

# ARKANSAS STATE LIBRARY

A DIVISION OF THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## LSTA Grants to States Five-Year Plan

*SUBMITTED TO IMLS JUNE 17, 2022*



# 2023-2027

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Arkansas State Library is to serve as the information resource center for state agencies, legislators, and legislative staffs, to provide guidance and support for the development of local public libraries and library services, and to provide the resources, services, and leadership necessary to meet the educational, informational, and cultural needs of the citizens of Arkansas.

## **VISION**

The Arkansas State Library, through its dedication to support, enhance, and expand free and open access to its unique resources and services, provides every Arkansan with the necessary tools to be fully engaged citizens. Through leadership and support by the Arkansas State Library, all libraries in Arkansas are equipped to develop and provide quality programs and services that support lifelong learning for Arkansans and are recognized as anchor institutions within their local communities.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The following sources were reviewed and analyzed to determine the needs of Arkansas libraries and citizens.

- Evaluation of the Arkansas State Library 2018-2022 Grants to States Five-Year Plan
- 2021-2026 Arkansas Department of Education Strategic Plan for Arkansas State Library
- Arkansas State Library 2018-2022 Grants to States Five-Year Plan

In addition to these data sources, ASL staff members working closely with libraries around the state contributed their knowledge, both anecdotal and empirical, of Arkansas libraries' needs in the projects included in this five-year plan.

The Needs, Goals, and Projects in the 2018-2022 LSTA Grants to States Five-Year Plan remain relevant, as indicated in the Evaluation, and are incorporated into this Plan.

The items below are identified as needs in the Evaluation:

### **Need 1 – Communication**

Continue to increase and enhance communication to libraries and library audiences by advertising programs on various social media platforms and through schools and various community institutions.

### **Need 2 – Information Access**

Expand and maintain sustained access to the information sources ASL provides, including related services, such as reference assistance, interlibrary loan services, and circulation.

### **Need 3 – Continuing Education**

Continue to provide high quality professional development and continuing education opportunities in a variety of formats for library workers in the state.

#### **Need 4 – Targeted Services**

Reach vulnerable and diverse library audiences, a critical LSTA priority, by continuing existing and developing new programs aimed toward targeted audiences with unique and diverse information needs.

#### **Need 5 – Technology Support**

Minimize the Digital Divide by continuing programs which facilitate libraries' ability to provide access to the internet and technology, and to foster digital literacy skills for their audiences.

### **GOALS**

The following goals are arranged by priority of need from the Needs Assessment. Need 1 is an overall need reflected by the projects within each goal.

#### **Goal 1 - Enhance Access to Information for Lifelong Learning**

The Arkansas State Library supports lifelong learning for all Arkansans by expanding access to information resources of all types through digitization, preservation, maintenance of collections; and by maintaining, improving, and creating new models of access to those resources.

- Need 1 – Communication
- Need 2 – Information Access

#### **LSTA Priorities**

1) Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, and digital literacy skills.

2) Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b) (6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services.

4) Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

7) Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks.

### **Projects**

Potential projects that may be funded are listed in alphabetical order. All projects within this goal have overarching procedures/activities:

- Ensure the project is represented on the ASL website, including any links to documents or publications produced by the project; and
- Support training, professional development, and continuing education opportunities for project staff to better support LSTA programs.

These projects include, but are not limited to:

### ***1. Arkansas Center for the Book***

The Arkansas Center for the Book encourages reading and literacy among Arkansas residents of all ages and stimulates public interest in books, book history, and the literary heritage and culture of Arkansas. The Center's through a variety of activities and programs developed to perpetuate the value of the written word and its impact upon generations.

Reading programs introduce collaborative opportunities with other libraries and organizations that are interested in encouraging reading and sustaining lifelong learning. Reading programs can promote cultural diversity and inclusion among Arkansas citizens.

#### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Several activities allow the Arkansas Center for the Book to support Goal 1. learning. These include maintaining books for library-supported book clubs, hosting an author for If All Arkansas Read the Same Book, ASL presence at the National Book Festival, the creation of the Arkansas Gems poster featuring books about Arkansas or by Arkansas authors, plus other related activities that may arise during the 5-year plan timeframe.

#### **Benefits/Outcomes**

Arkansas Center for the Book activities encourage Arkansans to read for both enjoyment and learning. Literacy is the cornerstone of learning; through its promotion the Center supports readers' abilities to bolster their general knowledge and pursuit of lifelong learning.

The Center measures quantifiable outcomes whenever possible, including the number of presentations given, number of book club sets circulated, and attendance averages. Qualitative outcomes are recorded based on feedback from participating libraries and their clientele.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds support the reading programs administered by the Center, including book club sets and author events.

Funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, postage, travel, and staff training to support the programs and activities that facilitate this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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### ***2. Arkansas Digital Library Consortium (ADLC)***

The Arkansas Digital Library Consortium (ADLC) is an open consortium formed to facilitate the acquisition and use of digital content by pooling the buying power of Arkansas public libraries. Consortium membership is open to all public libraries in Arkansas.

**Procedures used to carry out activities**

Procedures include, but are not limited to, the promotion of literacy through partnerships with and between libraries and schools, as well as ASL outreach to libraries without access to digital content. Additionally, through the execution of duties as Chair of ADLC's Selection Committee, the project administrator ensures that the shared collection represents a variety of genres, formats, and intended audiences, facilitates the spending of pooled funds contributed by member libraries, and supports other ASL programs and projects by purchasing related titles for the ADLC collection.

**Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The project benefits Arkansas citizens by not only providing free access to digital content under a library lending model, but also by substantially increasing the amount and variety of digital media available by maximizing the collective buying power of participating libraries.

**Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, the purchase of content credit, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and staff training to support the program and its activities in facilitation of this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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**3. *Arkansas Statewide Virtual Union Catalog (Mockingbird)***

The Arkansas Statewide Virtual Union Catalog (Mockingbird) is a new ASL initiative that allows participating Arkansas libraries to link their catalogs on a single online platform. The resulting federated catalog is an efficient method for Arkansas residents to discover resources from public libraries across the state. Its value to Arkansans will increase over time as more libraries join the platform and share their catalogs.

Additionally, Mockingbird functions as a resource sharing platform for interlibrary loan transactions. If participating libraries opt to use this feature; each institution can choose to allow patron-initiated or staff-mediated interlibrary loan requests. This feature facilitates resource sharing between libraries across the state.

**Procedures used to carry out activities**

Procedures for this project include contracting with a vendor for the platform, contacting libraries about the service, onboarding new libraries, managing the participating libraries, and troubleshooting any issues that may arise.

**Benefits/Outcomes**

The Arkansas Statewide Virtual Union Catalog provides an infrastructure to support resource discovery, resource sharing, and information access for the residents of Arkansas. Maintaining library resources and engaging in resource sharing is a tenet of the Arkansas Standards for State

Aid to Public Libraries; the Mockingbird platform helps libraries of all sizes and types meet this standard. The capacity of libraries to respond to the informational needs of their patrons is improved as resources are discovered, borrowed, and loaned.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

As a continuing statewide initiative, LSTA funds sustain the annual subscription cost for the platform, implementation fees as additional libraries join, and any training fees needed to support the project. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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## ***4. Collection Management***

The Collection Management area acquires, processes, catalogs, and delivers all materials included in the Arkansas State Library's tangible and digital collections. Additionally, the area maintains and conducts all administrative functions for related library software and underlying systems.

The tangible, non-document collections include General Non-Fiction, Reference, Library Science, Patent & Trademark and the Arkansas Collection. An online collection of digital resources is maintained on the agency's website; materials are selected that support the research needs of state government employees.

All collections, including subscription digital resources, are freely accessible by the public onsite at the Arkansas State Library. Many items are eligible for direct circulation to the public, but state government employees may also request research materials directly through the interlibrary loan department and register for remote online access to the digital collections.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

The Acquisitions unit purchases all resources for the non-government documents collections, adheres to our collection development policy and conducts regular weeding of non-depository materials to ensure the integrity of each collection. The unit receives and processes physical materials for inclusion in the collections, and reviews digital subscriptions prior to renewal. Staff ensures patrons' remote access to digital resources is sustained, and diagnoses and resolves any access problems with content vendor support or relevant internal units.

Online access to subscription databases, periodicals and other digital resources is provided through the library's website using title, audience and subject access points. Remote access to digital resources is supported by an authentication server; remote and onsite access to all linked resources is verified on a routine basis.

Excepting digital subscriptions, all materials acquired are fully cataloged to the item level. Original and copy cataloging are both conducted as appropriate to the item. Bibliographic

records for federal documents are imported directly from a subscription service. Bibliographic records are available from the library's online catalog and OCLC WorldCat.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

Many of the Arkansas State Library's collections are legislatively mandated, and materials are selected to further the intent of the enabling statutes and overall mission of the library: to facilitate the development of library staff and support the research needs of state government employees. Materials are selected and delivered with an eye to maximize the convenience of information access for both library and state government staff, but all collections are made freely available to the public.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

Federal funds pay the subscription fees for the integrated library system (ILS), cataloging service, and authentication service. Funds are used to purchase supplies for the physical processing of tangible materials and general office supplies required to support the activities of the Cataloging and Acquisitions units. Funds are also used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, travel, and training to support meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

The long-term project is ongoing with multiple work units across the Collection Management area dedicated to ensuring that all acquisitions, cataloging and collection maintenance activities are continuous and consistent throughout each year.

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## ***5. Digital Services – Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)***

The Arkansas State Library serves as the regional federal depository library for the state of Arkansas. As a regional depository, the Arkansas State Library receives copies of all federal government publications distributed by the Government Publishing Office (GPO). Regional depositories must retain at least one tangible copy of these publications permanently. All tangible materials are maintained in a separate Federal Documents collection, with free public access policies that adhere to the FDLP's current legal program guidelines.

In addition, Digital Services staff provide consultation to and facilitate communication between GPO and the selective depositories across the state.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Federal documents in tangible formats are received in shipments from GPO and processed for inclusion in the Federal Documents collection. Bibliographic records are acquired from a commercial software subscription for both tangible documents received and new digital documents cataloged by GPO. The bibliographic records are imported into the online catalog; digital titles include a persistent URL to a GPO-hosted version of the digital object.



**Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The intent of the FDLDP is to ensure the American public has access to the information published by the federal government. As a regional depository, the Arkansas State Library provides free public access to its Federal Documents collection and circulates those materials within Arkansas via interlibrary loan.

**Expenditure of Funds**

Federal funds pay the subscription fees for the bibliographic subscription, maintenance contracts for microfiche equipment, supplies for the physical processing of tangible documents, and any general office supplies required to support the activities of Digital Services staff. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

The long-term project is ongoing with a dedicated Library Coordinator to ensure all related activities are continuous and consistent throughout each year.

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**6. *Digital Services – State Documents Depository Program***

The Arkansas State Library is legislatively mandated to serve as the official state documents depository for the state. The State Documents Depository maintains a continuously growing body of state documents housed at the Arkansas State Library in a central, permanent, and publicly accessible collection.

The State and Local Government Publications Clearinghouse program provides enhanced access to state government information on a local level by distributing copies of Arkansas documents to a statewide network of designated state depository libraries. Both programs are legislatively mandated by the state of Arkansas on behalf of its citizens.

The collection and retention of Arkansas state government-issued documents into a central, permanent collection is a vital service to build and maintain a current and historical record of state government. The collection is made publicly accessible to both the public and state government employees and increases the transparency of state government.

**Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff communicate routinely with state agency liaisons concerning the receipt of documents and program compliance. Documents in all formats are received from state government agencies and processed by Digital Services staff. Tangible copies are distributed via the Clearinghouse to state depository libraries. All documents received, regardless of format, are cataloged to the item level; digital documents are uploaded into an online repository maintained by the Arkansas State Library Digital Services staff. Digitization and preservation activities are conducted and prioritized according to ongoing collection assessments.

**Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The collection is unique and provides a current and historical record of state government. The collection centralizes public access to state government information and supports the research

needs of both the general citizenry and state government employees. The emphasis on free public access, as well as the centralized nature of both the tangible and digital collections, increases the transparency of state government. Item-level cataloging increases visibility and facilitates searching the collection. Ongoing digitization efforts and the online repository facilitate remote access and allow physical preservation of historical materials.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

Federal funds pay the subscription fees for the digital repositories, maintenance contracts for digitization equipment, supplies for both the physical processing and archival preservation of tangible documents, postage for document distribution, and the general office supplies required to support the activities of Digital Services staff. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

The long-term project is ongoing with a dedicated staff unit to ensure all related activities are continuous and consistent throughout each year.

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## **7. *Information Services***

The project provides traditional library services, including reference, circulation and interlibrary loan, to government agencies, businesses, libraries, and citizens.

The Arkansas State Library is designated by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) as the Patent and Trademark Resource Center for the state of Arkansas.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

ASL Reference staff use the library's collections to conduct reference and information services on behalf of all patrons, including state employees, libraries and the general public. Staff provide reference services to patrons using a variety of communication methods, including virtual meeting software, telephone, email, fax or face-to-face interactions.

Reference staff conduct patent and trademark services on behalf of Arkansas residents according to current USPTO guidelines.

Information Services staff share state employees' expressed resource needs with Collection Management staff so that new collection additions can be considered to better support the information needs of state government.

Circulation staff register new patrons, circulate materials per library policy, shelve tangible materials within the collections, and register eligible state employees for remote access to the library's digital collections.

Staff provide interlibrary loan services via online subscription platform and by telephone, email, fax, or in person for state employees and libraries. Additionally, staff mediate interlibrary loan requests on behalf of small or rural libraries that cannot afford subscriptions platforms or are otherwise not equipped to handle requests independently.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

Information Services activities facilitate public access to information and the Arkansas State Library's unique resources and collections. Interlibrary loan activities further enhance access to information via resource sharing.

Greater, professionally mediated access to information supports patrons' ability to improve their general knowledge and skills, which in turn increases individual competence and confidence. This encourages Arkansas citizens to participate in their family, work, and community roles more freely and effectively.

The expected outcome is to maintain and expand services for all audiences to support their needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, and digital literacy skills.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used to support interlibrary loan activities, including platform subscriptions and shipping costs. Funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated

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## ***8. Traveler Statewide Digital Resource Program***

The Traveler project provides Arkansas residents and libraries with free remote access to an online collection of quality digital resources.

All Arkansas residents may freely access Traveler resources remotely from the Arkansas State Library's website; no registration is required. Arkansas public, school, and academic libraries may opt to provide their patrons with access to Traveler resources via their library's website, or to access them from ASL's website.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Staff investigate, develop, and implement statewide resources contracts per state procurement guidelines. Project administrator investigates potential partnerships with libraries, state agencies, or other organizations for opportunities to expand the collection beyond its normal allocation.

The project administrator chairs an Advisory Committee to ensure the resources selected comprise a comprehensive collection that supports a variety of library types, audiences, and information needs. The administrator compiles and provides information, including usage statistics, that inform committee decisions.

The project administrator collaborates with relevant ASL staff to maintain the Traveler webpages, manages library applications for institutional access, requests support from the authentication vendor as needed, and maintains a roster of participating libraries.

Additionally, the administrator hosts publisher workshops and conducts train-the-trainer and information presentations in a variety of formats to promote the collection, facilitate the use of its resources, and generally support information literacy.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The project benefits Arkansas residents with free access to a comprehensive digital collection suitable for educational, research and workforce development activities. The collection is easily accessible, since no registration is required and authentication is accomplished through geolocation.

The availability of Traveler resources enhances the buying power of Arkansas libraries and allows individual institutions to expend local resource budgets elsewhere. This maximizes the libraries' ability to develop collections tailored to the individual needs of their respective local communities and audiences.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, digital resource subscriptions, authentication services, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

This project is ongoing. All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

## **Goal 2 - Provide Training, Professional Development, and Resources to the State's Library Workforce**

The Arkansas State Library provides training, professional development, and continuing education opportunities for the state's library workforce to improve staff skills, promote leadership, and enhance recruitment efforts. A strong workforce advances the delivery of library services across Arkansas. Resources, including supplies, books, and subgrants when funds are available, may be provided to improve the institutional capacity of Arkansas libraries.

- Need 1 - Communication
- Need 3 - Continuing Education

### **LSTA Priorities**

3) (a) Provide training and professional development, including continuing education, to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership, and advance the delivery of library and information services, and (b) enhance efforts to recruit future professionals to the field of library and information services.

4) Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

## **Projects**

Potential projects that may be funded are listed in alphabetical order. All projects within this goal have overarching procedures/activities:

- Ensure the project is represented on the ASL website, including any links to documents or publications produced by the project; and
- Support training, professional development, and continuing education opportunities for project staff to better support LSTA programs.

These projects include, but are not limited to:

### ***1. Library Consulting Services***

Library consulting services benefit the library community by increasing knowledge, confidence, and expertise in the areas of policy development and library management. Consulting services are provided on behalf of public library staff, administrators, directors, friends of library groups, and boards of trustees.

Consulting services are designed to increase professional competency in both traditional library services and in new and emerging services, to foster best practices in the library community, and to develop community-focused library services for all Arkansas residents.

#### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Consultations are provided upon request and conducted via phone, videoconference, email, or in person. Project staff conduct routine site visits to ensure that information provided by the Arkansas State library is relevant, practical, and well-tailored to individual libraries.

Training for boards of trustees and new library directors is provided upon request and conducted onsite or virtually.

Project staff contract for the production and distribution of a new edition of Arkansas Library Laws is after every biennial legislative session.

Project staff research and develop specialized toolkits and training materials in response to external forces such as changes in education policy, cultural and technological shifts, or public health crises.

Project staff provide individual and group training for the annual Public Library Survey.

#### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The availability of consulting services supports the ability of library workers to increase their knowledge, confidence and expertise, and encourages those in leadership positions to become more effective directors and administrators. This enhances their ability to deliver outstanding library services and programs, which in turn leads to an improved library experience for all Arkansas residents.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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## ***2. Support the Arkansas Library Community with Continuing Education Opportunities***

Project staff provide statewide continuing education and professional networking opportunities for library directors and administrators, front line library staff, those in leadership or management roles, Trustees and Board members, and Friends of the Library members.

Project staff employ a blend of in-house developed and vendor-contracted sessions and platforms to provide the training and development opportunities.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Staff provide continuing education and professional development opportunities to Arkansas library staff via contracted vendors, including but not limited to: synchronous webinars of broad interest to the library community, asynchronous online courses available to registrants free of charge, and statewide customer service training for front-line staff.

Project staff plan and host the Arkansas Library Leadership Institute (ALL-In) every three years, as well as ongoing professional development and networking opportunities for current and past cohorts.

Using ALL-In as a model, project staff develop and implement an Arkansas Library Director and Administrator Orientation program and an Arkansas Library Paraprofessional Academy.

Project staff develop online learning modules on the following topics: long-range planning, public library trustee orientation, new library director orientation, disaster planning, public library friends training, and the basics of supervision.

Project staff conduct quarterly listening sessions to address the continuing education needs of the Arkansas library community and gauge the efficacy of programs developed in-house or contracted with commercial vendors. Project staff conduct participant surveys to gauge learning outcomes, overall usefulness of the session, and how participants expect to apply any knowledge gained in their library work.

Project staff recognize Arkansas State Library scholarship recipients upon successful completion of graduation requirements on an annual basis.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

Training, continuing education and professional development opportunities lead to a statewide library workforce that is knowledgeable, confident, and cognizant of the applicable laws and policies relevant to libraries. Well-developed staff and effective leaders enhance the quality of library services and programs delivered across the state, which directly benefits Arkansas residents.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

This project is ongoing. All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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## **3. *Youth Services***

This project provides professional development and networking opportunities to support youth services staff in Arkansas public libraries. The project targets library workers responsible for services and programs developed for audiences aged from birth through young adulthood.

For library services to meet the shifting needs of youth and local communities, library staff must receive regular and innovative training that equips them to provide effective services and programs for families and students.

Youth populations are often vulnerable and underserved. As opportunities arise, this project also seeks to create bridges between schools, local and state services agencies, public libraries and other relevant organizations to expand and strengthen the net of essential services available to youth.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff develop and provide regular training opportunities for annual workshops and webinars for youth services staff, and host routine virtual meetings for youth services programmers to discuss topical issues.

Project staff increase the type and number of remote communication tools available to better reach youth services staff, foster communication, and bolster networking opportunities across the state.

Project staff promote and facilitate the Arkansas Choice Book Award programs to schools and students, and seek to create new and reinforce existing partnerships between schools and public libraries. In addition, staff support early literacy efforts such as 1000 Books Before Kindergarten and Re-imagining School Readiness with the Museum of Discovery.

Project staff develop various “programs in a box;” complete kits made available for use by public libraries to cover contingency situations such as event cancellations or surprise group visits.

Project staff investigate opportunities for partnerships and attend local education co-ops and conferences held by the Arkansas Department of Education or other institutions involved with literacy, education, student readiness, and other appropriate causes.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The institutional and interpersonal connections created through training and networking encourage sustained investment in professional development for public library staff throughout Arkansas.

Staff who participate in regular training and continuing education opportunities are better prepared to recognize and serve the needs of their communities.

Vulnerable youth populations are, in turn, better served by library staff, and are well poised to succeed in formal education and to develop an appreciation for lifelong learning.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

Funds are used to distribute materials, promote events, pay subscription fees for virtual meeting tools, and travel expenses for trainings, conferences, and partnership efforts in support of this project. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

## **Goal 3 – Provide Programs to a Broad Audience with Diverse Information Needs**

The Arkansas State Library strives to enrich the lives of Arkansans through programs, services, and resources that are responsive to the needs of audiences with unique or diverse information needs.

- **Need 1 – Communication**
- **Need 4 – Targeted Audiences**

### **LSTA Priorities**

4) Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

5) Target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills.



6) Target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 9902(2)) applicable to a family of the size involved.

7) Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks.

## **Projects**

Potential projects that may be funded are listed in alphabetical order. All projects within this goal have overarching procedures/activities:

- Ensure the project is represented on the ASL website, including any links to documents or publications produced by the project; and
- Support training, professional development, and continuing education opportunities for project staff to better support LSTA programs.

These projects include, but are not limited to:

### ***1. Provide library services for blind and print disabled Arkansas residents***

Enabling Statute: 13-2-207 (4) Provide specialized services to the blind and individuals with print disabilities under a cooperative plan with the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled of the Library of Congress.

The Arkansas State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled provides audio and braille books to Arkansas residents of all ages who are unable to read standard print material comfortably due to visual or physical disability. Services are also provided to those with reading disabilities such as Dyslexia.

Eligible patrons receive books and magazines in braille or audio format through free mail delivery. Project staff also facilitate the ability of patrons to digitally download materials on demand from the National Library Service's Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service.

#### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff maintain information about eligibility standards and provide accessible, online registration forms on the Arkansas State Library's website. Project staff review new applications for eligibility and register new patrons.

Project staff provide reference and reader's advisory services to patrons and circulate tangible materials through the mail. Project staff contract with vendors to provide braille services and technical support for audio players to patrons.

Project staff conduct informational and train-the-trainer workshops on behalf of libraries to share their expertise on serving this targeted audience.

Project staff enhance existing and develop new programs to better serve youth populations within this targeted audience.

**Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

Individuals with visual, physical, or reading disabilities enjoy sustained access to library materials, equipment and services. A vulnerable audience with difficulties using standard library materials and services is accommodated and able to enjoy a full-service library and read for pleasure, information or education.

**Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel and training to support programs and activities that support this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

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***2. Statewide Sharing and Engagement***

This project seeks to fill a current gap in communications and coordination efforts across the Arkansas State Library by creating a new professional position dedicated to leading outreach activities and coordinating related events.

With a formal outreach project with dedicated staff, ASL no longer misses opportunities to promote and educate stakeholders on the LSTA funded services and resources available to them through the Arkansas State Library.

Digital resources promoting and increasing the visibility of ASL's collections, programs, services and available training opportunities are developed, which better serve public library and state agency audiences and increase the likelihood of their use.

**Procedures used to carry out this project**

Project staff develop a variety of digital and promotional resources that highlight ASL's collections, services and programs. Project staff conduct presentations and workshops providing information on these resources to ASL's stakeholders.

Project staff develop guidelines for and coordinate ASL's social media presence, and monitor all posts for compliance to standard.

Project staff provide assistance to internal ASL units hosting events, and coordinate staffing and scheduling at ASL booths during various events, meetings and conferences.

**Benefits or Outcomes**

The project increases engagement with agency stakeholders and libraries, and increases the likelihood that ASL's collections, resources and events are used and attended.

Interdepartmental collaboration is facilitated and ASL staff units are better able to promote their LSTA projects.

**Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities that support this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027.

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**3. *Summer Reading***

The development of reading skills is statistically proven to suffer regression during periods when students are not in school. The Arkansas State Library Summer Reading program sustains reading development skills in students during schools' summer breaks.

Public libraries develop and provide Summer Reading and learning experiences for pre-school children through high school students. Online services and programs are combined with face-to-face participation to expand the reach of this program all population groups of each branch library.

Support of statewide participation in Summer Reading is realized through providing public libraries with the materials and technology determined to be of most use to their patrons. A commercial online program platform is provided to each public library branch, and additional materials are chosen as needed from the Collaborative Summer Library Program and other vendors. Two workshops offering Summer Reading-focused keynotes and relevant breakout sessions are presented to train both public and school library staff, as well as volunteers, serving patrons aged birth through young adult.

**Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff maintain the contract with the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) and the online program platform. Staff purchase and distribute additional materials to public libraries as needed.

Project staff plan and deliver spring and fall workshops on Summer Reading. Post-workshop surveys are conducted to determine the efficacy of the training, materials, and services provided.

Statistics are gathered from participating libraries to monitor program success and trends in youth participation.

**Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

The statewide coordination and support of Summer Reading programs increase local participation in the program throughout the state.

Training increases the skill and confidence of public library staff responsible for planning and implementing successful Summer Reading programs.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

Federal funds are used for CSLP membership fees, subscription costs for the offered online platform and virtual meeting tools, and for additional materials or services for public libraries determined to be necessary to support Summer Reading programs. Funds are also used for workshops, speaker and venue fees, promotion of the event and event materials. LSTA funds will also be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027.

## **Goal 4 - Enhance the Technological Environment of Arkansas Libraries**

The Arkansas State Library enhances the technological environment of Arkansas libraries by providing IT consultation services and facilitating opportunities for the testing and implementation of new and emerging technologies.

- **Need 1 - Communication**
- **Need 5 - Technology Support**

### **LSTA Priorities**

2) Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b) (6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services.

4) Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

7) Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks.

### **Projects**

Potential projects that may be funded are listed in alphabetical order. All projects within this goal have overarching procedures/activities:

- Ensure the project is represented on the ASL website, including any links to documents or publications produced by the project; and
- Support training, professional development, and continuing education opportunities for project staff to better support LSTA programs.

These projects include, but are not limited to:

## ***1. E-Rate and Technology Support***

The E-Rate and Technology Support project provides assistance and training to the library workforce and those with the administrative authority to procure broadband or internet connections for the library.

Direct assistance is given on the federal Universal Service Schools and Libraries Program, otherwise known as E-Rate, as well as similar programs that fund internet access or technology for public libraries.

Technology training is offered to increase the libraries' knowledge of their network infrastructure to facilitate the use of technology by patrons and staff. Topics covered include various emerging and current technologies, especially where overlap exists with funding opportunities in E-Rate or similar programs. Additionally, training opportunities are provided that cover digital equity and inclusion topics with the goal of teaching library staff ways to support internet and technology use in their communities.

### **Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff provide training and filing assistance to libraries for E-Rate, the Emergency Connectivity Fund and similar existing or new programs that fund broadband or technology.

Project staff promote broadband programs to increase awareness and participation. Staff conduct training sessions focused on program rules, program filing and administration, procurement procedures, and policies, including the Children's Internet Protection Act and internet safety policies.

Technology support is provided via training on various topics for library staff.

Project staff monitor the number of libraries that participate in the E-Rate program and the reported broadband speeds, and include this information in the Annual Public Library Survey.

### **Benefits or Outcomes Expected**

Libraries continue to use the E-Rate program to provide robust broadband connectivity and modern internal connections equipment that more effectively serve the needs of library staff and patrons. Libraries are able to offer fast internet, including Wi-Fi, at an affordable rate.

Training helps library staff understand technologies that are eligible for funding under E-Rate or similar programs. The availability of free, direct assistance on the filing process facilitates libraries' ability to file complete and timely E-Rate applications, without incurring the expense of a contracted E-Rate consultant.

The combination of E-Rate adoption and technology training helps bridge the Digital Divide by directly benefitting targeted library populations with demonstrated needs, such as rural populations.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, services, printing, travel and training to support programs and activities to assist in fulfilling this project.

All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027.

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**2. *Information Technology Management and Support (IT)***

This project provides the IT infrastructure and related services critical to the delivery of the library resources and services that the Arkansas State Library provides to state employees, public libraries and citizens.

This project enables the work of internal staff and supports every LSTA funded project deployed by the Arkansas State Library. The project provides the tools, resources and delivery methods to reach audiences effectively, and allows staff to nimbly adapt to the ever-changing world of information technology.

**Procedures used to carry out activities**

Project staff perform network administration and management, purchase software and hardware, ensure that related systems are maintained and provide general IT support for internal staff.

Project staff provide internal consultations on the potential utility of new tools and systems, and oversee the implementation and administration of various telecommunications tools and systems employed by staff and in onsite meeting facilities.

**Benefit or Outcome**

Internal IT support is necessary for ASL staff to conduct their work. The availability of dedicated, in-house IT support expedites the ability of staff to receive support, have issues resolved in a timely fashion, and receive consultation and guidance on existing and emerging technology. This allows all staff more time to focus on their actual work, and facilitates their ability to deliver high quality services and resources.

This environment allows LSTA projects to flourish and be delivered with optimal efficiency and efficacy, which directly benefits all of ASL's various audiences.

**Expenditure of Funds**

LSTA funds are used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel and training to support programs and activities that support this goal. All spending complies with federal regulations and guidelines, along with IMLS guidance, to ensure the appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

All activities will take place 2023-2027, unless otherwise indicated.

**Crosswalk**

Goal	Focal Area	Project	Intent
<b><u>1</u></b>  <i>Enhance access to information for lifelong learning for all Arkansans</i>  <i>LSTA Priorities: 1,2,4,7</i>	Lifelong Learning	Arkansas Center for the Book	Improve users' general knowledge and skills
	Information Access	Arkansas Digital Library Consortium	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
		Arkansas Statewide Virtual Union Catalog	Improve users' ability to discover information resources
		Collection Management	Improve users' ability to discover information resources
		Digital Services	Improve users' ability to discover information resources
		Information Services	Improve users' ability to discover information resources
		Traveler Statewide Databases	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
<b><u>2</u></b>  <i>Provide training and professional development to the state's library workforce</i>  <i>LSTA Priorities: 3,4</i>	Institutional Capacity	Youth Services	Improve the library workforce
		Continuing Education	Improve the library workforce
		Library Consulting	Improve the library workforce
<b><u>3</u></b>  <i>Provide programs and services to targeted audiences</i>  <i>LSTA Priorities: 4,5,6,7</i>	Information Access	Library for the Blind	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
		Statewide Sharing and Engagement	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
	Lifelong Learning	Summer Reading Program	Improve users' general knowledge and skills
<b><u>4</u></b>  <i>Enhance the technological environment of Arkansas libraries</i>  <i>LSTA Priorities: 2,4,7</i>	Institutional Capacity	E-Rate & Technology Support	Improve library's physical and technological infrastructure
		IT Support and Management	Improve library's physical and technological infrastructure

## **Coordination Efforts**

Every effort is made to work with other state agencies and offices to coordinate resources, programs, and activities that strengthen and benefit the LSTA priorities as written into the ASL goals of the 5-year plan. ASL remains vigilant for potential collaborative endeavors and partnerships at the state and national level.

ASL coordinates efforts at the state level through collaboration and partnerships with the Arkansas Department of Education and its various divisions, Arkansas Educational Television Network, Department of Human Services, and Division of Services for the Blind.

Coordination efforts at the national level include participation in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) and working with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Library of Congress Center for the Book, National Library Service, various programs of the American Library Association, and the Government Publishing Office (GPO).

The following demonstrate current coordination efforts for ASL's LSTA projects:

- Robust broadband connectivity for all Arkansans is a priority for the state, and the E-Rate and Technology Support project collaborates with the Arkansas Department of Education and other state agencies and stakeholders to align efforts for statewide connectivity. Additionally, the project collaborates with organizations such as the American Library Association (ALA), the Schools, Health, and Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB) and similar organizations working with anchor institutions on telecommunications and broadband policy.

Through the work of these organizations, education and information on federal broadband programs is passed along to libraries in the state. Such collaboration also facilitates unified commentary on state or federal broadband programs, which furthers the goal of expanding broadband access.

- The Acquisitions unit in Collection Management collaborates with the internal Information Services and Library Development units of the library, as well as external state agencies, to gather input for collection acquisitions to better meet the expressed needs of its clientele.
- The Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education currently contributes state funds to two digital resources in the Traveler collection, and provides professional development opportunities and marketing for some of these resources to its employees and stakeholders. Coordination of efforts in resource acquisition has been provided for through at least 2025, and ASL staff will remain vigilant to opportunities to extend this coordination through at least 2027.
- Digital Services staff use a liaison system in which state agency directors designate one or more liaisons to serve as the primary contact between their state institution and the State Documents Depository. Digital Services staff provide orientation trainings to new liaisons and provide additional training or consultations upon request concerning both the submission of documents and use of the resulting collection. Digital Services staff track and



routinely contact state institutions that are not in compliance with the program's legal requirements. While the goal is always complete compliance, the State Documents Depository currently works with over 200 state government entities.

Similarly, consultations and training regarding the maintenance of state documents collections are routinely provided to the state depository libraries, many of which are state-supported educational institutions.

- Youth services staff actively pursue partnerships with state and national organizations concerned with lifelong literacy development, education, and the general health and well-being of youth and their families. The Arkansas State Library and Arkansas public libraries have successfully partnered with: the Museum of Discovery, local Public Broadcast Service affiliate Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN), Arkansas Department of Human Services, Delta Dental, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Arkansas Department of Education, Little Rock Zoo, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, and the Arkansas Arts Council.
- Cooperation with local schools is vital to Summer Reading promotion. To widely distribute information about the year's Summer Reading theme, the Youth Services Coordinator works with the Arkansas Department of Education, the educational co-ops, the Arkansas Literacy Association and other state agencies such as, but not limited to, state parks, state health offices, and other entities devoted to increasing literacy and student development in Arkansas.

## **Evaluation Plan**

Evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan is ongoing and based on the annual State Program Reports submitted to IMLS. Individual program evaluations employ different methodologies, depending on the type of program evaluated. Standard measures, such as surveys, data collection, record keeping, pre-and post- assessments, observation, and other tools are used to measure outcomes, outputs, quality, quantity, cost-effectiveness, and the impact of each project.

Documentation and results for all evaluation methods is retained for use in the final assessment of the program. Results of the final assessment inform appropriate levels of continuity or revision in the next five-year plan.

## **Stakeholder Involvement**

Stakeholders for the Arkansas State Library programs include the Arkansas General Assembly, the Arkansas State Library Board, Arkansas libraries, advisory committees, citizens of Arkansas, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Stakeholder involvement includes, but is not limited to, quarterly Arkansas State Library Board meetings and scheduled periodic advisory committee meetings.

Communication with the Arkansas General Assembly and the liaison in the Office of the Governor maintains involvement of those stakeholders.

Formal and informal communication with librarians of Arkansas, and customer surveys to the citizens of Arkansas, maintain their involvement in ASL programs and projects.

### **Communication and Public Availability**

Upon approval, the 2023-2027 Plan will be posted on the Arkansas State Library website with an email link for public comments. Printed versions are provided on request. The plan remains posted on the ASL website throughout the five-year period and is catalogued as a state document, with permanent access provided through ASL's online repository and through the catalog.

The Arkansas State Library Board meetings and the Arkansas Library Association Annual Conference are also used to disseminate the final State Plan. Communication with other key stakeholders and members of the library community is accomplished through formal and informal presentations, written reports, press releases, newsletter features, administrative memoranda and other remote communication tools such as email, blogs and professional email discussion groups. Librarians across the state are encouraged to provide comment/feedback.

### **Monitoring**

ASL staff continuously monitor LSTA projects. Projects and activities are planned, implemented, and supervised by project directors with coordination from the ASL Executive Team.

The projects listed in this plan are statewide and the project directors are housed at the state library, which allows easy and constant communication between the LSTA Coordinator and project directors. The LSTA Coordinator monitors programs through reports by staff, site visits, and communication with ASL project coordinators.