Statutes or a library established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 15A:1-1 et seq., and receive public funds pursuant to N.J.S.A.40:54-35, or library consortia that provide for the systematic and effective coordination of the resources of eligible libraries, organized and operated for exempt purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

An entity may receive only one grant award under this opportunity.

Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 9, 2022</td>
<td>Release of LSTA 22 grant solicitation package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10, 2022, 8 A.M.</td>
<td>Application portal opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 23, 2022</td>
<td>A pre-recorded technical assistance webinar will be posted to the NJSL YouTube site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 2022</td>
<td>First application Q&amp;A document posted to the NJSL website; updated weekly through August 5, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 12, 2022, midnight.</td>
<td>Application portal closes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On or after September 1, 2022</td>
<td>LSTA 22 grant projects begin. Expenditures made before September 1, 2022 will NOT be reimbursed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31, 2023</td>
<td>Mid-year reports due by midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31, 2023</td>
<td>LSTA 22 grant projects completed; funds fully encumbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15, 2023</td>
<td>Final day to submit reimbursement requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 30, 2023</td>
<td>Final reports due by midnight on or before September 30, 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Partners

NJSL encourages partnerships in project design and implementation. Potential partners may include, but are not limited to, nonprofit organizations, schools, or other entities serving people with low literacy.

General Application Criteria

Only complete applications received by the stated due date will be reviewed. Complete applications include all required attachments and a 3 to 7 page narrative addressing the components in the Review Criteria (below) and with the following headers:

Audience Need

Project Plan, Activities, Established Timeline

Outcomes and Evaluation

Sustainability and Organizational Capacity

Budget Justification

Examples of Allowable Expenses (not an exhaustive list)

All expenditures/costs must be reasonable, allocable, and necessary for the grant.

- Consulting or contractual services;
- Accessories and supplies that are necessary to support the project;
- Hardware, software, and/or technology necessary to support the project;
- Salaries and benefits for temporary staff to be employed for the project OR temporary staff to be employed to cover duties of full-time personnel while the full-time person works on the project. Temporary staff means part-time or full-time personnel hired specifically to help carry out the project, or additional hours for existing part-time staff. The project description should clearly explain the need for added staff.
- Subscriptions and licenses within the grant period;
- Travel and/or training expenses related to the project for library or project staff;
- Evaluation to show the extent to which the project has met its goals;
- Indirect costs; and
- Other expenses that are reasonable, allocable, and necessary to support the project.

Indirect Costs

You may choose to request reimbursement for eligible indirect costs incurred for this federally funded project. An indirect cost is an organization’s costs that cannot be readily isolated or
identified with just one project or activity. These types of costs are often referred to as “overhead costs” and typical examples include office space, utilities, telephone and Internet costs, and administrative or financial operations for an entire organization. There are four options when using an indirect cost rate:

- Use a current indirect cost rate already negotiated with a federal agency. You will be asked to submit your approved federal indirect rate plan letter if you are awarded a grant;
- Use an indirect cost rate proposed to a federal agency but not yet approved;
- Use a rate not to exceed 10% of the Modified Total Direct Costs (de minimus rate) if your organization does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate and you are not subject to other requirements (i.e., for local governments); or
- Do not include any indirect costs.

When determining the amount that can be charged to indirect costs, the modified total direct costs (MTDC) must be used as the amount of funds that the indirect costs are calculated against. The MTDC is the sum of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to $25,000 of each contract or subaward, regardless of the period of performance of the contract/subaward. MTDC excludes equipment with a per-unit cost of $5,000 or more, capital expenditures, rental costs, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each contract or subaward in excess of $25,000. See 2 CFR 200.414 for more information on indirect costs.

Federal Budget Guidelines
Expenses included in the project budget must be allowable under federal and state laws and must be expended for purposes and items described in the grant application. In addition, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Equipment with a useful life of more than one year and per-unit cost of $5,000 or more must be approved by IMLS prior to purchase. A grant award is NOT considered prior approval of a purchase. NJSL will request and receive approval from IMLS after a grant agreement is executed and prior to the acquisition of the item(s).
- Equipment purchased with grant funds must be tracked for audit purposes. Grantees must use, manage, and dispose of equipment acquired under a Federal award in accordance with the requirements specified in 2 CFR §200.313 (c)-(e).
- Records must be maintained for three years after the submission of the last LSTA State Program Report (SPR) for NJSL’s current LSTA State Plan. The current LSTA State Plan expires September 2022, with a final SPR to be submitted in January 2023. Grant records must therefore be retained through January 31, 2026.

Examples of Unallowable Expenses (not an exhaustive list)

- Construction, pre-construction planning, or renovation of facilities (generally, any activity involving contract labor in the construction trades is not allowable);
- Promotional items and memorabilia including gifts, incentives, and souvenirs;
• Refreshments, entertainment, ceremonies, receptions, or social events;
• Salaries, wages, and/or benefits for existing staff;
• Subscription plans, services, or software licenses that extend beyond the project’s funding period.

For additional guidance on allowable and unallowable costs, see also the Uniform Guidance in the Code of Federal Regulations, 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Subpart E, and also the IMLS Tip Sheet for Allowable Costs:

2 CFR Part 200: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6214841a79953f26c5c230d72d6b70a1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl


**Application Questions/Technical Assistance**

Applicants with questions in advance of the due date may email them to grants@njstatelib.org with the subject title “LSTA 22 Grant Question.” An initial question and answer document will be posted on NJSL’s website by July 1, 2022 and will be updated once per week through August 5, 2022.

**Application Review**

For review purposes, all eligible applications will be reviewed by a three-member evaluation panel. Panelists abstain from commenting on or evaluating a project if they have a perceived or actual conflict of interest which may include but is not limited to:

• any recent relationships, financial or otherwise, with the applicant organization or any persons connected with the proposal;
• residing or working in the applicant’s community;
• having played a meaningful role in the development of the project; or,
• having previously worked for the applicant.

Applications will be scored on 100 point scale.

**Audience Need (30 points maximum):**

A complete response will:

• Demonstrate the needs of the audience by describing additional characteristics of the population as clearly as possible, using data when possible. For example: racial and ethnic communities, including LGBTQI communities; older adults; people with a specific
disability; people experiencing homelessness; people who are incarcerated or on parole; veterans; immigrants, etc.

- Outline barriers faced in serving the targeted patron groups.
- Explain how you will address these barriers in order to provide literacy services to the targeted patron groups.
- Describe how your project will contribute to more equitable library service for the community or state.
- Briefly explain the services and/or resources that this project will provide, touching on how the proposed project addresses identified needs of the targeted audience. Funded projects are required to provide services to patrons as opposed to only providing resources.
- Outline at least one intended literacy-related goal or outcome that also addresses the LSTA goal.

**Project Plan, Activities and Timeline (30 point maximum):**

A complete project plan will:

- Describe each major project activity, milestone and/or strategy in sufficient detail.
- Discuss how similar services/programs/activities have been effective in achieving outcomes related to the goal selected.
- Demonstrate how each major project activity will help to achieve your project’s intended outcomes.
- Describe the role of partner organization(s) in project activities, if applicable. Partnerships or collaborations with community-based organizations are an LSTA program priority and encouraged, but not required, for this grant opportunity.
- Discuss where project activities will take place and how the community will be engaged, including marketing and outreach to the primary audience. Describe how you will ensure your outreach strategies and communications method are inclusive and culturally appropriate.
- Provide anticipated outputs for each major project activity. If your proposed project involves instruction, for example, your outputs may include the length and number of training sessions, attendance, curriculum developed. **Please note: If your project is selected for funding, NJSL will work with you to determine if additional outputs need to be tracked for federal reporting purposes.**

Project components may include and are not limited to planning, purchasing, hiring and/or contracting, implementation of activities, provision of patron services, programs, evaluation, etc.

A complete timeline will:

- Identify major project components.
- Provide estimated dates of completion.
- Identify responsible parties.

**Outcomes and Evaluation (20 point maximum):**
A complete response will:

- Describe the intended change in participants, even if it extends beyond the project’s timeframe.
- Discuss how the project activities are designed to result in changes in participants.
- Describe how the intended change in participants will be measured during the grant period.
- Describe how information gathered during the grant period will be evaluated to consider the project’s effectiveness and areas for improvement.

**Sustainability and Organizational Capacity (10 point maximum):**

A complete response will describe how the proposed project:

- Increases the applicant’s capacity to serve the primary audience.
- Contributes to stronger relationships with community organizations, including project partner(s), if applicable.
- Will impact future library-based literacy services to other library users.
- Will contribute to more equitable services in the community or state.
- Will be sustained beyond the grant period, as appropriate.

**Form B Budget and Budget Justification (10 point maximum):**

A complete response will:

- Provide a detailed explanation and justification of the requested funds, based on the categories listed on FORM B, the Budget Summary Form. Detail all necessary, reasonable and allocable expenditures anticipated during the grant period of September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023 that align with the project goals. Quotes, estimates, mileage, and other methods of calculating budget items should be detailed in the budget justification. Budget estimates for employee and proposed contractor services should correspond with reasonable approximations for the activities to be performed. Cost share contributions from the applicant and project partners may be included, but are not required.

**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 accepted.

**Right to Cancel**

This grant opportunity does not obligate NJSL to award a contract and NJSL reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered in its best interest due to lack of funding, agency priorities or other considerations.
**Acknowledgement of IMLS and NJSL Support**

Grant recipients are required to credit IMLS in all related publications and activities in conjunction with use of the grant funds. Recipients should publicize grant-supported activities in available and appropriate media. The following acknowledgement statement must be used when meeting these requirements:

“This publication/activity/program is supported in full or in part with funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the New Jersey State Library, award number LS-252474-OLS-22.”

IMLS logos are available at [https://www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award/grantee-communications-kit/imls-logos](https://www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award/grantee-communications-kit/imls-logos). The NJSL logo is available at [https://www.njstatelib.org/about/publicity-acknowledgement-guidelines-grantees/](https://www.njstatelib.org/about/publicity-acknowledgement-guidelines-grantees/)

**Reporting and Monitoring**

Grant recipients must submit mid-year and final reports to NJSL.

- The mid-year report will ask:
  - How is your project going?
  - Are you running into any unanticipated problems/challenges?
  - Are you on track to meet the goals of your grant?

- In addition to a narrative description, grantees should be prepared to submit the following data, as applicable, in the final performance report form, to be provided, along with a final expenditure report form:
  - Project outputs
  - Project beneficiary demographics
  - Important findings and outcomes
  - Lessons learned that could impact other libraries

NJSL staff may call, email, or otherwise correspond with recipients to monitor the progress of a project.

**Grant Application Instructions**

All applications must be submitted through an online portal: [http://lsta22grants.njstatelib.org/](http://lsta22grants.njstatelib.org/). This link will be operational and instructions for using the portal will be posted on the NJSL website when the portal opens.

**The portal will open June 10, 2022 at 8 A.M. and close at midnight August 12, 2022.**

Applicants must be prepared with all responses and completed documents to upload within the portal in one session. The portal does not provide the opportunity to save an application and
come back to it at a later date. Applicants that submit an application will automatically receive a confirmation message to the email address associated with the portal user. If you submit an application and do not receive acknowledgement within 24 hours, send a message for assistance to grants@njstatelib.org. If you wish to withdraw your application from consideration after you submit it in the portal, please email grants@njstatelib.org.

A complete application consists of two types of documentation:

- Information provided in fillable fields in the portal
- Documents required from all applicants

Information to be provided in fillable fields in the portal:

- Public Library Administrative Entity/Library Consortium Name
- Non-profit status, if applicable
- Library/Consortium Director name, phone, and email
- Project Director name, title, phone and email
- Public Library/Cooperative address, city, and zip
- Tax ID # (TIN/EIN)
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): Beginning in April 2022, the Federal government transitioned from the use of the Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) as the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards government-wide. All entities wishing to receive Federal grants and subgrants must obtain a UEI in order to be awarded funds. This fact sheet contains information and instructions on obtaining a UEI for your organization if you do not already have one.
- Fiscal Year end date
- Applicant county
- Project Executive Summary (up to 120 words): What will your project do, for whom or what, and why?
- Total grant request amount

Application Checklist

Your complete application consists of a complete response to the portal questions and the following documents uploaded through the portal:

- FORM A: Certification
  - This form must be signed. When you sign the application, you certify that you have read these guidelines and that you will comply with the approved application and budget, the assurances herein and in the official grant agreement, and all other applicable federal regulations, state statutes, and local policies, if awarded a grant.
FORM B: Budget Summary Form
- Enter the amount of funds requested in each category. Enter a zero (0) if no funds will be spent in the category. Cost share may be included, but is not required.
  Note that:
  - Salaries & benefits may be requested for new temporary staff or additional hours for current part-time staff.
  - Subscriptions/licenses/warranties that are paid with grant funds cannot go beyond the grant period end date of August 31, 2023.
  - Equipment such as Chromebooks, hot spots, laptops, routers, or anything with a per-unit cost of $4,999 or less is considered Computer Supplies per IMLS and should be included in Section C. Other Materials & Supplies on Form B. Only equipment with a per unit cost of $5,000 or more should be listed in Section F. Equipment on Form B.
  - Funds requested to support publicity for the project may fall into more than one category, such as Other Materials & Supplies, or Contracts & Services, or Other Costs.
  - Indirect costs: Please choose one of the four options for the calculation of indirect costs. See the Examples of Allowable Expenses section of these guidelines for guidance on the inclusion of indirect costs.

FORM C: Certifications for LSTA Grantees
- This form must be signed. Includes specific certifications that are required of all IMLS subgrantees.

FORM D: Assurances Non-Construction Programs
- This form must be signed. The standard Federal form that is required of all federal subgrantees.

FORM E: CIPA Compliance
- This form must be filled out and signed. Addresses the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which concerns children’s access to harmful content over the Internet.

FORM F: Resolution to Apply
- This form must be signed.

NARRATIVE RESPONSE
- Please submit as Word document or PDF file

PROOF OF NONPROFIT STATUS: A library consortium applying as a nonprofit institution must submit a copy of the letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating its eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. (See 2. C.F.R. § 3187.7(b)).

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION: Write a budget justification to identify each expense and show the method of cost computation used to determine each dollar amount. Address both grant funds and cost share, if applicable. Save as a Word document or PDF file.

*All applicants must submit all forms for this grant opportunity.
Additional Federal Regulations and Assurances

Limited English Proficiency Guidelines
Federal regulations require that grant recipients take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to the information, programs, and services they provide to people with limited English proficiency. Please consider language assistance services, if appropriate, when planning and implementing your project.

Certifications Regarding Compliance with Federal Regulations for LSTA Grantees
All recipients of Federal awards made from IMLS Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds must make further certifications regarding lobbying, debarment and suspension, drug-free workplace, federal debt status and conflicts of interest, among others, as set forth in the Certifications Regarding Compliance with Federal Regulations of Library Services and Technology Act Grantees form. *A signed Form C – Certifications Regarding Compliance with Federal Regulations for Library Services and Technology Act Grantees is a required application document.*

Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
All recipients of Federal awards and subawards are subject to agree to abide by the terms set forth in Form D Assurances – Non-Construction Programs. *A signed Form D is a required application document.*

CIPA Internet Safety Certification
The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was enacted by Congress in 2000 to address concerns about children’s access to obscene or harmful content over the Internet. CIPA imposes requirements on libraries that receive discounts for Internet access or internal connections through the FCC’s E-rate program. IMLS further requires certification that libraries are CIPA compliant or that CIPA requirements do not apply because no funds made available from IMLS are being used to purchase computers to access the Internet or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet. *A signed Form E - the CIPA Internet Safety Certification, is a required application document.*

Single Audit Requirements
Audit requirements for recipients of federal aid are established according to 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F, which requires that a grantee have a Single Audit performed when Federal Funds expended equal or exceed $750,000 in a fiscal year. Auditors should be informed that payments received from LSTA subgrants are 100% federal funds, subject to the Single Audit Act.