



Massachusetts Libraries

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

FACT SHEET

Jobs/Career Information at Your Library

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program will allow libraries to receive up to \$7,500 in grant funds to provide services and resources to carry out programming aimed at serving the needs of job and career seekers in their communities. As part of the grant program, libraries will be expected to:

- Define a specific project audience
- Create an advisory group that includes members of governmental, civic and community groups and institutions of higher education as appropriate, and members of the project audience
- Enhance or develop job/career multimedia collections, including online exam preparation resources (as funding permits).
- Provide staff training on job/career resources, including, but not limited to using the website of the [Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development](#) and statewide library resources, to successfully address patron inquiries.
- Create/update library web page(s) relevant to the grant theme that highlights job/career resources and programming, including, but not limited to the Massachusetts Libraries Jobs Portal <http://libraries.state.ma.us/pages/searching-for-job> and statewide licensed databases. Examples: [Bellingham Public Library](#) (listed under Online Resource), [Newton Free Library Career Center LibGuide](#), [J. V. Fletcher Library Resources for Job Seekers](#), [Middleborough Public Library Jobs](#)
- Provide training opportunities for the target audience to enable them to make informed choices regarding their job/career decisions. Examples: computer training, resume preparation, interviewing, networking, a career day, etc.
- Collaborate with appropriate municipal government departments, local community organizations, educational institutions and businesses and other departments within the institution. Collaboration with governmental and local civic and community partners must be demonstrated.
- K-12 institutions must collaborate with their public libraries, as well as appropriate faculty and staff. See MBLC's [Policy on Cooperation between Public Libraries and School Libraries](#) (<https://mblc.state.ma.us/mblc/board/policy/cooperation.php>)
- Academic libraries must collaborate with appropriate faculty and staff

ELIGIBILITY

Any public, school or academic library that meets standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs is eligible to apply. Public libraries that received previous Libraries for Job Seekers LSTA Grant are not eligible. Applicants must have identified a need to serve job and career seekers in their MBLC approved long-range and annual action plan.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form with the “Jobs/Career Information at Your Library” option checked off. For additional information about this program, please contact Marlene Heroux at the MBLC at 800-952-7403, ext. 250 or email marlene.heroux@state.ma.us

BACKGROUND

Libraries have always provided resources for career development and job information. As the methods of finding and applying for a job have significantly gravitated to the use of the Internet for job seekers, the library’s provision of free, high-speed Internet services and computers is seen as an increasingly valued service by its users. Additionally, many libraries offer Wi-Fi access as well, welcoming patrons to use their own computers to access the Internet from the library, both inside and out.

Library staffs that are already skilled at helping patrons learn how to use computers to search electronic collections are now being recruited to teach job seekers with no previous computer or Internet experience how to research, find jobs and government assistance, create and post resumes, and set up email and social networking accounts. They teach patrons how to use electronic resources offering everything from full-text articles to GED materials, and citizenship and professional exam preparation testing to filing for unemployment.

The public library, often in partnership with local community agencies and other governmental departments can meet the needs of job seekers to help them find, apply and interview for jobs, as well as connect them with education, health, housing, financial and legal resources at this challenging time. Many come with low technology and literacy skills, as well as being speakers of English as a second language. K-12 and academic libraries help students that make career choices that affect their lives. Those people new to libraries are eager to be introduced to their resources and find help.

As reported by the Pew Research Center, “Many believe libraries should be pathways to economic opportunity, especially when it comes to providing resources for business development, jobs search and enhancing workforce skills...52% of all Americans 16 and older say libraries should ‘definitely’ create programs for local businesses or entrepreneurs.” (Horrigan, John. “*Libraries at the Crossroads*: Pew Research Center, September 2015, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/>)

2013-2017 MASSACHUSETTS LONG RANGE PLAN GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal 1: Support learners of all ages with their individual educational and learning goals.

Objective 3: The MBLC supports programs that provide outreach to an identified group of residents who need assistance with a particular learning need.