Massachusetts Libraries

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

mass.gov/mblc

FY2027 Resource Sharing Grant Program Fact Sheet

Purpose

The Resource Sharing Program provides an opportunity for the state to help offset the costs of libraries that share their materials with other libraries, both within their automated network, and beyond.

Background

The Resource Sharing grant program was implemented statewide in 1998. Since that time, title counts have risen from 7 to 13.6 million, total holdings have increased by 44% (26 to 37.4 million), and ILL activity, has increased from less than 1 million to 9.8 million items per year.

Formula for FY27

FY27 will be the sixth year in which awards are calculated using the new formula. In FY17, MBLC and the networks began to look for a simpler and more predictable method for allocating available funds in this program. The long-established formula relied on title, holdings, and ILL counts. The changed formula is based on network operating expenditures (80%), membership size (10%) , and ILL counts (10%). These factors have been chosen as they:

1) most accurately reflected the historic distribution of funding from the program,
2) are a fair proxy for the costs of running a network in relation to how many members are being supported, and,
3) recognize that in a resource sharing program, interlibrary loan activity should be included in some manner. Libraries are encouraged to lend to other libraries in part because networks receive funding through this grant program.

Because the new approach shifts the relative percentage that each network receives from the total available funds, safeguards have been put in place. No network will see a decrease or increase of more than 3% in any given year. The shift will occur over a five-year period based on the snapshot of data taken in FY22.

eCard Program Maintenance

MBLC has worked with the automated networks[1] to implement a common eCard registration and renewal platform across the state. In FY23, LSTA funds were used to support the initial startup costs and language translations. Moving forward, MBLC will offset 75% of participating networks' total ongoing costs for eCard maintenance --$74K of $99K-- through the state resource sharing grant program.

Procedures

Each network will provide MBLC with total operating expenditures for the previous fiscal year, total member and outlet counts for the current year, and interlibrary loan activity (network transfers, Commonwealth Catalog, point-to-point lending and eContent lending). MBLC staff will apply these data and present to the networks at their September meeting for consideration before the Board votes awards.

Eligible Applicants

The nine automated resource sharing networks are eligible to apply: CLAMS, CW MARS, FLO[2], MBLN, Minuteman Library Network, MVLC, NOBLE, OCLN and SAILS.

Application Process

Forms/memoranda sent to Networks	July 6, 2026
Applications due	August 14, 2026
Meet with Networks to discuss preliminary figures	September, 2026
Board votes grant awards	October, 2026

Anticipated Funding

The total amount available for this grant is expected to be about $2.1 million, most being resource sharing formula distributions plus an additional $74K for eCard platform maintenance.

If the total amount of funds available should change, the formula will be applied to derive the recommended award amounts to each grant recipient.

---

[1] FLO, not having public library members, does not participate.

[2] The HELM (Higher Education Libraries of Massachusetts) library network is a consortium of 13 public higher ed libraries, primarily community college libraries. HELM is fully managed by FLO. HELM ILL data is included in FLO's calculations. This resource sharing grant award benefits both FLO and HELM members.

To Apply

Complete the reporting and request forms for this program and submit via email to: amy.clayton@mass.gov (Amy Clayton) by **4:00 PM on August 14, 2026**.

Questions?

Questions about this grant program should be directed to Kate Butler, Library Information Systems Specialist, at kate.butler@mass.gov, 617-725-1860 x253 or 800-952-7403.