

REV 250: Examining the Semiquincentennial through a Jersey Lens
Question and Answer Documentation

2/10/2025 Update

- 1. Is a Friends of the Library group (a registered 501(c)3 group) allowed to apply on behalf of a library?**

No, 501(c)3 groups are not allowed to apply on behalf of the library. 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.

- 2. To apply for this grant, does the public library need to have a federal SAM identification number and be in good standing [with SAM]?**

No, the library does not need to have a federal UEI number and be in good standing on SAM.gov to apply for this grant, as the program is not funded with Federal funds.

- 3. What is organizational capacity?**

Organizational capacity describes the applicant's ability to carry out a project. This may include staff members or training, hours open to the public, partnership agreements, local support, and a realistic timeline.

- 4. If my public library wants to partner with other public libraries on one of these grants, and if my library puts together the grant application, will the other libraries involved in the project also be able to submit their own grant for a different project?**

Yes, other libraries who are partners on your public library's project may submit their own application for a different project.

- 5. Can a consortium manage a project for a group of libraries?**

No, consortia are not eligible applicants for this grant opportunity. 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.

6. Can individual libraries within a system apply separately?

No, an eligible applicant is one that meets the statutory criteria for a public library, commonly referred to as an administrative entity. An administrative entity may select which of its location(s) will be involved in the grant project.

7. Does a County system apply on behalf of a branch?

Yes, applications are accepted from organizations that meet the statutory criteria for a public library, i.e. Administrative entities that have multiple branches. The applicant may select which location(s) will be involved in the grant project.

8. Can public school libraries apply for this grant?

No, school libraries are not eligible applicants. They may participate as partners of a public library.

9. Is the Foundant profile logon one per library or one per person?

The Foundant profile is for the entity applying, in this case a public library. Each applicant should designate one person to enter all the necessary information and documents for the REV 250 application.

10. Can grant funds be used to hire and pay people to do data entry if we're applying for a digitization grant?

No, salaries are not an allowable expense of this grant program.

11. What is the timeframe for the grant project?

The full period of performance is twelve months, estimated between 5/1/25 and 4/30/26. Expenses incurred before the start of the period of performance will not be eligible for reimbursement.

12. The final report is due before the July 4 celebration date - seems odd?

This grant opportunity is inspired by the semiquicentennial, but is not limited to that period.

13. If we are interested in digitization and increasing access to some of our archival materials, but want to do public programs to enhance/promote this, which category should we apply for? Whichever we are putting more money towards?

We suggest applying for an Option 1 grant and include public programming costs as part of the budget.

14. For a digitization project, do the items being digitized need to be from the Revolutionary period?

There is no requirement for items to be from any certain period of history. The requirement is that they be from New Jersey's history. This can include any time before or after the American Revolution.

15. Would it be allowable to take on an intern as an independent contractor?

Yes, grantees can pay an outside contractor to provide digitization or other grant-related services.

16. Do the programs have to be presented in the library or could a local school (partner) host the program?

Programs can be held anywhere in the community that is reasonable because of access or ease of the facility. A partner may provide a space that will enhance the project, or the library may want to present at other community events to increase outreach.

17. Will the slides be made available as well?

The slides are available on the Rev 250 webpage:

https://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/grant-opportunities/rev250/

18. I'm interested in applying for a public programming grant through the REV250 opportunity. The wording of the grant is to highlight an event of local importance. I was hoping to bring in different speakers, since our community responds well to this type of program. My question is, do the speakers all have to present about the same historical event/time period? I'd like to celebrate the Revolutionary period, but my library is also celebrating a milestone anniversary next year and we were hoping to find a speaker about that time period (1960s).

Public programming may encompass more than one event of historical importance to your community. Your application must provide details about the historical importance of each event for which funding is requested.

19. We would like to increase access to library items that have been in our "Vault" (a non accessible area of the library). All feature historical items either pertinent to the town or library. Once these items have been digitized or listed in a finding aid, we'd like to display stand-out items in something like a new display case. Additionally, we would want to curate a circulating kit or backpack that would feature topics/items/reproduced documents from the Vault. And then to

highlight this new access and display and circulating items, we'd want to host supporting programs.

Is this scope too large? I am somewhat thinking it fits mostly within the Special Collections category, but just wanted to verify funds could still go towards programming.

If your budget is only expected to include the display and circulating items mentioned, then an application in Option 3 is appropriate. However, if your budget will include expenditures beyond those noted, you may want to look at another option. Promotional or programming expenses are appropriate for every option.

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20. I will be applying for the County Library System. Do I need to specify branches, or could I say, 10 lectures various branches?

No, you do not need to specify which branches will host the events now. Please note that the specific locations for the lectures can be chosen at a later date.

21. Also a little difficult to nail down exact dates for the programs, which will take place in 2026, can approximate dates be used?

Yes, approximate dates can be used.

22. Do you need invoices from the presenters?

Yes, vendor invoices and supporting documentation will need to be submitted with the final grant report.

23. I am interested in applying for the Digitization grant in collaboration with our local historical society, a 501(c)(3) organization. Is this allowed? I understand they are not allowed to apply on our behalf as per the Q and A sheet.

Yes, partnerships with community groups such as historical societies are highly encouraged.

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24. The grant application requires library board approval. It does not indicate whether this is a yes/no question or if I need to get a letter from our board.

The applicant should submit a board resolution approving the application. If this is not available, please provide a date for the board meeting at which the resolution is expected to be voted on.

25. Can you provide us with any technical advice about what scanner to propose for purchase? We have no knowledge of scanners beyond tabletop/office types and don't know what type/brand/model might be appropriate for library use. Any direction you can provide would be appreciated.

NJSL is not able to provide any technical advice related to the equipment, as it will in part depend on what type of hardware and software environment your library operates under. You may want to reach out to organizations like the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) for recommendations.

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26. Can a program supported by the grant take place in May of 2026? Or must all programming be completed by April 30th?

27. It is too early for us to have exact programming dates. If we encumber the funds, can we book programs through Sept. 2026?

Grant-funded programs can take place after April 30, 2026 as long as the awardee requests and receives a no-cost extension of their grant award.

28. I noticed in the Application Review Criteria Section that despite being scored on a 100-point scale, the maximum number of points for the four criteria add up to 110 (20+40+20+30). Is one of the criteria maximums incorrect? Or does this mean that it is impossible to score the maximum for every criteria?

This was an error in the online guidelines document, which has been corrected and reposted.

https://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/grant-opportunities/rev250/#guidelines

The correct scoring for each part is

1. Historical issue and community need – 20 points, maximum
2. Project plan, activities and timeline – 40 points maximum
3. Outcomes and evaluation – 10 points, maximum
4. Budget and narrative budget justification – 30 points, maximum

29. I'm interested in applying for option 1: digitization but my estimated costs are less than \$10,000. Can I still apply?

You may submit an application for Option 2 or 3 that includes digitization along with other activities as described for each option.

30. Who do I speak to about technical issues with Foundant?

Any technical issues in the Foundant Platform can be directly addressed by LaKia Allen, lallen@njstatelib.org

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31. Can you please verify that that application due date is March 21st?

Yes, the correct due date for applications is March 21, 2025, at 11:59 pm.

32. Should we add the itemized products to the Budget Template? Or only include the total amounts on the template and list the items in the Budget Narrative? I wasn't sure if adding rows to the template was considered overwriting the formulas.

Please include the itemized list in the budget narrative. Adding rows overwrites the formulas.

33. I'm in the process of preparing a Rev250 Grant application and am curious where I should allocate advertising in the provided budget template? I presently have it in "Section 7 Services". Please

That is correct, advertising can be included in the Services section.

34. Where do you recommend I categorize programming on the budget form?

Please list your programming costs where they best fit into one of the categories provided. A. Consultant Fees, C. Supplies and Materials, or E. Equipment might all be a good fit for what is needed. Be sure to include everything needed.

35. I see that "Library Board Approval" is a required attachment. Does the Library Board need to approve a formal resolution authorizing the grant application? Or would a statement of support from the Library Director be sufficient?

Please see the response to Question 24, page 4.

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36. I am going to be applying for Public Programming [Option 2]. Where do you recommend I categorize programming on the budget form?

Please include each budget item in the Budget Template section that makes the most sense: Supplies, Materials, Consultants, Services, etc. Be sure and attach a Budget Narrative that details each expense.

37. I have been collaborating with a town committee that is planning a big celebration in October of 2026. I realize that this is beyond the grant period. My participation in the town celebration does not involve this grant funding. I believe that including the information makes for a stronger grant application but don't want the application to be disqualified because it involved programming beyond the term. I would appreciate your POV.

Please see the response to questions 26 and 27 in this document, on page five.

38. The library is interested in applying for the digitization grant to support a documentary project that highlights the experiences of everyday individuals during the American Revolution, with a focus on the Battle of Trenton. Our public archival department houses a wealth of historical materials—including firsthand accounts, paintings, scrapbooks, and photographs—that provide valuable insights into this period.

We seek clarification on whether this project qualifies under the digitization component of the grant, considering our plans to digitize these archival materials and creating a digital documentary itself contributes to historical preservation by converting stories into an accessible format. Or since we intend to host a public screening of the completed documentary, would this aspect be considered under programming instead?

Digitization seems like the better fit. Creating the documentary and the divulgation of it would be an expected part of the digitization project.

39. What is the difference on the grant application between Project Name and Project Title?

40. It is not clear what the difference is between the project title and project name.

41. Can you explain the different specifications for Project Name (100 characters) vs. Project Title (50 characters)?

The Project name and title can be the same or different. Neither is scored as part of the application.

42. Could you please let us know if we have already registered into the Fondant grants management system, and if so, what are our credentials to log in.

Please see question 30 on page 5/6.

43. I'm looking at the application for Rev250, and I am a little confused about what exactly goes in the section with the boxes under the Activity Description. The entire description of the program won't fit. Who is considered the responsible party?

The Activity Description should be a short, step-by-step description like ‘schedule programming’, ‘purchase materials’, ‘scan documents’, etc. The responsible party should state the position that will perform each task, such as “Head Librarian’, ‘Consultant’, Marketing Department’, etc. .

44. Is an additional timeline expected?

No additional timeline is expected, please list the timeline in this form.

45. Are contingencies an allowable expense for the Rev250 project budget? For example, if we are including a technology/equipment budget, can we add a small percentage onto the total budget as contingency in case the prices rise between the time we submit our application and the time the grants are awarded? With the volatility of the tariff situation, we want to ensure we are requesting enough funds to be able to cover any potential rise in costs of goods.

If applicants wish to account for potential equipment price increases, they should include that in the specific budget line items, not as a percentage of the total budget, and then explain it in the budget narrative.

46. The Budget Template in Section F. Services is not calculating correctly.

A corrected Budget Template has been added to the website. It is also acceptable to fix the formulas if applicants have already worked on their budgets.