

New Hampshire

Library Services and Technology Act

Five-Year Plan

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2027

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Institute of Museum & Library Services**

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Mission of the New Hampshire State Library	4
The 5-Year Plan for the Library Services & Technology Act	5
New Hampshire Demographics	6
Public Libraries in New Hampshire	7
Needs Assessment	9
Goals & Projects	10
Coordination Efforts	15
Evaluation Plan	18
Stakeholder Involvement	18
Communication and Public Availability	19
Monitoring	19
Certifications and Assurances List	19
Sources Consulted	20
Signed Certifications and Assurances	21

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 116,867¹ libraries and over 30,000² museums. The mission of IMLS is to “advance, support, and empower America’s museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.”³ At its foundation, IMLS connects people to information. IMLS works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain culture and knowledge, to enhance learning and innovation, and to support professional development.

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) of 1996, as re-authorized in 2003, 2010, and 2018, is a subsection of the Museum and Library Services Act. The IMLS “Grants-to-States Program” is funded under LSTA and is the largest grant program administered by IMLS. LSTA provides financial assistance to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAA) using a population-based formula to support statewide initiatives and services in the 50 state, US territories, and Freely Associated States. The Grants-to-States Program has the benefit of building the capacity of state to develop statewide plans for library services, and to evaluate those services every five years. The SLAA is the official agency of a State charged by law with the extension and development of public library services throughout that state.⁴ New Hampshire State Library is the SLAA for the State of New Hampshire.

All goals for the five-year period must address needs congruent with the purposes and priorities of the LSTA as stated in 20 U.S.C. § 9141 (1-9)⁵ through projects 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 section 9902(2) of title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved;

¹ [Home - Number of Libraries in the United States - LibGuides at American Library Association \(ala.org\)](#)

² [Institute of Museum and Library Services Museum Data Files, November 2018, page 7](#)

³ [Mission | Institute of Museum and Library Services \(imls.gov\)](#)

⁴ [20 U.S.C. § 9122, \(4\)](#)

⁵ [Purposes and Priorities of the Library Services and Technology Act | Institute of Museum and Library Services \(imls.gov\)](#)

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.

Mission of the New Hampshire State Library

The mission of the New Hampshire State Library is to:

- Promote excellence in libraries and library services to all New Hampshireites;
- Assist libraries and the people of New Hampshire with rapid access to library and informational resources through the development and coordination of a statewide library/ information system;
- Meet the informational needs of New Hampshire state, county and municipal governments and its libraries; and
- Serve as a resource center on New Hampshire.

By engaging in activities that support its mission, the New Hampshire State Library (NHSL) enriches the lives of the people of New Hampshire by preserving and sharing the literary, cultural, and historic heritage of the state; by providing leadership to the state's libraries; by ensuring equal access to information for all; by supporting the development of public policy; and by promoting the joy of reading and lifelong learning.

Integral to this mission is the state library's advocacy of the freedom of New Hampshire citizens to read and have full access to information and readily accessible resources regardless of their geographic location, level of income, access to technology, background, abilities, and identities.⁶

As the official depository of New Hampshire state documents, the state library proudly preserves the record of New Hampshire government for the public trust, while at the same time contributing to the well-informed and continuously self-educated citizen.

Local history, local decisions, and limited government define living in New Hampshire. Developing statewide plans for library service takes this into account. The state library serves as a leader for all libraries in the state, being a knowledgeable source of information and a broker for coordinated services. This leadership role enables the expansion of basic library services, provides a testing ground for new services, and ultimately enhances the quality of life for citizens of the Granite State.

⁶ The words "background, abilities, and identities" were used due to their inclusion in the [NH Governor's Executive Order 2020-01](#)

The 5-Year Plan for the Library Services & Technology Act

To receive funds under the LSTA Grants-to-States program, each SLAA must submit to the Director of IMLS a State Plan detailing goals, projects, assurances, and procedures for a five-year period.⁷ A State Plan is a document that identifies a state’s library needs, sets forth the activities to be taken toward meeting the identified needs supported by Federal funds made available under the LSTA, and provides assurances that the officially designated SLAA has the fiscal and legal authority, as well as the capability, to administer all aspects of any award under the Grants-to-States program.⁸

The State Five-Year Plan also provides assurances for establishing the state’s policies, priorities, criteria, and procedures necessary to the implementation of all programs under the LSTA.⁹

The purpose of this plan is to comply with the public law and to show how funds under the LSTA will contribute to meeting the library needs in New Hampshire. The plan sets forth the State Library’s mission, needs, goals, programs, and evaluation methodology for administering New Hampshire’s LSTA Grants-to-States program for 2023-2027. It defines priorities, intended outcomes, stakeholders and their roles, evaluation plans, and the communication and monitoring procedures that will assure the involvement of the library community and library users in the implementation of the LSTA Grants-to-States program.

The plan is developed to ensure that all people in New Hampshire, regardless of geographic location, ability, socio-economic circumstance, background, or identity have equal access to quality library services.¹⁰ It outlines the goals and objectives that the state library will undertake using LSTA-funded programs and services to achieve statewide impact. It addresses all eight of the Institute of Museum and Library Services Grants-to-States priorities.¹¹

⁷ [20 U.S.C. § 9134 \(a\)](#)

⁸ [20 U.S.C. § 9122 \(5\)](#)

⁹ [20 U.S.C. § 9122 \(5\)](#)

¹⁰ The words “background, abilities, and identities” were used due to their inclusion in the [NH Governor’s Executive Order 2020-01](#)

¹¹ [Purposes and Priorities of the Library Services and Technology Act | Institute of Museum and Library Services \(imls.gov\)](#)

New Hampshire Demographics

New Hampshire continues to be characterized as overwhelmingly affluent and well-educated. It has the lowest level of poverty among the 50 states and is the third wealthiest state in the nation according to median household income. It also has a very low unemployment rate.

Population characteristics impacting library services in New Hampshire¹²

Population 2020: 1,377,529
 Population estimate (July 1, 2021): 1,388,992
 Under 18 years of age: 18.8%
 Under 5 years of age: 4.7%
 Age 65 & older: 18.7 %
 Median age: 42.2 years
 White: 89.8%
 Black: 1.8%
 Asian: 3.0%
 Hispanic or Latino: 4.0%
 Other races: 1.4%
 Median Annual Income: \$77,923
 Per Capital Annual Income: \$41,234
 Families below poverty level: 7.0%
 Unemployment rate (as of June 2022): 2.3%

National civilian population with vision difficulty: 2.4%
 NH civilian population with a vision difficulty: 2.4%
 NH civilian population ages 18-64 with a vision difficulty
 (non-institutionalized): 1.6%

New Hampshire's Economic Scoreboard¹³

<u>Category</u>	<u>National Rank</u>	<u>New England Rank</u>
Favorable tax climate	6	1
Standard of living (inverse poverty rate)	1	1
Safest State	3	3
Child & family well-being	2	2
Education – adults with high school degree +	6	1
Healthiest state	6	4
Per capita income	9	3
Education – adults with college degree +	10	4
Most livable state	4	1

¹² Stats for the first segment of population characteristics are from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NH>. The stats regarding vision difficulty are from the [2021 Disability Statistics Supplement](#)

¹³ Compiled from various sources – see “sources” section of plan, page 20.

New Hampshire’s population is spread among 10 counties, seven of which are in the southern half of the state. The majority of the population is concentrated in the southern part of the state, with four southern counties (Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford) accounting for over 75% of the total state population of 1.37 million. According to US census figures, the state population grew by 61,059 between 2010 and 2020. Over 90% of this growth was within the four counties mentioned above. The northern counties are far more sparsely populated. Coos, Grafton, and Carroll Counties, which geographically make up roughly the northern half of the state, have a combined population of 172,493, or 12.5% of the state total. The biggest population declines were seen in Coos county, which lost over 5% of its residents between 2010 and 2020. With a current population estimate of 31,268, Coos county still has the smallest county population in New Hampshire.

At the municipal level, the three most populous places are Manchester, Nashua, and Concord, a ranking that has remained stable for many years. There are 13 cities and 218 towns in New Hampshire. In 2020, Dover, Londonderry, and Hampton were in New Hampshire’s top ten fastest growing cities. Hooksett, Durham, and Newmarket moved into the top ten, replacing Portsmouth, Keene, and Laconia (which dropped out of the current top ten ranking). Hooksett was the number one city with the fastest growing population in the state, adding 1,583 more residents in the past year alone.

Our state’s 65+ population is expected to continue to increase in the next 20 years. By 2040, one quarter of the state population will be 65+. This graying of our state, often called the silver tsunami, presents a few challenges, one of which is providing library services that meet the needs as well as the physical limitations of this population.

Public Libraries in New Hampshire

New Hampshire boasts a long tradition of publicly supported libraries. In fact, the Peterborough Town Library has the distinction of being the first tax-supported library in the United States. It began operations in 1833 after residents voted at town meeting to fund the library for that year. In 2022, New Hampshire counted 222 libraries with at least one serving each community in the state.¹⁴

More than 50 years ago, Mildred McKay, NH State Librarian from 1942 to 1964, wrote an essay in the prestigious journal *Library Trends*, in which she described New Hampshire’s changing landscape and history with regards to libraries: “Within the state’s 9,304 square miles are 235 independent towns and cities. Funds for services of those towns come from local property taxes voted by the townspeople at the annual meeting. Since many towns are small in population and poor in taxable property, the funds are frequently meager. Yet the people are taxing themselves for the support of 229 public librarians, which serve all but 5,000 of the state’s total population of 606,921.”¹⁵

Although the figures have changed, the underlying principle still remains the same today: public funding for New Hampshire libraries varies greatly from community to community. Funded exclusively at the local level, NH public libraries receive no direct aid from the state, and the 10 counties in New Hampshire make no contributions for library services. Seventy-five percent of New Hampshire libraries are located in communities

¹⁴ The IMLS Public Library Data Survey for 2022 (capturing data from 2021) saw 222 NH public libraries respond, with 11 NH public libraries not submitting data, for a total of 222 public libraries in NH.

¹⁵ Mildred P. McKay, “New Hampshire’s Single State Library System,” *Library Trends*, vol. 13, no. 3 (Jan. 1965), 279. [history of nh libraries mildred mckay.pdf \(librarysample.org\)](#)

with populations of 7,500 or fewer, and, in many cases, substantially fewer: for example, the Town of Nelson has a 2021 population estimate of 645.¹⁶ Providing modern library services with the local funds available is an enormous challenge.

In meeting this challenge, New Hampshire libraries offer a mixed picture. New Hampshire is 4th in the number of print materials per capita: NH librarians reported that over 698,878 library patrons borrowed 5,286,266 items during 2020. With regard to e-content and e-reading, 200 out of 234 public libraries provide downloadable audio books and eBooks to their patrons. On the other hand, some public libraries in the North Country still do not provide Internet access to the public. New Hampshire ranks 50th in the public-use Internet computers per library although NH does rank 21st in the public-use Internet computers per 5,000 population.

Measure ¹⁷	Number	Ranking (out of 51)
Internet computers per library	6.87	50
Internet computers per 5,000 pop.	5.77	21
Print materials per capita	4.11	4
FTE librarians per 25,000 pop.	10.60	1
State operating revenue per capita	0.00	46
Registered borrowers per capita	0.57	23
Circulation per capita	7.46	123
Library visits per capita	6.47	2
Reference questions per capita	0.57	N/A
Operating expenditures per capita	49.8	13

As a small, largely homogeneous state, New Hampshire is poised to meet these challenges of delivering library service to its residents through the work of the NH public librarians, library trustees, library friends, and most importantly, library supporters and patrons who join forces with the NH Library Association (NHLA), the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association (NHLTA), and the library cooperatives to help improve the library experience for the residents of NH. What makes all of this work is the cooperative spirit of the New Hampshire library community and the expertise and talent of the NHSL staff.

¹⁶ [USA: New Hampshire \(Counties and Towns\) - Population Statistics, Charts and Map \(citypopulation.de\)](https://citypopulation.de/en/usa/new-hampshire/counties-and-towns/population-statistics-charts-and-map/)

¹⁷ FY2020 Data Files- <https://www.ims.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey>

Needs Assessment

In preparation for its new IMLS LSTA Five-Year-Plan 2023-2027, the New Hampshire State Library actively sought input from the library community and residents of the state of New Hampshire.

To ensure rigorous and objective evaluation of NHSL’s implementation of the IMLS LSTA Grants-to-States program, the state library, in cooperation with nine other state library administrative agencies (SLAAs) in the Northeast, participated in the issuance of a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) for a “Cooperative Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan Evaluation 2018-2022” through the Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE). QualityMetrics was selected to complete this work. In preparing our report, which was issued on March 27, 2022, the evaluators from QualityMetrics engaged stakeholders in the process through virtual focus groups, personal interviews, and a web-based survey. The data gathered in that process has been used to assess the needs of our state and to set our LSTA goals for federal fiscal years 2023-2027.

On the whole, the result of the stakeholder surveys demonstrated the need for federal support in continuing to provide resources and services to library patrons statewide in a rapidly changing technological environment. Using LSTA funds to support statewide access to resource sharing, electronic materials, and training (especially in technology areas) was deemed vital to offering quality service, information and professionalism to the citizens of New Hampshire.

It is the opinion of the evaluators that “...NHSL dedicates the funds to developing and supporting statewide programs and services. These programs focus on maintaining critical infrastructure which public libraries in New Hampshire rely on. These programs are administered by the dedicated and capable staff of the NHSL. New Hampshire takes a perhaps unique approach to funding and organizing public libraries. Each public library is independently funded and receives no state funding.”¹⁸

This input indicates that equity of access, equity of service, and equity of innovation continue to be the goals that serve our libraries best.

¹⁸ *New Hampshire State Library, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to State Program Implementation Evaluation Federal Fiscal Year 2018 – Federal Fiscal Year 2022*, page 7.

Goals and Projects

All three of our goals are equal in priority and all will be ongoing during the five-year grant period.

Goal I - Equity of Access: Increase the equity of access to library and information services for New Hampshire residents of all abilities and backgrounds by providing resource sharing, electronic resources, and continuing access to historic materials through direct services as well as coordination of linkages among and between libraries and partnerships with other agencies and organizations.

The specific projects that are part of this goal were identified by the stakeholders surveyed as part of our 2013-2017 five-year plan evaluation as meeting needs that were very important, and by QualityMetrics in the most recent evaluation as essential¹⁹ to New Hampshire public libraries and to their patrons.

One particular project, the New Hampshire Downloadable Books project (#3) remains under this goal of Equity of Access despite the placement of the project under Goal III, Equity of Innovation, in the 2013-2017 Five-Year Plan Evaluation report. Discussion among NHSL staff culminated in a decision to leave this project under Goal I, Equity of Access, because they believe that digital formats of materials is not an innovative solution at this point in 2022 but is a regular part of our essential services to New Hampshire public libraries and their patrons.

This goal is congruent with IMLS LSTA purposes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8, listed on pages 3-4 of this document.

The following projects support the goal of Equity of Access:

1. Maintain, expand, and improve the NHAIS Interlibrary Loan System for the benefit of library staff and patrons.

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Patrons will be able to search both within their libraries and offsite for bibliographic resources available statewide and will be assisted in identifying and obtaining resources not otherwise available to them. High quality cataloging records available free of charge to NH public libraries through the system will also enhance access for citizens to local library collections

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay for equipment, staff, and services such as access to bibliographic resources needed to maintain the NHAIS ILL system.

2. Provide an efficient and cost-effective transportation system to facilitate the exchange of interlibrary loan materials between libraries.

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Libraries will receive the help they need to provide their patrons with far greater collection resources than they can collect on their own.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay for the fueling and maintenance of a fleet of delivery vans and pay the salaries of the van drivers.

3. Facilitate and manage the New Hampshire Downloadable Books Consortium (NHDB) on behalf of the state's public libraries and their patrons.

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH residents will maintain access to digital audiobooks and eBooks through their public libraries.

¹⁹ *New Hampshire State Library, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to State Program Implementation Evaluation Federal Fiscal Year 2018 – Federal Fiscal Year 2022, page 3.*

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay the NHDB platform fees and the salaries for NHSL staff who manage the service.

- 4. Maintain a digital archive of “born-digital” state government publications, available online to the public at no charge. Library staff will identify and archive digital publications by state agencies and organize them in a full-text searchable database.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Individuals, researchers, and legislators will gain knowledge from “born-digital” state government publications and will benefit by having 24/7 access outside of the NHSL physical building.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay the annual fee for maintenance and support of the digital archive platform and software.
- 5. Facilitate an open-source Integrated Library System solution for small libraries.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Library materials held by small libraries will be discoverable by patrons 24/7 through an online catalog, and the technological infrastructure and operations of these libraries will be improved by having a modern library catalog

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used for staff salaries to implement new installations and to provide ongoing technical support and training for library staff.
- 6. The NH Talking Books Services will support access to materials that will help meet the reading/information needs and interests of NH residents who are physically unable to see, handle, or process printed material comfortably. These services may include developing a strong and current collection of materials; monitoring and promoting technologies of benefit to the low-vision community; improving awareness of and access to the library, both physically and virtually; and building community partnerships with local agencies such as Future In Sight and low-vision teachers, the NH Department of Education Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the NH Department of the Health and Human Services, Family Services.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH residents who are physically unable to see, handle, or process printed material comfortably will be able to access the information they need.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used for staff salaries, supplies, and infrastructure to support the activities and resources for the visually impaired.
- 7. Facilitate and manage access to a variety of online databases for all types of libraries through NHewLink, coordinate group purchases on behalf of libraries of additional database content when feasible, and increase the viability of these statewide electronic services to New Hampshire citizens.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH residents will maintain access to digital information for research/reading.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay for database contract, and for NHSL staff salaries for those managing electronic services and facilitating group purchases of electronic database content.
- 8. Collect, curate, and protect historic NH printed materials, including participation in digitization and microfilming projects, to support the preservation of NH-specific knowledge in multiple formats for increased public access.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: New Hampshire residents will have access to unique historical resources that would otherwise not be easily accessible. New Hampshire history is being preserved for current and future generations.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used for preservation treatment and format transfer costs, as well as costs related to the coordination of preservation and access projects with multiple partners.

GOAL II - EQUITY OF SERVICE: Increase the equity of service to New Hampshire residents by providing professional development resources and opportunities for librarians throughout the state so that they can learn about best practices and library initiatives that will help them to better serve their constituents, especially children, older residents, and rural populations.

As described in the 2021/22 evaluation of the New Hampshire LSTA program by Quality Metrics, there is a high need for continued professional development resources and services for public librarians and staff. Through the feedback provided by the surveys and focus groups during the evaluation period, Quality Metrics concluded “providing flexible, low cost, remote options for library staff professional development is critical, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent shut down in March 2020.”²⁰ This need is further heightened by the large turnover in public library staff that is ongoing in 2022 after the current IMLS LSTA program evaluation process was completed.

This goal is congruent with all eight IMLS LSTA purposes, listed on pages 3-4 of this document.

The following projects support the goal of Equity of Service:

- 1. Support the programs of the Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library, which celebrates and promotes reading, books, literacy, and the literary heritage of New Hampshire, as well as highlights the role that reading and libraries play in enriching the lives of the people of the Granite State.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: The general knowledge of NH citizens about the literary heritage of their state will be enhanced, and libraries and schools will be able to offer programs and activities based on Center for the Book resources and tools that support early literacy and civic engagement. Additionally, training and education opportunities are made available to public library staff in the state to enhance their skills in the areas related to the Center’s mission

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds supplement the funds of the Center in supporting specific projects where the goals are congruent with LSTA purposes.

- 2. NHSL librarians and staff will attend professional meetings, conferences, and events to promote statewide library services.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NHSL staff will be better informed about current library practices and will communicate these practices to librarians statewide.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay professional development online and in-person registrations for NHSL staff members, and membership fees to institutions offering professional development opportunities.

- 3. Collect and compile public library statistics annually to determine library services trends.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH public librarians will be better able to evaluate their resources and programs, determine staffing and other budget needs, and develop long-range plans.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay for the survey software.

²⁰ *New Hampshire State Library, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to State Program Implementation Evaluation Federal Fiscal Year 2018 – Federal Fiscal Year 2022*, page 19.

- 4. Maintain a NH Automated Information System (NHAIS) helpdesk to support libraries in their use of both the NHAIS Interlibrary Loan system and the local automated systems that underlay that system with resources, including one-on-one technical assistance and online training/webinars.**
BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Library staff will understand how to best utilize the ILL system, how to maintain their local automated systems so that they work well with the ILL system, and improve their cataloging and ILL skills to meet patron information needs.
USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to pay for helpdesk staff salaries and any equipment, transportation costs, software, or subscriptions needed to fund in-person or online assistance and training.
- 5. Collaborate with state and national organizations to develop conferences for librarians, including those serving specific populations such as children, teens, older adults, and rural communities.**
BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NHSL staff will be able to share new state and national resources/information with NH public library staff so that they are able to better implement programs and services for their patrons.
USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will support conference planning activities/attendance.
- 6. Provide professional development including online resources, tutorials, and training opportunities on a variety of necessary skills, as well as online tools to facilitate networking to enhance the skills of New Hampshire’s current library workforce.**
BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Classes, workshops, and other training opportunities will enhance the knowledge and skills of library staff across the state in a variety of subjects, providing ways for them to network and learn from each other.
- 7. Deliver assistance and counsel to library personnel to help them improve their services for individuals of all ages.**
BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH library staff will receive instruction/counsel via email, phone, online resources, and in-person trainings on a wide variety of subjects, including technology, library administration, collection development, database resources, literacy, and programming. This instruction and counsel will help library staff better support their patrons’ needs for learning, workforce development, and digital literacy skills.
USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will purchase training equipment and resources, and pay some of the salaries of staff providing consultations and trainings.
- 8. Coordinate statewide literacy projects, including the summer reading program and other programs geared to different age groups and underserved populations.**
BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Libraries will be better able to offer summer reading programs and literacy initiatives to children, teens, and adults as well as underserved populations such as those in rural communities.
USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will be used to support direct programming in libraries through grants programs and materials purchases that support literacy programming in public libraries.

GOAL III – Equity of Innovation: Inspire lifelong learning and advance the equity of innovative services and programming by developing projects for use by the state’s libraries, including scalable pilot projects, to anticipate and meet the changing needs of New Hampshire’s residents for library services and information

There is a need in our communities for more technology-based programming, as well as library staff training to support technology needs in communities (from computer basics to digitization of historic materials). This was indicated by NH librarians in focus groups conducted as part of our 2013-2017 LSTA five-year plan evaluation: “In the evaluators’ focus groups, participants noted that the digital divide is still very real in New Hampshire, and continues to be a barrier to equitable access, service, and innovation for many residents. Broadband is not widely available across the majority-rural state, which impacts both access and technical skills for much of the population. It was also noted by one focus group participant that there is a digital divide of sorts among library staff.”²¹

This goal is congruent with all eight of the LSTA purposes listed on pages 3-4 of this document.

The following projects support the goal of Equity of Innovation:

- 1. Partner with the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), as well as other libraries and local/national organizations, to implement a statewide digital library of images, documents, and other resources of historical value from New Hampshire communities.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: Implementation of a statewide digital library of images, documents, and other resources from New Hampshire communities to enhance access for NH residents and others.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will assist the development of the service, fund necessary equipment to be loaned to library participants, and for NHSL staff salaries.

- 2. Introduce new and existing technologies to libraries, including necessary training and networking with peers, which will allow the creation of innovative programming and services in libraries across the state.**

BENEFIT/OUTCOME: NH library staff and NH residents will be introduced to a wide array of technology and innovative trends taken from the larger library community, at times as pilot projects, to enhance the knowledge and abilities of both target audiences.

USE OF FUNDS: IMLS funds will support introducing new technologies (services and/or equipment) and for NHSL staff salaries.

²¹ *New Hampshire State Library, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to State Program Implementation Evaluation Federal Fiscal Year 2018 – Federal Fiscal Year 2022, page 21.*

Coordination Efforts

Equity of Access									
Focal Areas	Intents	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8
Lifelong Learning	Formal education						X	X	
	General knowledge & skills	X		X			X	X	
Information Access	Ability to discover info resources	X		X		X	X	X	X
	Ability to obtain/use info resources	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Institutional Capacity	Library workforce								
	Library infrastructure	X	X			X			
	Library operations	X	X			X			
Economic & Employment Development	Use resources for employment support							X	
	Use business resources				X			X	
Human Services	Further personal, family, or household finances	X	X	X			X	X	
	Further personal or family health & wellness	X	X	X			X	X	
	Further parenting & family skills	X	X	X			X	X	
Civic Engagement	Ability to participate in community	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	Ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	X	X	X	X		X	X	X

Coordination Efforts, cont.

Equity of Service									
Focal Areas	Intents	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8
Lifelong Learning	Formal education	X						X	X
	General knowledge & skills	X						X	X
Information Access	Ability to discover info resources	X						X	X
	Ability to obtain/use info resources	X			X			X	X
Institutional Capacity	Library workforce		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Library infrastructure		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Library operations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Economic & Employment Development	Use resources for employment support							X	X
	Use business resources							X	X
Human Services	Further personal, family, or household finances							X	X
	Further personal or family health & wellness							X	X
	Further parenting & family skills	X						X	X
Civic Engagement	Ability to participate in community	X						X	X
	Ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	X						X	X

Coordination Efforts, cont.

Equity of Innovation			
Focal Areas	Intents	Project 1	Project 2
Lifelong Learning	Formal education	X	X
	General knowledge & skills	X	X
Information Access	Ability to discover info resources	X	X
	Ability to obtain/use info resources	X	X
Institutional Capacity	Library workforce		X
	Library infrastructure	X	X
	Library operations		X
Economic & Employment Development	Use resources for employment support		
	Use business resources		
Human Services	Further personal, family, or household finances		
	Further personal or family health & wellness		
	Further parenting & family skills		
Civic Engagement	Ability to participate in community	X	X
	Ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	X	X

Evaluation Plan

To assess the effectiveness of the projects included in this Five-Year Plan, NHSL will use a variety of measures to collect quantitative and qualitative data depending on the activity being evaluated. NHSL submits the required annual State Programs Report to IMLS each December which shows progress towards meeting the goals of the state plan for LSTA-funded projects. IMLS will use the details of this report to report to Congress, who authorized the program, on the impact of LSTA in New Hampshire.

The yearly evaluation will occur with the annual submission of the IMLS State Programs Report for the federal fiscal year. NHSL will review and analyze progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the plan during the grant award period. Individual programs and projects will be evaluated utilizing reports from project managers. Statistics, anecdotal evidence and satisfaction surveys will help determine successes and challenges.

At the end of the five years, an independent evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Program will be conducted in accordance with LSTA requirements. Intended benefits and outcomes have been built into this plan and will inform our evaluation strategy. Standard and accepted evaluation methods, including but not limited to surveys, questionnaires, data collection, cost-benefit determinations, anecdotal evidence, observations and comparisons, will be employed at the end of the five years to measure our success in meeting the stated goals through our projects. Results will be determined using focus groups, surveys, interviews and a comparison of improvements and changes in the knowledge, skills, satisfaction level and service capacity of New Hampshire's libraries over the course of the plan period. The five-year evaluation of this plan will be designed to include a needs assessment for our next five-year planning process.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement, communication and monitoring are essential elements of this plan. NHSL could not have undertaken this plan without stakeholder input to gauge statewide library service needs. Stakeholder involvement determines stakeholder needs and priorities. The stakeholders of this plan include the NH library community, NH residents and the NH legislature. The 424 state legislators represent the interests and needs of the 1.37 million people in NH. The 231 NH public libraries that make up the statewide library community represent the interests and needs of their users to the State Librarian. Each public library in our 234 towns/cities (not counting unincorporated areas) is totally independent of any other local or state government.

Because of stakeholder input during the recent evaluation process, LSTA programs have already been vetted. The NHSL relies on the NH Library Association, NH Library Trustees Association, the eleven public library cooperative groups and the NH School Library Media Association to convey library service needs. NHSL makes every effort to be present at regularly scheduled meetings of these groups. In addition, NHSL provides a regular Director's call virtual forum in which concerns, issues, and needs of public library directors are brought forward for collegial discussion. These in-person and virtual meeting opportunities allows NHSL staff to consistently connect with stakeholders on a frequent basis in an environment where open discussion leads to decisions regarding the development, implementation and evaluation of LSTA programs. State Library personnel communicate one-on-one with librarians across the state daily, which provides opportunities for real-time stakeholder input.

Communication and Public Availability

In keeping with the State of New Hampshire’s transparency of government policy, NHSL makes all documents pertaining to LSTA programs publicly available in both print and electronic format. Both the print and electronic versions of the approved plan will be kept permanently as part of the New Hampshire State Library’s collection. The electronic version will be included in the NHSL Digital Document Depository.

This draft plan was written by the State Librarian in consultation with library personnel who will serve as project managers for program activities. The approved plan will be available on the state library’s website at www.nh.gov/nhsl. Upon approval of the plan by IMLS, announcements will be made through the blogs and social media platforms of the New Hampshire State Library, and at meetings of library associations and cooperatives.

A media release of plan approval by IMLS will be released by our agency, the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resource, and this plan will also be available on the New Hampshire State Library web site and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) website <http://cosla.org>, which facilitates sharing LSTA plans among state library agencies.

Monitoring

Monitoring the library needs in New Hampshire and updating the assessment is a continuous process. Data and feedback are collected from libraries as a matter of course in accordance with normal LSTA annual reporting procedures. When the needs of libraries and library users change, new strategies and initiatives are implemented accordingly to achieve the intended outcomes specified in the Five-Year Plan. An important part of this monitoring process is the tracking of outcomes by State Library personnel who have consulting, training and technical assistance responsibilities.

Certifications and Assurances

The following required certifications and assurances are appended to this plan:

- State Certification from NH Attorney General’s office (authorizing State Librarian to do rest of assurances)
- Non-Construction Assurances 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

Sources Consulted

Sources used in compiling “New Hampshire’s Economic Scoreboard” (page 6)

- <https://taxfoundation.org/2021-state-business-tax-climate-index/>
- <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/poverty-rate-by-state>
- <https://www.consumeraffairs.com/homeowners/safest-states-in-the-us.html>
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- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_and_territories_by_educational_attainment
- <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/healthiest-states>
- <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/per-capita-income-by-state>
- <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/quality-of-life-by-state>

Additional Sources consulted in compiling this plan

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- <https://www.nh.gov/osi/data-center/2020-census/index.htm>
- <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=0400000US33>
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- https://www.nh.gov/nhsl/lids/public_library_stats.html