

FIVE-YEAR STATE PLAN GUIDELINES FOR STATE LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES 2028-2032

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Submit to stateprograms@imls.gov by June 30, 2027

What is IMLS?

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. Our mission is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. Our vision is a nation where individuals and communities have access to museums and libraries to learn from and be inspired by the trusted information, ideas, and stories they contain about our diverse natural and cultural heritage.

What is the Grants to States Program?

The Grants to States program is the largest source of federal funding support for library services in the U.S. Through this program, IMLS provides financial assistance to develop library services throughout the States, U.S. Territories, and the Freely Associated States. IMLS funds support projects that, among other purposes, promote literacy and education; enhance and expand the services and resources provided by all types of libraries; enhance the skills of the current and future library workforce and leadership; develop public-private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; and target library services to individuals with diverse geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, and individuals from other underserved communities. The program recognizes the importance of information technology by emphasizing programs that teach digital literacy skills; develop library services that provide all users with access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks; and establish or enhance electronic and other linkages among and between libraries and other entities.

Each State is responsible for leveraging non-Federal, State, and local funds to match the Federal funds it receives. 20 U.S.C. § 9133(b). In addition, each State must sustain a "Maintenance of Effort" level of State spending on libraries and library programs to ensure that Federal funds do not replace State funds in supporting State-based programs. 20 U.S.C. § 9133(c).

Who is Eligible?

The fifty-nine established State Library Administrative Agencies ("SLAAs") may apply for Grants to States funds.

What is an SLAA?

A State Library Administrative Agency (“SLAA”) is the official agency of a State charged by law with the extension and development of public library services throughout the State. 20 U.S.C. § 9122(4).

How to Apply?

To receive funds under the Grants to States program, each SLAA must submit to the Director of IMLS a state plan detailing certain goals, assurances, and procedures for a five-year period (“State Plan”). 20 U.S.C. § 9134(a).

What is a State Plan?

A State Plan is a document that identifies a State’s library needs, establishes goals and activities to address those needs supported with Federal funds under the Library Services and Technology Act (“LSTA”), and provides assurances that the officially designated SLAA has the fiscal and legal authority and capability to administer all aspects of any award under the Grants to States program. 20 U.S.C. § 9122(5). The State Plan must also provide assurances for establishing the State’s policies, priorities, criteria and procedures necessary to implement all programs under the LSTA. 20 U.S.C. § 9122(5).

What to include in the 2028-2032 State Plan

Include the following sections in the following order, using the following headings (in bold). The State Plan should be no longer than 25 pages, not including appendices. Please format using a Letter (8.5” x 11”) template, leaving a margin of at least 0.5” on all sides, using a font size of not less than 10 points.

Mission Statement

The State Plan should include a mission statement that specifies the type of services the SLAA provides, for what purposes, for whom, and how the SLAA provides the services.

Needs Assessment

The 2028-2032 State Plan must identify specific needs for library services to be addressed in the five-year period. This needs assessment should be based on:

- The SLAA’s most recent five-year evaluation (2023-2027)
- Complementary data, as appropriate
- Other advisory input, as appropriate

The SLAA should describe its data sources and the processes used to document the State’s needs, the audiences to whom the data sources apply, the methods used for data analysis, and the expected process for periodically updating the State’s knowledge of its library services needs.

Goals

The SLAA must establish goals as a cornerstone of the State Plan, and each goal should:

- Address at least one need identified in the needs assessment
 - Be prioritized with the criteria for prioritization explained. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(1).
 - Include objectives and indicators for each goal's success
 - Be assigned one or more IMLS Focal Area(s), for alignment with the Grants to States program's reporting system, the State Program Report (<http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>) – See Crosswalk section for a list of the six Focal Areas
 - Address needs congruent with the [purposes and priorities of the LSTA](#) as stated in 20 U.S.C. § 9141 through activities that:
 1. expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats (including new and emerging technology), in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and financial literacy and other types of literacy skills;
 2. establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improved 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;
 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, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services;
 4. develop public and private partnerships with other agencies, tribes, 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; and
 8. carry out other activities consistent with the purposes set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 9121, as described in the SLAA's plan.
- 20 U.S.C. § 9141(a)(1-8).

Projects (*Sub-Heading for Goals*)

Either the narrative or the Crosswalk appendix for each goal must describe:

OMB Control Number: 3137-0029, Expiration Date: 3/31/2027

You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

- Examples of supporting projects for each goal, including:
 - A project title or short description
 - Procedures used to carry out the projects (e.g., subawards, if applicable)
 - What benefit or outcome is expected
 - The assignment of a single IMLS Intent per project, for alignment with the Grants to States program's reporting system, the State Program Report (<http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>) – See Crosswalk section for a list of the fourteen Intents
 - A timeline for program activities over the five-year period

Coordination Efforts

The State Plan must describe how the SLAA will work with other State agencies and offices where appropriate to coordinate resources, programs, and activities and leverage, but not replace, the Federal and State investment in:

- (A) programs and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;
- (B) early childhood education, including coordination with–
 - (i) the State's activities carried out under 20 U.S.C. § 9837(b)(4) and (e)(1); and
 - (ii) the activities described in the State's strategic plan in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 9837b(a)(4)(B)(i);
- (C) workforce development, including coordination with–
 - (i) the activities carried out by the State workforce investment board under 29 U.S.C. § 2821(d);
 - (ii) the State's one-stop delivery system established under 29 U.S.C. § 2864(c); and
 - (iii) the activities carried out by the State in support of adult education and literacy under title II of such Act; and
- (D) other Federal programs and activities that relate to library services, including economic, business, and community development, health information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills.
20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6).

Evaluation Plan

The SLAA must describe the methodology that will be used to evaluate the success of funded activities in achieving the goals of the 2028-2032 State Plan. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(4). This will ultimately take the form of a five-year evaluation as directed by legislation. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(c). The evaluation should consider the outlined objectives and indicators for each goal and the benefit or outcome derived from projects. Projects that include components of public and library staff instruction, content creation or acquisition, and planning and evaluation will be evaluated using outcomes-based assessment questions built into the program's reporting system, the State Program Report (<http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>).

Involving Libraries and Library Users in the State Plan

SLAAs must describe the procedures that will be used to involve libraries and library users throughout the State in policy decisions regarding the implementation and evaluation of the 2028-2032 State Plan. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(5). SLAAs must integrate partner involvement and communication, which are essential elements of a State Plan. Each SLAA seeking assistance under the Grants to States program may establish a State advisory council that is broadly representative of the library entities in the State, including public, tribal, school, academic, special, and institutional libraries, and libraries serving people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers. 20 U.S.C. § 9151.

Public Availability

SLAAs must describe the channels that will be used to communicate to libraries, library users, and other public audiences the content of the State Plan and any results, products, processes, or benefits. Each SLAA receiving a grant must make the State Plan readily available to the public and share it with the library community. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(e)(2).

Monitoring

SLAAs must describe the procedures for monitoring project performance in relation to the State Plan, as well as subrecipients and contracts. This monitoring should comply with 2 C.F.R. 200.328-332 and reporting requirements related to the State Program Report (<http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>).

Certifications and Assurances *(Appendix or attachment rather than a required heading)*

The following are the required certifications and assurances:

- State Legal Officer's Certification of Authorized Certifying Official
- Five-Year Plan Assurances
- Assurances of Non-Construction Programs
- Internet Safety Certification (only required for SLAAs carrying out services as a public library)

Crosswalk *(separate Appendix, unless incorporated in narrative)*

For alignment with the Grants to States program's reporting system, the State Program Report (<http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>), SLAAs must include a crosswalk that maps each State Plan goal to one or more of the six IMLS Focal Area(s) and maps associated projects to **one** of the fourteen corresponding Intent(s):

- Lifelong Learning
 - Improve users' formal education
 - Improve users' general knowledge and skills
- Information Access
 - Improve users' ability to discover information resources
 - Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
- Institutional Capacity
 - Improve the library workforce

- Improve library's physical and technology infrastructure
 - Improve library operations
- Economic & Employment Development
 - Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support
 - Improve users' ability to use and apply business resources
- Human Services
 - Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal, family, or household finances
 - Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness
 - Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills
- Civic Engagement
 - Improve users' ability to participate in their community
 - Improve users' ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern

Approval Process

IMLS will approve a State Plan that meets the requirements of the LSTA as set out in these guidelines and provides satisfactory assurances and certifications that the provisions of the State Plan will be carried out. Once IMLS approves a State Plan, IMLS will send a letter to the applicant stating that the State Plan has been approved.

If IMLS determines that the State Plan does not meet the requirements of the LSTA, then, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 9134(e)(3), IMLS will:

- Notify the SLAA of such determination and the reasons for such determination;
- Offer the SLAA the opportunity to revise its State Plan;
- Offer technical assistance in order to assist the SLAA in meeting the requirements of § 9134(e)(3); and
- Provide the SLAA the opportunity for a hearing.

Other Statutory and Administrative Requirements

States are obligated to comply with the LSTA, which is set forth at 20 U.S.C. § 9121 et seq., and all accompanying program requirements including, among others:

Administrative Costs and Program Activities: Not more than 4 percent (4%) of the total amount of funds received through the Grants to States program for any fiscal year by a State may be used for administrative costs. 20 U.S.C. § 9132(a). The State library administrative agency must expend, either directly or through subawards or cooperative agreements, at least ninety-six percent (96%) of the funds for program activities. 20 U.S.C. § 9141(a).

Matching Funds: The Federal share of the cost of the activities described in the State Plan must be 66 percent. 20 U.S.C. § 9133(b)(1). The non-Federal share of payments must be provided from non-Federal, State, or local sources (34 percent). 20 U.S.C. § 9133(b)(2).

Maintenance of Effort: States are subject to a Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement described in 20 U.S.C. § 9133(c). Under this provision, IMLS is required to reduce the funding otherwise payable to a State if the State fails to show a continued effort to fund its libraries over time. This ensures that Federal assistance results in an increase in the level of library activity and that a State does not replace State dollars with Federal dollars.

For purposes of considering the Maintenance of Effort, the level of State expenditures must include all State dollars expended by the SLAA for library programs that are consistent with the purposes stated in 20 U.S.C. § 9121(1-12). All funds included in the Maintenance of Effort calculation under this subsection must be expended during the fiscal year for which the determination is made, and must not include capital expenditures, special one-time project costs, or similar windfalls. 20 U.S.C. § 9133(c)(2).

Annual Report: For each annual award with a two-year period of performance, the SLAA must submit reports on LSTA-funded activities showing progress towards meeting the goals of the State Plan. An interim financial report (Federal Financial Report) must be filed at the end of the first twelve months and the final performance and final financial reports must be filed at the conclusion of the award period of performance.

Required final reports are due 120 days after the end of each grant fiscal year, by the end of January. The SLAA must submit these reports online using the State Program Report (SPR) at <http://imls-spr.imls.gov/>.

Revisions: If, after the State Plan has been accepted, the SLAA would like to make a substantive revision, then the revision must be submitted to IMLS as an amendment to the Plan. Such revisions are due by April 1 of the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the amendment will be effective. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(a)(3).

Evaluation Report and Information Requirements: Each SLAA must submit an Evaluation Report to IMLS that independently evaluates LSTA-funded activities prior to the end of the five-year period. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(c). Each SLAA (and subrecipient) receiving federal funds through the Grants to States Program must submit to IMLS such information as IMLS may require in order to fulfill the requirements of the LSTA. 20 U.S.C. § 9134(d).

How to Submit Your State Plan

The State Plan must cover the five federal fiscal years beginning with 2028 and should be no longer than 25 pages, not including appendices. Please format using a Letter (8.5" x 11") template, leaving a margin of at least 0.5" on all sides, using a font size of not less than 10 points. The State Plan should be organized in the order of the requirements listed in these guidelines. The State Plan should be submitted as a PDF document, along with the below signed Certifications and Assurances, to stateprograms@imls.gov not later than June 30, 2027.

Certifications and Assurances

Program Assurances for 2028-2032 five-year cycle:

- State Legal Officer's Certification of Authorized Certifying Official
- Five-year Plan Assurances

- Assurances of Non-Construction Programs
- Internet Safety Certification (only required for SLAAs carrying out services as a public library)

Assurances and Certifications must be returned with the State Plan.