Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)
Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA)

Policies and Procedures

LSTA funds are made available for statewide programs and direct grants to libraries, Massachusetts Library System (MLS), automated resource sharing networks, and other cooperating groups. The Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS) defines libraries as a library or a parent organization, such as a school district, a municipality, a state agency, or an academic institution, that is responsible for the administration of a library. Eligible libraries include public libraries, elementary and secondary school libraries, college and university libraries, research libraries and archives that are not an integral part of an institution of higher education and that make publicly available library services and materials that are suitable for scholarly research and not otherwise available, and private or special libraries that have been deemed eligible to participate in this program by the state in which the library is located.

All activities must address goals and objectives in the Massachusetts LSTA Long Range Plan, 2018-2022 and abide by state and federal guidelines. Whenever possible, these activities will include cooperative and collaborative efforts that involve libraries, groups, and agencies, etc. of different types.

Eligibility

To be eligible for apply for a LSTA grant, a Massachusetts Library System Member Library, MLS, the Automated Resource Sharing Networks and Cooperating Groups must:

- Have a long-range plan on file at the MBLC that meets the MBLC planning requirements of the *Massachusetts Long-Range Plan, 2018-2022* and the *LSTA Policies and Procedures*.

- Submit an Action Plan update by December 1 for the fiscal year of the coming LSTA round. Action Plans can be submitted electronically to Amy Clayton at amy.clayton@state.ma.us.

- And public libraries must remain certified for the State Aid to Public Libraries Program throughout the application and award process.

Grant Requirements

If a grant is awarded, the library must:

- Agree to provide outcome measures (changes in skill, knowledge, attitude, behavior, condition, or life status for target group) for the project and what will be done to evaluate whether the project goals and outcomes have been met. Most grantees will need to do a pre and post survey for the project.
- Assure that the library, organization, institution follows certain federal laws. These assurances are part of the agreement with the library and the MBLC is the grant is awarded.
- Follow state and federal procurement guidelines.

General Policies

In reviewing applications for Direct Grant Programs, the following policies will apply, except where superseded by annual Fact Sheets for individual programs:

- LSTA funding is intended to provide seed money for the establishment of new services or supplemental funds for enhancement of existing services. Funds may not be used to operate programs or services on a continuing basis, to replace local operating money, or to fund projects from the same applicant for sequential or similar services.

- It is not the purpose of LSTA funding for personnel to replace local staff funds, to pay staff already working full-time, to pay staff working on non-project activities, nor to be continued beyond a very specific time period. Any fringe benefits required locally may only be paid in proportion to actual time spent on LSTA activities.

- Multi-year projects may be considered for specific programs where the scope and complexity of the project requires activities to be conducted over a long period of time. Multi-year projects are not funded if the intent is to conduct the same activities continuously beyond one year.

- Applicants, who have previously received a grant, must have completed and submitted all progress reports, evaluations, audits and other required documentation to the MBLC by the required dates.

- All grant recipients must agree to comply with all IMLS regulations and certifications.

- No more than one project is funded per applicant in any grant round, unless specifically allowed by the Fact Sheet. Exceptions may be made for MLS, networks, or large libraries that can demonstrate the capacity to properly manage a second project, as funds permit. Libraries completing the second year of a two year project should not apply for a new project if the same staff will be involved.

- Libraries may not apply for the same program more than once, unless specifically allowed in the program Fact Sheet.

- Libraries joining an automated resource sharing network should be aware that equipment (such as workstations, printers, and scanners), and some other one-time costs (such as initial fees, training fees, retrospective conversion, and other similar costs), and ongoing membership fees are considered a local responsibility and will not be funded through LSTA unless a specific program permitting such costs is approved by the Board of Library Commissioners.

- LSTA funds will not be used to fund standalone automated systems. Federal funds will continue to be used to support cooperative automation efforts through automated resource sharing networks.

- Applicants must show cost-share contributions of at least 30% as part of their LSTA project. There must be reasonable assurance that the project can be continued locally if successful.

- All grantees are allowed to cover indirect costs with LSTA funds. The federal Office of Management and Budget provides a 10% indirect rate for institutions that do not have federally negotiated rate.

- All projects must have a significant programming component that will link the materials and activities planned as part of the project with the population it is intended to serve. Requests for only materials/equipment are not considered.

- Costs for purchase of consultant services are allowed only if the specific expertise and/or resource required are not readily available at MLS or the MBLC.

- Major equipment (such as motor vehicles, kiosks, etc., having an acquisition cost of over $10,000) is not an allowable cost, but may be considered only as part of a program of services to a population facing special challenges using libraries. Such equipment will be funded for a maximum of 50% of the cost of acquisition.

Rundown of what you cannot do with LSTA funds

- Buy food and beverages, or food service supplies like paper plates.

- Lobbying (not even for your local budget)

- Do public relations or advertising for libraries services in general, although you may, and indeed are encouraged, to do public relations and advertising for specific services you have provided with LSTA funds:

  - Not allowed: "Come to the library, it's a great place to learn."
  - Allowed: "Come to the library's information literacy program, and learn how to search the databases provided with LSTA funds." (A double winner—both the classes and the databases are paid for with LSTA funds!)

- Hire "entertainment" for a program that is not educational in nature or tied in with your program.

- Give away promotional items – key chains, refrigerator magnets, T-shirts, mugs.

- Give away books.

- Buy computer hardware unless you comply with CIPA. The Children's Internet Protection Act—see glossary or go to http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/erate/cipa/index.php

Direct Programs Background

A State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL), comprised of sixteen representatives of all types of libraries, and individuals who use them, acts as an advisory board to the program; participates in annual planning and budgeting activities; reviews and evaluates Direct Grant Programs, and other activities that implement this Long Range Plan; and makes recommendations for funding to the Board of Library Commissioners. The Board establishes the process for selecting SACL members and Board liaisons.

SACL develops and recommends to the Board of Library Commissioners a Program and Budget that is responsive to the Massachusetts LSTA Long Range Plan goals and objectives and the needs of the library community. The annual announcement of the Direct Grant Program includes the calendar of the LSTA Direct Grant Program, LSTA Policies & Procedures, and a letter of intent form. Applicants are required to file a Letter of Intent form notifying the MBLC of their desire to participate. Workshops and staff assistance are available for all grant programs to help applicants prepare applications that meet the criteria for the program. All grant applications are reviewed by SACL; its recommendations are forwarded to the Board of Library Commissioners for approval. All grants are monitored by assigned MBLC staff that provides support and guidance to ensure compliance with program criteria and all applicable federal and state requirements.