Understanding the Competitive Process for LSTA Grants
FFY13/State FY14 Competitive LSTA Grant Cycle - NEW

The application phase for large competitive grants in the FFY13 LSTA grant cycle is now open. Funding for project activities will begin October 1, 2013.

Applications and information (MS Word):
- LSTA Application Form for Large Competitive Projects
- Document: Evaluating the Success of LSTA Subgrant Projects
- Document: Calculating the Local Match for an LSTA Grant
- Optional subgrant application addendum: Project Partner Statement
- LSTA Subgrant Project Selection FAQs

Read all documents before beginning the application.

The upper limit for any one competitive grant is $50,000 with the typical award around $25,000. Available funds are limited and the selection process will be competitive.

Deadline for submitting an application for a large competitive grant: Friday, May 17. All parts of the application (i.e., all 8 pages belonging to the main application form with Director’s signature, the optional Project Partner Statement, and letters from Project Partners) must be received at the State Library by 5:00 p.m. Grant awards will be announced in early June.

Other grant programs (Tuition Assistance, Conference Attendance, Planning Grants, 2014 Summer Reading Grants) will be announced as they become available.

FFY12/State FY13 Competitive LSTA Grant Cycle

LSTA Competitive Subgrants were awarded to public libraries for projects to benefit South Carolinians:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
OVERVIEW – LSTA SUBGRANTS

The State Library distributes Federal grant funds* to public libraries in the form of resources, services, and subgrants.

Annual subgrant programs:
✓ Competitive Projects – Average $25,000
✓ Tuition Reimbursement
✓ Conference Attendance
✓ Grants for library planning
✓ Summer Reading Program

*LSTA funds: Library Services and Technology Act.
How Applications are Scored

- Applications are reviewed on seven criteria.
- Each criterion is scored from 1 to 10 points.
- Maximum possible score = 70.
- A project that scores under 50 points, or that scores 0 on any one of the seven criteria, will not be funded.
I. A CLEARLY-DEFINED PROBLEM

The target group, and the need or problem to be solved for that group, are clearly defined.
Sample community need/problem

“Children are not reading at grade level by third grade, increasing the likelihood they will not graduate from high school.”

We know this because:

1. School test scores for K-3 are below average.
2. Dropout rates in this community are higher than the South Carolina average.
3. We interviewed teachers, who reported wide-spread lack of support for reading in the home.
Sample community need/problem

“People in the community are not taking advantage of the library’s online resources and downloadable materials.”

We know this because:

1. “Hits” to our website are low for the size of our community.
2. We conducted a survey – results show many people are unaware of our online offerings.
3. We conducted a focus group – the group concluded that our web portal leading to these resources is confusing and hard to use
2. THE LIBRARY CAN SOLVE THE PROBLEM

The application makes a convincing case for the library to address the need or problem.
Sample Rationale

- “The library’s children’s staff has been trained to demonstrate read-aloud techniques to parents.”
- “The library has a proven record of collaboration with the school district on successful projects.”
- “The library is the only county agency that has a staff assigned to website development.”
3. OUTCOMES WILL BE EVALUATED

A comprehensive plan to evaluate the outcomes of the project is included.
Sample Evaluation Methods

- “Two staff members are assigned to keep personal journals during the project, to record their observations of how participants react to our services.”

- “We have invited a panel of community members to try out and critique our new website.”

- “We will count circulation statistics before and after the program.”
4. The project budget is reasonable

Planned expenditures are shown to be necessary and allowable costs to achieve project goals.
# Sample Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET ITEM</th>
<th>LSTA GRANT FUNDS</th>
<th>LOCAL CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>PROJECT TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel (Library staff only; use “Other” section for contract personnel.)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary/wages</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Materials</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library books</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$2500</td>
<td>$2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other expenditures; Fees for services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fees, contract staffing</td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, transportation</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing, advertising</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment and Supplies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology equipment</td>
<td>$8000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating supplies</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUDGET TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>$11,250</td>
<td>$10,250</td>
<td>$21,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Budget Narrative

- “Salary is the local contribution used to meet the matching funds requirement.”
- “Friends of the Library are picking up the cost of new books – also goes to the match.”
- “Contract fee for reading consultant; cost of shuttle rental to bring families to the library; purchase of a banner to advertise SRP.”
- “Four AWE computers for the children’s room; software purchased through grant and also as part of our matching funds.”
5. ANNOUNCING THE PROJECT

The promotion for the project appears solid and well planned, and demonstrates knowledge of the target audience.
Sample Promotional Plan

- “*We will obtain school permission to announce the project through students’ take-home folders one month before the program.*”
- “*We will purchase a quarter-page ad in the newspaper.*”
- “*Our teens will draft a press release that will appeal to other teens, and they will work to have it posted in all high school newspapers in the district.*”
6. WHO’S IN CHARGE?

Responsibility for project activities is assigned to appropriate people and shown on the timetable.
7. KEEPING THINGS REAL

The timetable is reasonable and fits within the time available: October 2013 to August 2014.
# Sample Timetable & Staff Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
<th>STAFF NAME/POSITION RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oversee all project activities including expending budget and doing reports</td>
<td>10/1/13 – 8/15/14</td>
<td>John Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give a presentation to library staff about the upcoming project</td>
<td>Staff meeting, date TBD</td>
<td>John Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with school librarians to schedule visits</td>
<td>11/1/13 – 5/15/14</td>
<td>John Fawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with consultant trainer to schedule program dates, prepare for visit</td>
<td>1/1/14 – 5/15/14</td>
<td>John Deer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
<th>STAFF NAME/POSITION RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create design for banner</td>
<td>Deadline 1/30/14</td>
<td>New PR staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and place newspaper ad</td>
<td>2/15/14 and 3/15/14</td>
<td>John Deer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee students for high school paper ad</td>
<td></td>
<td>John Fawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
<th>STAFF NAME/POSITION RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oversee all evaluation and work on final report with project manager</td>
<td>10/1/13 – 8/15/14</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select focus group members, contact and schedule the meeting</td>
<td>Deadline 4/15/14</td>
<td>John Doe with assistance from children's staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORTS</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
<th>STAFF NAME/POSITION RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit Final Report</td>
<td>OCTOBER 31, 2014</td>
<td>John Doe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ADDITIONAL QUALITIES

The following five additional characteristics can add 30 extra points to your score.

Each affirmative assessment = 6 points.
Each negative assessment = 0 points.
Sustainability

Project activities, and the benefits of the project, are likely to continue after the grant funding ends.
Innovation

The project has innovative aspects – new to South Carolina or to the broader library community.
Replication

The project can serve as a model for other libraries to follow.
The project introduces **EFFICIENCIES** (could include technology solutions)
Collaboration

The project utilizes one or more community partnerships.
SUMMING UP

Focus on a real and immediate problem.

Show confidence in the way you plan to solve it.
STEP 1: DEFINE THE PROBLEM

Start with your end users: What do they need?

- Improved reading and writing skills
- Job seeking skills
- Computers to access information
STEP 2: PROPOSE A SOLUTION

Describe the best way the library can meet those needs:

- Offer classes
- Model reading behavior
- Install computers or provide handheld devices
STEP 3: ADD A BUDGET...

- Cost out the proposed solution
- Decide who will work on the project

...and that’s the basis of a grant proposal!
STEP 4: TELL THE WHOLE STORY

- Fill in the blanks, referring to the 7 criteria.
- Add some or all of the five additional qualities.
STEP 5: TIDY UP

- Make sure staff and partners are committed.
- Check for accuracy, and ask someone else to proofread.
- Submit by the deadline.

Good luck!
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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- **(803) 734-8653**
- **ksheppard@statelibrary.sc.gov**