

LSTA

Library Services Technology Act

Dig in! Growing Libraries with Gardens and Nature-based Learning Spaces

Grant Amount:
\$10,000

Time Range:
1 or 2 years*

Eligibility:
Any

Staff Contact:
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Summary:
Create a garden area for learning



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This grant will establish a garden at the library that will serve as a teaching space. Projects should include a strong programming component with an emphasis on hands-on activities. Possible topics might include gardening techniques, native flora and fauna, container gardening, canning and preserving, cooking with produce, growing herbs, attracting pollinators, and relevant environmental issues.

Some libraries may also want to include additional features that highlight nature such as life underground, exploring water, life cycles, rocks and dirt, and so on. Libraries looking to incorporate nature-based activities into their project might find inspiration at Nature Explore.

Outreach should play a key role in projects. Libraries should seek out partnerships with the Massachusetts Master Gardeners Association, agricultural groups, horticultural societies, gardening clubs, local non-profits that support community gardening, and other relevant organizations.

Projects must include a plan for maintaining the space during and after the project.

BACKGROUND

Gardens can present a variety of learning opportunities as well as benefits to a community. Libraries can use a garden to offer activities and programs that provide opportunities for all ages and abilities to explore science and nutrition, develop DIY skills, and improve social-emotional learning. Libraries can also use a garden to help promote and support healthy living in their community. There is increasing evidence of positive health outcomes from gardening.**

*Libraries on an academic calendar may choose to do a 2 year project at the discretion of the consultant.

**Gardening is beneficial for health: A meta-analysis (Soga 2016)

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