

VERMONT'S LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT GRANTS TO STATES FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2023-2027)

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INTRODUCTION

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) authorizes state program grants to certified state library administrative agencies (SLAAs). In order to be eligible for funding, SLAAs must submit a five-year plan for implementation that is consistent with the stated purposes of LSTA and with the priorities of the so-called “Grants to States” program. Each year, SLAAs throughout the nation carry out more than 1,500 projects that are supported by this program. Funds are distributed to the states and territories and are monitored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Following are purposes of LSTA and the priorities¹ of the Grants to States program.

Purposes of LSTA (20 U.S.C. § 9121)

1. Enhance coordination among Federal programs that relate to library, education, and information services;
2. Promote continuous improvement in library services in all types of libraries in order to better serve the people of the United States;
3. Facilitate access to resources in all types of libraries for the purpose of cultivating an educated and informed citizenry;
4. Encourage resource sharing among all types of libraries for the purpose of achieving economical and efficient delivery of library services to the public;
5. Promote literacy, education, and lifelong learning, including by building learning partnerships with school libraries in our Nation’s schools, including tribal schools, and developing resources, capabilities, and programs in support of State, tribal, and local efforts to offer a well-rounded educational experience to all students;
6. Enable libraries to develop services that meet the needs of communities throughout the Nation, including people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers;
7. Enable libraries to serve as anchor institutions to support community revitalization through enhancing and expanding the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, economic and business development, critical thinking skills, health information, digital literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills, and new and emerging technology;
8. Enhance the skills of the current library workforce and recruit future professionals, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services;
9. Ensure the preservation of knowledge and library collections in all formats and enable libraries to serve their communities during disasters;
10. Enhance the role of libraries within the information infrastructure of the United States in order to support research, education, and innovation;
11. Promote library services that provide users with access to information through national, State, local, regional, and international collaborations and networks; and
12. Encourage, support, and disseminate model programs of library and museum collaboration.

Grants to States (20 U.S.C. § 9141) Priorities

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;

¹ <https://www.ims.gov/grants/grants-state/purposes-and-priorities-lsta>

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 section 9902(2) of title 42) 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 State library administrative agency's plan.

The following document presents the Vermont Department of Libraries' FFY 2023-2027 LSTA Plan for fulfilling the requirements of the LSTA Grants to States program. It summarizes the needs of Vermont's libraries as well as the library and information needs of Green Mountain State residents. These needs have been identified through an examination of a variety of factors including demographic data, relevant societal indicators, and findings and insights from the recently completed evaluation of the Department of Libraries implementation of its 2018-2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan. The new 2023-2027 LSTA Five-Year Plan sets forth goals and identifies anticipated projects designed to address these needs.

In crafting its LSTA Plan, the Department of Libraries also looked at how its efforts might address state-level priorities, which overlap considerably with the goals of the LSTA Grants to States program. The state's three key strategic priorities as expressed by Governor Phil Scott in his January 2022 budget address are to:

- grow and strengthen the workforce,
- give kids more opportunities, and
- help communities recover and thrive long into the future.

The work of the Department of Libraries can positively contribute to statewide efforts to achieve each one of the Governor's priorities. For example, the Department can help strengthen and grow the workforce and support "workers who are learning new skills for a future career" by making available resources that support job-focused training and education through the Vermont Online Library.

In his January 2022 State of the State address, Governor Scott shared his goal that "kids in the smallest communities have as many opportunities as kids in the largest." An example of the Department of Libraries' contribution toward that goal is that the Department provides support for early childhood literacy programs at public libraries across the state. These programs administered by the Department of Libraries help to ensure that parents and caregivers have access to information and resources vital to their children's development as readers and learners regardless of the size of the community they live in or their household budget.

The Department of Libraries' work also supports the Governor's goal that Vermont's "communities recover and thrive." For example, through cultural programming grants to libraries and partner organizations, the Department of Libraries contributes to civic discourse in Vermont. The cultural programming supported by the Department of Libraries provides people of all ages not only with opportunities to learn, but with opportunities to participate in community conversations around topics of interest and concern.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

Vision

The Department of Libraries will support Vermont libraries' ability to become hubs of lifelong learning, offering free, universal, and convenient access that will improve quality of life and strengthen our communities. Our services will help grow the Vermont economy, reinforce and support various approaches to literacy, and make library services more accessible to vulnerable and underserved populations.

Mission

Guided by 22 V.S.A. §601-635, the mission of the Department of Libraries is to provide, administer, and maintain access to information in a variety of formats to the three branches of State government, libraries statewide, the general public, and Vermonters with special needs; to support, strengthen, and foster new means for statewide cooperation and resource sharing among all types of libraries and government agencies; to lead a service of advice and consultation to all libraries, in order to assist them in realizing their potential; and to increase public awareness of libraries and their services.

Inherent in this mission is the belief that libraries are essential to the general enlightenment of citizens in a democracy and that every Vermonter should have access to the educational, cultural, recreational, informational, and research benefits of libraries.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A variety of data sources were used to develop the needs assessment portion of this Plan. Sources of information include 2020 U.S. Census, 2021 America's Health Rankings, and the Vermont government website (vermont.gov).

General Demographic Characteristics

The State of Vermont has roughly 645,570 people and trails only Wyoming as the least populous state in the nation. Vermont's population growth (2.77%) lagged behind the national rate (7.35%) for the period between 2010 and 2020. Within New England, both New Hampshire and Maine have approximately twice as many people as the Green Mountain State, and Massachusetts' population is ten times larger. Rhode Island is slightly more than one-tenth the size of Vermont but is 15 times as densely populated; Connecticut is approximately half the size of the Green Mountain State but has more than ten times as many people per square mile.

The median age of Vermont residents (42.80 years) is considerably higher than the U.S. average (38.31 years) and educational attainment (both high school and college completion) in the state is also higher than the national average.

The median household income for 2020 (\$63,477) was slightly below the national mark. Although Vermont's poverty rate is lower than the national rate, nearly one in ten residents (9.40%) of the state are considered to be impoverished.

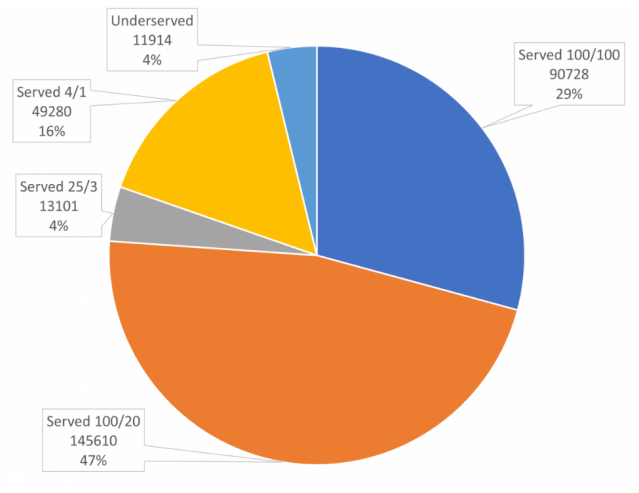
According to the U.S. Census Bureau's "Diversity Index," more than ninety-four percent (94.20%) of Green Mountain State residents are classified as "White Alone," a much higher percentage than the U.S. average (76.30%). Vermont is the third least racially diverse state in the nation and only Maine and West

Virginia rank lower in diversity. The percentage of the State’s population that is “Black or African American Alone” (1.40%) is almost ten times lower than the national norm (13.40%) and the percentage of individuals classified as “Asian Alone” (1.90%) is also much lower than the national percentage (5.90%).

The percentage of the Vermont population that identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino in the 2020 Census (2.00%) was considerably lower than the U.S. mark of 18.50%.

The percentage of the State’s population that was foreign-born (4.60%) was considerably below the U.S. figure of 13.50%. It is estimated that 5.60% of Vermonters over the age of five reside in households where a language other than English is spoken.

Although the percentage of Vermont households with a computer (91.30%) nearly mirrors the national mark of 91.90%, the percentage of households with a broadband internet subscription (83.00%) lags the national percentage of 85.20%. While this number of households lags the national percentage of 85.20% only slightly, a deeper look is necessary to understand Vermont’s broadband challenges more fully as not all broadband services Vermonters subscribe to qualify as high-speed or “advanced broadband service.” Vermonters who subscribe to lower-speed broadband services face severe limitations when using their home internet to meet their daily work, education, and telehealth needs.



This chart from the Vermont Department of Public Service breaks down access by download and upload speeds. It shows that in Vermont, 20% of households with access have download speeds of less than 25 Mbps or less and upload speeds of 3 Mbps or less. In Vermont 15.9% of households experience download speeds of 4 or less Mbps and upload speeds of 1 Mbps or less. Having access to broadband internet service in the home does not necessarily mean that one has access to internet service adequate to perform essential daily tasks, including telehealth visits, use of online education platforms and resources, and remote work.

In Vermont, geographic location greatly determines access to high speed broadband sufficient to perform daily tasks - with access to this resource being most prevalent only in the more densely populated northwest region of the state and being far more limited in the other regions of the state, which are generally more rural.

Finally, Vermont has a slightly higher percentage of veterans among its residents than the nation as a whole (5.41% for Vermont vs. 5.37% nationally). The Department of Libraries takes its commitment to supporting those who have served in the armed forces seriously and recognizes that access to information resources are a vital component of this support.

Basic Demographics	Vermont	United States
Population Estimate (July 1, 2021)	645,570	331,893,745
Percentage of Persons Under 5 Years of Age	4.70%	6.00%
Percentage of Persons Under 18 Years of Age	18.30%	22.30%

Basic Demographics	Vermont	United States
Percentage of Persons 65 Years of Age and Over	20.00%	16.50%
Median Age	42.8 Years	38.31 Years
White Alone Percentage	94.20%	76.30%
Black or African-American Alone Percentage	1.40%	13.40%
Asian Alone Percentage	1.90%	5.90%
Percentage Identifying as Hispanic or Latino	2.00%	18.50%
Percentage Foreign-Born Persons	4.60%	13.50%
Language Other than English Spoken at Home - Percentage of Persons % Over 5 Years of Age	5.60%	21.50%
Percentage of Persons 25+ High School Graduate or Higher (2016 - 2020)	93.50%	88.50%
Percentage of Persons 25+ Bachelor's Degree or Higher (2016 - 2020)	39.70%	32.90%
Percentage of Veterans	5.41%	5.37%
Median Household Income (in 2020 dollars)	\$63,477	\$64,994
Percentage of Persons in Poverty	9.40%	11.40%
Percentage of Households with a Computer (2016 - 2020)	91.30%	91.90%
Percentage of Households with a Broadband Internet Subscription (2016 - 2020)	83.00%	85.20%

Library Metrics

Public library statistics as reported in the 2019 Public Libraries Survey (PLS) reveal an overall picture of the status of Vermont's libraries that is mixed. On some measures such as visits per capita and programming, Vermont libraries are at the top or near the top among the states. However, on other critical metrics such as operating income and circulation of materials per capita, Vermont lags behind. Vermont is tied for last place with several other states that lack direct state aid to local public libraries. Coupled with only moderate local operating revenues, (28th rank at \$37.05), Vermont's public libraries strive to provide library services comparable to those provided in other states, but have less funding than their counterparts to do so.

Vermont's high ranking on print materials per capita (2nd) may be an indicator of a weakness rather than a strength. Coupled with a comparatively low ranking (31st) in collection expenditures per capita, the high number of print volumes, in at least some instances, likely reflects local collections that are prime candidates for "weeding." This conclusion is supported by Vermont's 25th place ranking on circulation per capita. To the credit of hard-working Vermont library staff, the state's circulation per capita measure (7.25 items per capita for the year 2019) was still above the national average of 6.86 items per capita. It should also be noted that a survey conducted as part of the planning process indicated an additional factor that stretches staffing capacity: library staff reported that they often need to spend a great deal of time in fundraising activities to supplement their tax-based support.

The 2019 PLS shows that 16.00% of Vermont's 185 public libraries serve populations of under 1,000 and that an additional 41.4% serve populations of between 1,000 and 2,499. This means that well over half

(57.4%) of Vermont’s public libraries have service populations of less than 2,500 people. Almost ninety-two percent (91.90%) of the libraries serve communities with fewer than 10,000 residents.

Vermont’s percentage of public library jurisdictions having at least one staff member with a master’s degree in library science from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited program is well below the national average (15.68% vs. 45.53%). This translates to just 29 of the state’s 185 public libraries having an individual on-staff with a master’s degree in library science. The widespread lack of formal training of many who work in Vermont’s libraries results in a high demand for professional consulting and staff development services from the Department of Libraries.

Vermonters have varying degrees of access to libraries depending on which community they live in. Because local public operational hours are based on such varied funding and staffing levels, it is even more important in Vermont that community members have access to shared online resources that are available to the community regardless of whether the library is open or not.

Public Libraries Survey (2019) Metrics	Vermont Rank	Vermont	United States
Total Library Operating Revenue	24	\$44.91	\$44.88
State Operating Revenue	46 (tied for last)	\$0.00	\$2.99
Local Operating Revenue	28	\$37.05	\$38.55
Collection Expenditures per Capita	31	\$4.25	\$4.51
Library Visits per Capita	2	5.89/capita	3.93/capita
Print Materials per Capita	2	4.74/capita	2.17/capita
Circulation per Capita	25	7.25/capita	6.86/capita
Total Programs Offered per 1,000 Population	1	52.91	18.65/ 1,000 pop.
Total Program Attendance per 1,000 Population	1	750.63/ 1,000 pop.	394.29/ 1,000 pop.
Total Paid Full-Time Equivalent Staff per 25,000 Population	9	16.33/ 25,000 pop.	11.37/ 25,000 pop.
Percentage of Paid Full-Time Equivalent Staff with ALA-Accredited Master’s Degree		20.10%	23.64%
Percentage of Public Library Jurisdictions with ALA-Accredited Master’s Personnel		15.43%	45.53%

Some Other Relevant Measures

Vermont’s basic “prose literacy” rate is 93.40%, the fourth highest among the states. With 37% of fourth graders and 40% of eighth graders at or above the proficiency level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Vermont ranks well above the national average (although most would agree that these numbers are not good enough). At 37% proficiency, Green Mountain State fourth graders outperform fourth graders nationally by 3%. Likewise, eighth graders in Vermont are 8% higher in proficiency than the national average.

Vermont residents can also take pride in having some of the highest ranking on a variety of health measures. According to the United Health Foundation’s *America’s Health Rankings*, the state rates first in exercising, first in the consumption of fruits and vegetables, fourth in overall public health funding and fifth in primary care providers per 100,000 population. Vermont ranks fifth in childhood immunizations and

sixth in flu vaccinations and colorectal cancer screening. In short, Vermont is an exemplar in terms of preventative care.

Nevertheless, **America’s Health Rankings** report also reveals some shortcomings. The state ranks 19th in dental health care providers per 100,000 population and 33rd in “frequent mental distress.” The Health Rankings also look at societal shortcomings of significance that contribute to overall health and well being. Several of these are indicated in the table below. These are factors that, in addition to affecting health outcomes, can also impact many other public services. Many of the measures in the table below reveal racial or socioeconomic disparities. Vermont ranks 18th in income inequality, 26th in high-school graduation racial disparity, 26th in residential segregation, and 35th in severe housing problems (affordable housing availability). Many of these factors have a direct, negative, and often disproportionate impact on quality of life issues for children, persons of color, foreign-born populations, and individuals with disabilities.

Selected Social Indicators	Vermont	United States
4th Grade - Percentage at or Above National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Proficient Level	37%	34%
8th Grade - Percentage at or Above National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Proficient Level	40%	32%
Basic Prose Literacy Rate (Based on data from the National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES])	93.40% (4th)	88.00%
Exercise (America’s Health Rankings)	1	
Fruit and Vegetable Consumption (America’s Health Rankings)	1	
Public Health Funding (America’s Health Rankings)	4	
Primary Care Providers per 100,000 Population (America’s Health Rankings)	5	
Dental Care Providers per 100,000 Population (America’s Health Rankings)	19	
Income Inequality (America’s Health Rankings)	18	
High School Graduation Racial Disparity (America’s Health Rankings)	26	
Residential Segregation (America’s Health Rankings)	26	
Severe Housing Problems - Housing Availability (America’s Health Rankings)	35	

Summary of Needs

- Support for resource sharing between libraries is essential in Vermont, where many libraries are small and have limited space to house physical collections that adequately meet the needs of the residents they serve.
- Training resources for new library staff are needed as many Vermont communities face challenges recruiting and retaining qualified library staff.
- The specialized services provided by the ABLE (Audio, Braille, Large-Print, and Electronic) Library continue to be essential to many Vermonters who are blind or otherwise print disabled.

- Support for librarians who serve youth and their families in public and school libraries is needed to ensure the early literacy success of Vermont's youth and to support children and teens as they embark on a path of lifelong learning.
- Continuing education and resources are needed to support library staff in reaching traditionally underserved populations (including children and families living below the poverty line) and meeting their needs for library service.
- Workforce development resources are needed to support Vermonters to build their careers within the state.
- Free access to high speed internet and technology is needed by many Vermonters, particularly those in remote areas who lack access to adequate broadband internet service in their homes.
- Consultancy support to library boards and trustees is needed to address significant variations in access to library materials and services that can be found between Vermont's municipalities.
- Databases, eBooks, and eAudiobooks are needed by public, school, and academic libraries both to meet the needs of the communities outside of open library hours and to ensure Vermonters have access to resources in their preferred formats.
- Technology consultancy services are needed by public and school librarians to keep current with the ever-evolving technological environment.
- Continuing education and professional advisory services are needed to support library staff, particularly those who have not had a formal library science education, in serving the emerging needs of their communities.

GOALS OVERVIEW

The Vermont Library Services and Technology Act Grants to States Five-Year Plan for 2023 - 2027 includes three goals. The goals are focused on desired outcomes for Vermonters and for the libraries that serve them. It is recognized that neither the Vermont Department of Libraries nor the Department's local partners (public, school, and academic libraries) have adequate resources to completely realize these goals. Achievement of the goals will necessarily be measured in terms of the degree of progress that is made toward these ultimate ends.

The stated goals are not simply goals for a state library administrative agency (SLAA). Instead, they attempt to capture a shared vision for transformative library services. The Vermont Department of Libraries will use its Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States funding to encourage, support, and enhance the efforts made every day by local libraries that each serve unique communities.

Following is an outline of the Goals and Projects that Vermont Department of Libraries anticipates will be carried out with LSTA support using Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 - FFY 2027 funds.

GOAL 1 - Strengthening Libraries

- Project 1.1 - Staff and Leadership Development and Training
- Project 1.2 - Professional Consulting Assistance
- Project 1.3 - Collecting, Analyzing, and Reporting Library Statistics
- Project 1.4 - Enhancing Connectivity

GOAL 2 - Enhancing Access to Information

- Project 2.1 - Statewide Resource Sharing - Discovery and Sharing Tools
- Project 2.2 - Statewide Resource Sharing - Physical Materials Delivery Systems
- Project 2.3 - Electronic Information Resources
- Project 2.4 - Digitization and Preservation
- Project 2.5 - Library Services to Individuals with Print Disabilities

Project 2.6 - Services to Underrepresented Populations

GOAL 3 - Fostering Learning and Building Community

Project 3.1 - Summer Reading Program Support

Project 3.2 - Cultural Programming Grants for Libraries

Project 3.3 - Book Awards

Project 3.4 - Early Childhood Literacy Support

Project 3.5 - Public Performance Licenses

Project 3.6 - Workforce Development Resources

It should also be noted that the three goals that are presented are linked together. They are essentially building blocks designed to ultimately further the twin objectives embodied in Goal 3 (Fostering Learning and Building Community). Goal 1 (Strengthening Libraries) recognizes that local public libraries are essential to the success of the plan. They represent the basic library service delivery infrastructure. Goal 2 (Enhancing Access to Information) is about providing the tools that libraries and the individuals who use them need to achieve success. By building a strong foundation with Goals 1 and 2, the Plan paves the way to the learning and engagement that are earmarks of thriving communities.

The three goals also align closely with four of the IMLS Measuring Success focal areas. Goal 1 (Strengthening Libraries) directly addresses the Institutional Capacity focal area. Goal 2 (Enhancing Access to Information) aligns with the Information Access focal area. Goal 3 concentrates on projects related to several of the intents that are included under the Lifelong Learning and Civic Engagement focal areas. Finally, it should be noted that elements of many projects positively impact all six of the Measuring Success focal areas. For example, some online resources that fall under Goal 2 (Enhancing Access to Information) are specifically included because they address economic and employment development concerns. Likewise, outreach efforts undertaken under Goal 2 (Enhancing Access to Information), programming and special resources provided under Goal 3 (Fostering Learning and Building Community) cross over into intents included under both the Human Resources and Economic & Employment Development focal areas.

GOALS

GOAL 1 - Strengthening Libraries

The Vermont Department of Libraries will support library staff members and libraries throughout the state by delivering relevant, high-quality, and community-focused services that incorporate up-to-date technologies and are based on best practices in the field of librarianship.

Identified Needs Addressed by Goal 1:

- Many, if not most, Vermont libraries of all types are financially challenged due to inadequate funding support.
- Most Vermont libraries are led by directors without formal library science education. This results in significantly higher staff-development and professional advisory needs in Vermont as compared with other states.
- Poor funding levels for libraries negatively impacts the ability of libraries to recruit and retain qualified library staff on an ongoing basis.
- Many Vermonters lack access to adequate broadband internet service.

LSTA Purposes Addressed by Goal 1:

- Promote continuous improvement in library services in all types of libraries in order to better serve the people of the United States.

- Enhance the skills of the current library workforce and recruit future professionals, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services.
- Enhance the role of libraries within the information infrastructure of the United States in order to support research, education, and innovation.

Grants to States Priorities Addressed by Goal 1:

- (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.
- 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.

IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area for Goal 1: Institutional Capacity

- IMLS Measuring Success Intents Addressed
 - Improve the library workforce
 - Improve library's physical and technological infrastructure
 - Improve library operations

Project 1.1 - Staff and Leadership Development and Training

Focal Area: Institutional Capacity

Intent: Improve the Library Workforce

Summary: This project provides professional development and leadership training to library directors, library staff, and library trustees. Content is provided through in-person sessions and through both synchronous and asynchronous online training opportunities such as webinars and presentations available from a wide variety of sources.

Audience: Library staff and library trustees

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Library directors, school librarians, public library staff, and trustees who are well-equipped to successfully fulfill their responsibilities and ensure continuity in library services. Other desired outcomes involve building a sense of community between and among library directors, library staff, and library trustees throughout the state and fostering the leadership skills necessary to position libraries as vital civic hubs.

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating in staff development and leadership training sessions. Number of individuals participating in staff development and leadership training opportunities broken down by type of contact (in-person workshop, live webinar, archived webinar, etc.). Number of individuals participating in the Certificate of Public Librarianship program. Number of individuals completing the Certificate of Public Librarianship program. Pre- and post-participation surveys may be conducted to assess the impact of group training experiences and with Certificate of Public Librarianship participants.

Examples of Potential Project 1.1 Activities:

- Certificate of Public Librarianship for library workforce
- Continuing Education for Vermont library workforce
- Training for Trustees and Friends

Project 1.2 - Professional Consulting Assistance

Focal Area: Institutional Capacity

Intent: Improve Library Operations

Summary: This project supports a variety of activities designed to improve library operations at the local level. Both personal contact and online tools are used to make school librarians, library directors, library staff, and trustees aware of best professional practices, to help them solve specific problems, and to alert the library community of grant and staff development opportunities. The professional consulting assistance is provided by Department of Libraries staff who specialize in specific topics.

Audience: School libraries, public libraries, library support organizations, municipalities, and other governmental entities

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Libraries that offer relevant, responsive, library services based on sound professional practices and that utilize techniques and technologies that increase efficiency and add value to end-users of libraries.

Evaluation: Number of libraries requesting assistance. Number of personal consultations (both in-person and via phone or virtual contact. Number of group sessions conducted and number of participants. Pre and post-participation surveys may be used to assess the impact of group training experiences.

Examples of Potential Project 1.2 Activities:

- Consultation to Vermont library workforce
- Consultation to Vermont library Trustees and Friends
- Consulting Collaboration with Statewide Partners

Project 1.3 - Collecting, Analyzing, and Reporting Library Statistics

Focal Area: Institutional Capacity

Intent: Improve Library Operations

Summary: This project involves the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data and information that can be used by the Department of Libraries, local libraries, and elected officials to inform their decision making. Data and information collected includes, but is not limited to, the data elements required by the annual Public Libraries Survey (PLS) and biennial State Library Administrative Agency Survey (SLAAS).

Audience: Libraries, library support organizations, municipalities, other governmental entities, and the general public

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: An increase in the application of a data-driven decision-making process in an effort to identify deficiencies and improve performance.

Evaluation: Number of libraries providing complete PLS and SLAAS information for submission. Timeliness of submission of PLS and SLAAS data and release of validated state-level data to the library community. Quality and quantity of derivative tools created (info-graphics, brochures, inclusion in reports, etc.).

Examples of Potential Project 1.3 Activities:

- Data Collection and Reporting (CollectConnect)
- Annual Report

Project 1.4 - Enhancing Connectivity

Focal Area: Institutional Capacity

Intent: Improve Libraries' Technological Infrastructure

Summary: This project includes, but may not be limited to the management of the FiberConnect Wide Area Network which currently affords access to broadband service for forty public libraries in Vermont. This project may also support other initiatives to expand broadband access to both libraries and to library users.

Audience: Libraries, library staff, and library users

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Provide broadband Internet connectivity for libraries and individuals that would have inadequate or excessively costly connections without this support.

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating. In the case of FiberConnect libraries, the estimated number of individuals benefiting from the service (measured by use of public computers). Other measures may be applied if additional connectivity initiatives are launched either as a supplement to or a replacement for the FiberConnect Network WAN.

Examples of Potential Project 1.4 Activities:

Support Statewide Broadband Enhancement Initiatives

Continue Support of Existing FiberConnect Wide Area Network (WAN)

GOAL 2 - Enhancing Access to Information

The Department of Libraries will provide Vermont residents with convenient access to relevant, high-quality information resources in formats that they can use for their educational, occupational, and personal/recreational needs.

Identified Needs Addressed by Goal 2:

- Many, if not most, Vermont libraries of all types are financially challenged due to inadequate funding support.
- Many Vermont libraries are small and lack the collection depth necessary to adequately meet the needs of the residents they serve.
- There are significant disparities in the resources and services available to Vermont residents through their libraries depending on where they live and how many hours their local library is open.
- There are many Vermonters who are blind or otherwise print disabled who depend on the specialized services provided by the ABLE (Audio, Braille, Large-Print, and Electronic) Library.
- Some Vermonters, including many children and families living below the poverty line and those who reside in State institutions, have unique library and information needs.

LSTA Purposes Addressed by Goal 2:

- Facilitate access to resources in all types of libraries for the purpose of cultivating an educated and informed citizenry,
- Encourage resource sharing among all types of libraries for the purpose of achieving economical and efficient delivery of library services to the public.
- Promote literacy, education, and lifelong learning, including by building learning partnerships with school libraries in our Nation's schools, including tribal schools, and developing resources, capabilities, and programs in support of State, tribal, and local efforts to offer a well-rounded educational experience to all students.
- Enable libraries to develop services that meet the needs of communities throughout the Nation, including people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers.
- Ensure the preservation of knowledge and library collections in all formats and enable libraries to serve their communities during disasters.
- Enhance the role of libraries within the information infrastructure of the United States in order to support research, education, and innovation.
- Promote library services that provide users with access to information through national, State, local, regional, and international collaborations and networks.

Grants to States Priorities Addressed by Goal 2:

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

IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area for Goal 2: Information Access

- Measuring Success Intents Addressed
 - Improve users' ability to discover information resources
 - Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Project 2.1 - Statewide Resource Sharing - Discovery and Sharing Tools

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to discover information resources

Summary: This project provides an efficient and cost-effective platform for resource sharing in Vermont. The project covers several components including Cooperative Libraries of Vermont (CLOVER), which is an Auto-Graphics SHAREit-based interlibrary loan system and VERSO (a shared integrated library system used primarily by small libraries). Together, these applications provide the foundation for statewide resource sharing of physical materials between libraries.

Audience: Libraries, library staff, and the general public

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Efficient sharing of resources between and among Vermont libraries. Expanded availability of resources for individuals living in communities served by libraries with limited resources.

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating in resource sharing activities. Number of items loaned - by library. Number of items borrowed - by library.

Examples of Potential Project 2.1 Activities:

- Collaborative Libraries of Vermont (CLOVER)
- Verso shared catalog

Project 2.2 - Statewide Resource Sharing - Physical Materials Delivery Systems

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Summary: This project facilitates the physical delivery of resources shared between and among libraries. At the current time, the primary mode of physical delivery is a contracted courier system. However, other mechanisms may be explored to supplement this system.

Audience: Public, school, and academic libraries and the people they serve

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Timely, cost-effective delivery of materials shared between and among libraries.

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating. Number of days per week delivery service is received - broken down by library. Number of items delivered. Turnaround time (average time between request for an item and delivery to the borrowing library).

Examples of Potential Project 2.2 Activities:

- Courier Service
- Other Delivery Mechanisms

Project 2.3 - Electronic Information Resources

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Summary: This project provides equitable access to a wide range of electronic resources including licensed databases and other e-content. It helps to level the information resource playing field for all Green Mountain State residents by offering a solid foundation of extensive content. By providing a core group of online resources to all Vermonters, the project also enables some libraries to direct their resources toward securing other supplementary electronic resources and/or content that is highly relevant to the community they serve.

Audience: The general public directly and through their libraries.

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: The ultimate outcome of this project is enabling individuals to access information that can help them succeed in achieving their educational, occupational, and/or personal goals. These services are accessible to Vermonters regardless of where they live, their socio-economic status, or ability to read standard print. This project addresses all six of the IMLS Measuring Success focal areas as well as all of the Measuring Success intents.

Evaluation: Number and nature of databases provided. Number of accesses, pageviews, retrievals, downloads, etc. (vendor-statistics). Source of access (individual, through libraries, etc.). The Department of Libraries may explore the feasibility of conducting periodic pop-up surveys of database users

Examples of Potential Project 2.3 Activities:

- VT Online Library
- Statewide platform for eBooks and eAudiobooks
- Continued collaboration with consortia that provide e-content and other online resources

Project 2.4 - Digitization and Preservation

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Summary: This project, which will be carried out if funding and staff capacity allow, will enable the Department of Libraries to support efforts to preserve and/or digitize documents, photos, or other content of historical significance or of importance to the work of Vermont governmental agencies.

Audience: Libraries, museums, historical societies, researchers, state agencies, and the general public

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: The content of important documents, photos, and records will be preserved, appropriately described, and made more discoverable and accessible.

Evaluation: Number of items/pages/photos digitized. Number of partner organizations.

Examples of Potential Project 2.4 Activities:

- Support for Green Mountain Digital Library

Support for other statewide digitization efforts
Provide continuing education and consultation on topics related to digitization and preservation

Project 2.5 - Library Services to Individuals with Print Disabilities

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Summary: This project supports the work of Vermont's **A**udio, **B**raille, **L**arge-Print, and **E**lectronic Books (ABLE) Library. The ABLE Library is Vermont's network affiliate of the Library of Congress' National Library for the Blind and Print Disabled. The program offers access to reading materials in many alternate formats for individuals who cannot use traditional print resources. Included are digital cartridges that can be played on a specialized reader supplied by the federal government, access to downloadable audio and refreshable Braille content (BARD), as well as other services designed to ensure equity of access to reading resources.

Audience: Individuals with print disabilities, their families, and support organizations

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Provide equitable access to reading materials and information resources for the Blind and those with visual impairments. These materials will be offered in the format and reading level that each ABLE library patron needs and wants.

Evaluation: Number of program users by category/format of content used. Number of items loaned by category/format of content. Number of new certified users. Number of program users by category of print disability. Number and nature of outreach efforts. Number of items (books, magazines, etc.) recorded.

Examples of Potential Project 2.5 Activities:

- Circulate eAudio and special format materials
- Circulate large print materials
- Support Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD)
- Expand and modernize Vermont recording program
- Provide outreach and programs to individuals with print disabilities
- Pilot, test, and promote emerging technologies
- Support access to Braille materials

Project 2.6 - Services to Underrepresented Populations

Focal Area: Information Access

Intent: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources

Summary: Enhance the ability of Vermont public library staff to support the needs of underrepresented populations in the communities they serve which will strengthen connections between individual members and their local public libraries and foster a life-long love of reading.

Audience: Individuals whose personal circumstances (location, economic status, disability, etc.) prevent or impede their use of traditional library services

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Increase awareness of underrepresented populations and to make consideration of their needs an integral part of program planning and collection development at libraries. This project should provide libraries with tools and connections to statewide partners to help achieve this outcome.

Evaluation: Number of training sessions offered. Number of library staff members participating in training and evaluation of training by participants. Number of programs and resources shared with state agencies and libraries.

Examples of Potential Project 2.6 Activities:

- Provide continuing education to library staff on the topic of inclusion and service to underrepresented populations
- Collaborate with departments within the Agency of Human Services to serve residents and clients
- Collaborate with state and federal agencies to reach diverse communities

GOAL 3 - Fostering Learning and Building Community

The Vermont Department of Libraries will provide libraries with the resources and training needed to help Vermonters achieve their occupational and personal goals and contribute to the vitality of their communities.

Identified Needs Addressed by Goal 3:

- Many, if not most, Vermont libraries of all types are financially challenged due to inadequate funding support.
- Many Vermont libraries are small and lack the collection depth necessary to adequately meet the needs of the residents they serve.
- There are significant disparities in the resources and services available to Green Mountain State residents through their libraries depending on where they live and how many hours their local library is open.
- Some Vermonters, including many children and families living below the poverty line and those who reside in State institutions have unique library and information needs.
- Vermont's high median age highlights the need for workforce development and for providing an environment that enables young Vermonters to build their careers within the state.

LSTA Purposes Addressed by Goal 3:

- Promote literacy, education, and lifelong learning, including by building learning partnerships with school libraries in our Nation's schools, including tribal schools, and developing resources, capabilities, and programs in support of State, tribal, and local efforts to offer a well-rounded educational experience to all students.
- Enable libraries to develop services that meet the needs of communities throughout the Nation, including people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers.
- Enable libraries to serve as anchor institutions to support community revitalization through enhancing and expanding the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, economic and business development, critical thinking skills, health information, digital literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills, and new and emerging technology.

Grants to States Priorities Addressed by Goal 3:

- 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.
- Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and community-based organizations.
- 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.

- 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 section 9902(2) of title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Primary IMLS Measuring Success Focal Areas for Goal 3: Lifelong Learning, Civic Engagement

- Primary IMLS Measuring Success Intents Addressed
 - Improve users' formal education
 - Improve users' general knowledge and skills
 - Improve users' ability to participate in their community
 - Improve users' ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern

Secondary IMLS Measuring Success Focal Areas for Goal 3: Economic & Employment Development and Human Resources

- Secondary IMLS Measuring Success Intents Addressed
 - Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support
 - Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills

Project 3.1 - Summer Reading Program Support

Focal Area: Lifelong Learning

Intent: Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Summary: This project enables libraries, including small libraries with very limited resources, to offer a high-quality summer reading program. In addition to supplying professionally developed materials, the Department also encourages participation in a number of other ways including access to an online reading challenge platform and support for public events.

Audience: Potential readers of all ages with a particular emphasis on children, tweens, teens, and families

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Summer reading programs have a positive impact in turning kids into lifelong readers. The ultimate desired outcome from summer reading is creating communities of readers of all ages and encouraging parents and caregivers to become actively involved in supporting reading behaviors in their households.

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating. Number of participants by age categories. Number of programs offered. Program attendance. Other metrics that may be sampled include increased circulation of materials, and number of books/pages read. In addition to the collection of anecdotal reports of the impact of summer reading on specific children. Libraries will be encouraged to carry out a post-participation survey of parents/caregivers if possible to determine whether reading behaviors are changed after the summer program ends.

Examples of Potential Project 3.1 Activities:

- Provision of reading and programming materials to public libraries
- Intergenerational initiatives
- Encourage participation through interactive online reading challenge platform
- Supplement local programming resources to support summer reading programming for youth.

Project 3.2 - Cultural Programming Grants for Libraries

Focal Areas: Lifelong Learning and Civic Engagement

Intents: Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Summary: This project builds on a longstanding tradition of support for substantive adult and family programming in Vermont libraries. In particular, the Department of Libraries plans to continue its collaboration with Vermont Humanities to offer an extensive series known as "First Wednesdays" that provides an amazing array of topics hosted by libraries scattered across the state. Moving forward, the cultural programming grants will support both in-person and virtual/hybrid events. The VTLIB/Humanities collaboration has expanded to jointly hosting residencies for nationally renowned YA writers, which the Department plans to continue.

Audience: The general public

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Providing opportunities for personal learning and discovery and prompting stimulating community conversations are goals of this program. Providing opportunities for Vermont youth and adults to engage with well-known YA writers (e.g. Angie Thomas, Jason Reynolds).

Evaluation: Number of libraries participating. Number of live programs offered. Number of live attendees. Number of synchronous virtual attendees. Number of views of archived programs. When possible, post-event participation surveys will be conducted.

Examples of Potential Project 3.2 Activities:

- First Wednesday Programs
- Speaker Residency Events

Project 3.3 - Book Awards

Focal Area: Lifelong Learning

Intent: Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Summary: This project provides an opportunity for Vermonters to be involved in selecting and recognizing their favorite books written by authors associated with the Green Mountain State. The Department of Libraries cooperates with partners in multiple award programs, each targeting a different age group.

Audience: Children, teens, adults, educators, and librarians

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Awareness of Vermont authors and their works. Encouragement of reading. Opportunities for community dialog based on shared reading experiences.

Evaluation: Number of participants in voting for each of the book award programs. Number of libraries and schools participating. Number of participants by age group.

Examples of Potential Project 3.3 Activities:

- The Red Clover Book Award (grades K-4)
- The Vermont Golden Dome Book Award (grades 4-9)
- The Green Mountain Book Award (grades 9-12)
- Vermont Book Award (Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Poetry for adults)

Project 3.4 - Early Childhood Literacy Support

Focal Area: Lifelong Learning

Intent: Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Summary: Support the delivery of early childhood literacy programs and services through Vermont's libraries

Audience: Children from birth to five (5) years of age and their parents/ caregivers

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Enhance the ability of Vermont public library staff to support the early childhood literacy needs of the communities they serve which will strengthen connections between children, parents, and caregivers and their local public libraries and foster a life-long love of reading among Vermont's youth

Evaluation: Number of early literacy childhood trainings provided, number of public library staff who attend, and evaluation of early childhood literacy trainings by participants. Number of programs and resources shared with state agencies and libraries.

Examples of Potential Project 3.4 Activities:

- Provide early childhood literacy training opportunities to public library staff
- Work with state agencies to share early childhood literacy information and resources with Vermonters.

Project 3.5 - Public Performance Licenses

Focal Area: Lifelong Learning

Intent: Improve users' general knowledge and skills

Summary: This project enables libraries to legally offer public performances of a wide array of cinematic content by underwriting the cost of public performance licensing.

Audience: Libraries and the people they serve

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Public libraries will offer enhanced public programming at a reasonable cost. Opportunity for the residents of communities to see movies of interest at no cost.

Evaluation: Number of libraries providing movie programs. Number of movies shown. Number of attendees. Anecdotal reports from library directors, staff, and/or attendees.

Examples of Potential Project 3.5 Activities:

- Motion Picture Performance Licenses

Project 3.6 - Workforce Development Resources

Focal Area: Economic & Employment Development

Intent: Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support

Summary: Make resources that support job-focused training and education available through the Vermont Online Library.

Audience: Individuals exploring careers and/or searching for employment

Timetable: Anticipated ongoing 2023-2027

Desired Outcomes: Support the state's workforce development efforts.

Evaluation: Number of workforce development-related sessions on the Vermont Online Library. Number of workforce development training sessions offered.

Examples of Potential Project 3.6 Activities:

- Provide online workforce development training and resources to Vermonters
- Enhance awareness of workforce development resources through newsletters and training for library staff
- Partner with state agencies to promote use of workforce development resources

COORDINATION EFFORTS

Crosswalk tables that map goals and projects to the IMLS Measuring Success focal areas and intents are provided in APPENDIX A.

The Department of Libraries coordinates its efforts with a number of state and federal agencies as well as with other governmental and non-profit organizations. The following list, which is by no means exhaustive, is indicative of the scope and nature of these cooperative relationships.

Partnerships

- Departments, agencies, and commissions within the State of Vermont including:
 - Vermont Agency of Administration
 - Vermont Agency of Education
 - Vermont Agency of Human Services
- Vermont Humanities Council
- Vermont Arts Council
- Library of Congress' National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled
- Schools and institutions of higher education
- Vermont Municipalities
- Historical Societies
- U.S. Veterans Affairs Department (VA)
- Non-Government Agencies and Associations
- Other State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs)
- Miscellaneous affinity groups

EVALUATION PLAN

The Department of Libraries will annually review this LSTA Plan with its staff, the Vermont Board of Libraries, and other stakeholders. If changes are needed, the Department will submit requests to IMLS. Program results have been emphasized in the State of Vermont for the last several years and the kind of evaluation carried out by the Department of Libraries in implementing its LSTA plan fits into this state-wide culture. The Department of Libraries takes a holistic approach to its evaluation of programs, incorporating both quantitative data and qualitative feedback received through its work directly with libraries. Both formal (e.g. survey responses) and informal (e.g. conversations) feedback are welcomed by Department staff. The pandemic opened communications between the Department of Libraries and library staff throughout the state in unexpected ways and placed the Department into more focus as a resource for libraries in Vermont. Increased communication with stakeholders enhanced the ability of Department of Libraries staff to gather feedback on both the value of the support it provides to the community of Vermont libraries and the needs of libraries. The Department plans to maintain this heightened level of communication and responsiveness.

Specific information regarding the anticipated evaluation efforts have been included under each proposed project. However, in an effort to ensure that the development of strategic partnerships and meaningful efforts are made to consider equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in every service the Department provides, an additional evaluation protocol has been developed that may be applied to projects as appropriate. The framework for this protocol is presented in APPENDIX B.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The ***Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** is based on extensive input from the library community, from independent evaluators, and from other stakeholders. This includes information and data gathered through individual interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

In June of 2021, the Vermont Department of Libraries participated with nine other states in the issuance of a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) for a “Cooperative Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan Evaluation 2018-2022.” The RFP was issued through the Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) and QualityMetrics LLC, headquartered in Silver Spring Maryland, was selected to carry out individual evaluations of each state’s implementation of their LSTA plans. The assessment of the Department’s efforts in carrying out the 2023-2027 Plan was conducted by QualityMetrics Chief Executive Officer Dr. Martha Kyrillidou assisted by associate researcher William Wilson. The process used in the assessment included both retrospective and prospective components and gathered valuable information both for the evaluation and for the subsequent planning process. Interviews, focus groups, and a web-based survey were conducted in addition to an extensive review of State Program Report (SPR) data.

QualityMetrics was subsequently engaged to facilitate the Department of Libraries’ LSTA planning process. An additional web-based survey of state residents and libraries was carried out as part of this process. Frequent Zoom sessions were conducted by QualityMetrics that involved the Vermont State Librarian, the Assistant State Librarian for Advancement, and the Assistant State Librarian for Information and Access. A total of 621 individuals responded to the web-based survey that was part of the planning phase between May 10 - May 23, 2022.

In short, ***Vermont’s Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** is based on stakeholder input secured through a variety of quality sources over the span of the last several years.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

Once the ***Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** has been approved by IMLS, the Department of Libraries will post the Plan on the agency website where it will remain throughout the duration of its implementation. Department Leadership will share the plan with Department of Libraries staff and the State Librarian will present the Plan to both the Vermont Board of Libraries and Agency of Administration Leadership.

The Plan’s goals may be amended if such an alteration is dictated by community needs. Budgets, specific activities, and anticipated products and services may also be adjusted based on the Department of Library’s capacity to carry out the Plan as proposed. However, any substantive revisions to the Plan will be submitted to IMLS in accordance with IMLS guidelines and the provisions of the Museum and Library Services Act. The Department will publicize the achievement of significant milestones identified in the Plan as well as ongoing results of its efforts. The Department of Libraries will also comply with reporting requirements through the SPR. Finally, both achievements and shortcomings will be shared with stakeholders within the state as part of an ongoing effort to improve performance and to increase the positive impact of projects and activities.

MONITORING

The implementation of Vermont’s ***Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** will be monitored on a continuous basis. Appropriate Vermont Department of

Libraries staff will be assigned to track the execution of all aspects of the Plan. Specific staff will be tasked with preparing and generating relevant reports as required as well as to inform decision making. A component of this tracking will be the monitoring of any sub-grant projects that are funded with LSTA dollars. Depending on the nature of a given activity, sub-grantees may be asked to submit semi-annual status reports. Final reports on the status and results of each project will be required. This formal process will be supplemented with a combination of on-site monitoring visits, phone calls, emails, and other virtual contacts.

All projects, including any sub-grant projects as well as those directly administered by the Department will be monitored on a regular basis as ongoing activities are conducted, documented, and measured. Information and data collected as part of this process will be used to inform the Department of Libraries' reporting to IMLS in the annual SPR.

As required, monitoring will comply with the requirements and procedures outlined in 2 CFR 200.327-332

- 2 CFR 200.327 - Financial Reporting
- 2 CFR 200.328 - Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance
- 2 CFR 200.329 - Reporting on Real Property
- 2 CFR 200.330 - Subrecipient and Contractor Determination
- 2 CFR 200.331 - Requirements for Pass-Through Entities
- 2 CFR 200.332 - Fixed Amount Subawards

ASSURANCES

The following assurances have been submitted with the plan:

- Program Assurances for 2023 Grant Award (Includes compliance with Internet Safety; Trafficking in Persons; Nondiscrimination; Debarment and Suspension; Drug-Free Workplace; Federal Debt Status; and Lobbying requirements)
- Non-Construction Assurance Form (SF-424B)
- State Legal Officer's Certification of Authorized Certifying Official
- Internet Safety Certification for Applicant Public Libraries, Public Elementary and Secondary School Libraries and Consortia with Public and/or Public School Libraries

APPENDIX A - CROSSWALK TABLES

VERMONT Goal 1 - Strengthening Libraries Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents

	1.1 Staff and Leadership Development and Training	1.2 Professional Consulting Assistance	1.3 Collecting, Analyzing, and Reporting Library Statistics	1.4 Enhancing Connectivity					
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	YES	YES	YES	YES					
Improve the library workforce	YES								
Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure				YES					
Improve library operations		YES	YES						
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 Resources									
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									

VERMONT Goal 2 - Enhancing Access to Information
Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents

2.1 Statewide Resource Sharing - Discovery and Sharing Tools
2.2 Statewide Resource Sharing - Systems
2.3 Electronic Resource Sharing - Physical Materials Delivery
2.4 Digitization and Preservation
2.5 Library Services to Individuals with Print Disabilities
2.6 Services to Underrepresented Populations

	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6
Lifelong Learning						
Improve users' formal education						
Improve users' general knowledge and skills						
Information Access	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Improve users' ability to discover information resources	YES					
Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Institutional Capacity						
Improve the library workforce						
Improve the library's physical and technological 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 Resources						
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						

VERMONT Goal 3 - Fostering Learning and Building Community
Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents

	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.1 Summer Reading Program Support</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.2 Cultural Programming Grants for Libraries</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.3 Book Awards</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.4 Early Childhood Literacy Support</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.5 Public Performance Licenses</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">3.6 Workforce Development Resources</div> </div>																			
Lifelong Learning	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES															
Improve users' formal education																				
Improve users' general knowledge and skills	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES															
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 the library's physical and technological infrastructure																				
Improve library operations																				
Economic & Employment Development																				
Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support																				
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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																				

APPENDIX B - SAMPLE EVALUATION PROTOCOL

Project Number and Title: Project 3.2 - Cultural Programming Grants for Libraries	Question(s) to be Answered	Method of Assessment	Data/Information to be Collected
Focal Areas and Intents: Lifelong Learning Improve users' general knowledge and skills Civic Engagement Improve users' ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	Was new knowledge and/or skill gained? If so, what? Will the conversation continue after the initial program is complete?	Pre and post-participation questionnaires - either online or onsite	Number of participants in attendance (in-person, virtually, and archived versions) Nature and magnitude of impact of program on individual participants
Potential Partnerships: Local Libraries Vermont Humanities Vermont Department of Libraries	Were any other partnerships involved? Were there potential partnerships that could have been developed?	Post event online response form distributed to major partners	Additional future potential partners
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion:	Were viewpoints and perspectives of traditionally underrepresented groups included in the program? What efforts were made to ensure that underrepresented groups were aware of the program and would feel welcomed?	Pre-program questionnaire to presenter(s) or to presenting organization Pre-program EDI guidelines shared with presenter(s) or presenting organization and post-event assessment of success of efforts to engage underrepresented groups.	Indication that alternative perspectives were or were not included Evidence of success of outreach efforts