



## STATE LIBRARY OF LOUISIANA

### A Vision for Louisiana Public Libraries

#### Library Services and Technology Act Five-Year Plan, 2023-2027

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## Mission Statement

### Mission:

The State Library of Louisiana inspires and supports literacy and lifelong learning for all Louisianans through access to information, strengthening communities, supporting exceptional library services, and preserving Louisiana's heritage.

### Agency Philosophy:

The State Library of Louisiana, its Board of Commissioners and staff value:

- Equal access to information for all citizens,
- The literary and cultural heritage of Louisiana,
- Intellectual freedom, and
- Reading.

### Background:

In 1925, with only five public libraries in the state, the Louisiana Library Commission was created, and Essae M. Culver led the mission to establish statewide public library service through the demonstration method. By 1968, all 64 parishes had public library service.

Today, Louisiana supports 67 public library systems providing statewide coverage: 61 of these are parish-wide; one is a system for two parishes; two are city libraries in parishes that also have parish libraries; and one parish does not have parish-wide service, but instead has two municipal libraries, and one district library that serves three towns and their outlying areas. While the State Library led the development of the public library system on request, each local library was created by the parish governing authority, and are still governed and funded locally. Funding for Louisiana libraries ranges from very well-funded to very poorly-funded. All but a few libraries are funded with a dedicated property tax: this makes their funding very stable, if not generous. The other libraries are funded by a partial property tax, municipal funding, or a sales tax.

The State Library provides strong supplemental support to all 67 systems through its statewide projects and initiatives, including educational and informational databases with access through the public libraries, an interlibrary loan system, continuing education, children's services, and consulting services.

The State Library does not hold back any Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds for administrative costs, and uses all LSTA funds for statewide initiatives for public libraries, with two exceptions: the Talking Books and Braille Library, which provides free public library service to Louisiana residents of all ages who cannot easily read standard printed materials, and the Louisiana Book Festival, which is held in Baton Rouge but brings in residents from around the state.

## Needs Assessment

The State Library of Louisiana (OSL) has based its LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-27 on the findings and recommendations on the recently completed evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan 2018-22 ([Microsoft Word - Evaluation report 2018-22 final \(state.lib.la.us\)](#)). The evaluator examined available data collected and compiled by OSL, as well as from other sources. Statistical data used include: the census, the LSTA annual state program reports and financial status reports, *Public Libraries in Louisiana: Statistical Report*, the Louisiana Performance Accountability System reports (LaPAS), OSL quarterly and monthly reports, workshop evaluations, biennial Talking Books and Braille Library (TBBL) patron surveys, and other one-time surveys by Library Development. Information from these reports and statistics provided information on programs, goals, primary services and users, and projected output and outcomes. Discussions with OSL department heads provided invaluable information on the programs and activities within their departments, and allowed them to speak candidly about the activities and programs in the five-year plan.

The State Library has also based its LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-27 on the following activities:

1. The annual public library director's satisfaction survey allows this group to anonymously express their satisfaction/dissatisfaction, provide suggestions for improvement, and offer ideas to implement the suggested improvements. In addition, since the pandemic, Library Development has been holding monthly virtual library administrators' meetings, as well as asking for input through email surveys of library administrators and evaluations of webinars and workshops.
2. Two focus group sessions were held by Zoom with members of the LSTA Advisory Committee. These were facilitated brainstorming sessions designed to elicit creative and innovative ideas for the future of library service in Louisiana. The following questions were asked:
  - What are the most important issues/challenges facing your library today?
  - What are the major new initiatives your library will undertake in the next year?
  - What do you predict will be the most important issues/challenges facing your library five years from now?
  - What role do you see the State Library playing in helping you address these issues?
3. Four focus group sessions were held by Zoom which invited the public library directors of the 67 public library systems in Louisiana to attend. These were also facilitated brainstorming sessions, following the same format as the LSTA Advisory Committee groups.
4. One focus group session was held with the Department Heads of the State Library. This was a facilitated brainstorming session, following the same format as the LSTA Advisory Committee groups, but focusing on services offered by the State Library.

5. In-depth discussions were held with OSL staff about the information, programming, and technology needs of Louisiana citizens, and the role of public library services, programs, information resources, and technology in the state's public library systems.

Participants in these sessions identified the following challenges to Louisiana public libraries in serving their communities.

- While Louisiana's population is static, it is becoming more diverse.
- Libraries serve individuals lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills, special needs individuals, and a growing senior population.
- Libraries serve the needs of the undereducated, under-employed, and unemployed.
- Libraries are asked to address the lack of technology and digital literacy within their communities.
- Libraries face:
  - Staffing issues, including hiring and retaining competent staff,
  - Aging facilities and repair of buildings damaged in hurricanes,
  - Planning for the future,
  - Technology issues in the library, both in updating equipment and training staff, and
  - Insufficient funding, including no new tax philosophies of local governing authorities and reductions in existing funding for other local priorities.
- Communication issues that include the marketing and promotion of programs and services to the public, as well as the local governing authority.

Results of these sources of stakeholder input suggested a number of key factors for the Louisiana LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-2027. These needs are identified as:

1. Access to Information—the importance of access to information by Louisiana residents.
2. Programs for Targeted Audiences—the importance of services and programs for targeted audiences and their specific needs.
3. Training and Professional Development—support of public library staff through training and professional development.
4. Technology Support—technology support and management for public libraries.
5. Communication/Promotion/Marketing—communication, promotion, and marketing training for public libraries to help libraries overcome barriers to public library use and a lack of information and awareness about public libraries by the general public and decision makers.
6. Literacy and Digital Literacy—improve literacy rate in all Louisiana residents, early childhood through adult.

7. Facility maintenance and staffing—support for libraries dealing with aging buildings or the need for new buildings, as well as a general lack of adequate staff.

Additional details about the needs assessment for Louisiana public libraries is included with the goals and programs/activities for each.

During the five years of the plan, OSL will update its knowledge of public library needs through the following:

1. Input from the public library directors through the semi-annual Administrative Librarian's Conference, monthly virtual library administrators' meetings, and the Annual Survey of Public Library Directors, as well as various e-mail surveys.
2. On-going input from public library administration, board, and staff through library consultants' visits, evaluations at continuing education webinars and workshops, and other interactions.
3. Surveys from Talking Books and Braille patrons, and the Department of Corrections staff and inmates of the prisons served by the State Library, as well as input from the general public.

Strategies suggested for addressing these needs include:

- Increase emphasis on partnerships and outreach, especially with other state agencies and libraries, and appropriate public/private partnerships,
- Continue leveraging economies of scale whenever possible,
- Provide services and tools to assist in improving the literacy level of Louisianans, and
- Enable libraries to expand outreach and promotional opportunities to gain greater visibility and use of their services, especially those provided through LSTA funding.

## Goals

The State Library supports a vision for the Louisiana public library as a vital, integral, and valued anchor in its community, dedicated to social, economic, and technological advancement for its citizens. Louisiana public libraries are living, vibrant places of interest, destinations, and places to seek help of all kinds. The State Library's Five Year Plan was developed to address the goals and priorities of the LSTA. To address these and meet the needs of Louisiana libraries, the following three goals were selected as the focus of the Five Year Plan for Louisiana.

- **Goal 1     Enhance Access to Information**
- **Goal 2     Improve Library Services**
- **Goal 3     Community Engagement**

Goals are aligned with the IMLS Measuring Success focal areas and intents.

# Projects

## Goal 1 Enhance Access to Information

The State Library will continue as the leadership agency that designs, facilitates, and supports projects and information products to ensure access to robust resources for all state residents. Louisiana residents need equitable access to information and services, but especially for those in rural communities. Rural areas and very small libraries need online access to a variety of resources and information that is more readily available in larger cities and libraries. The State Library provides resources that connect with library users for access in the library, from home, at school, and in the workplace.

**Needs Addressed:** Access to Information, Programs for Targeted Audiences, Technology Support

### LSTA Priorities Addressed:

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

## PROJECTS

### A. Institutional Library Services

**Project Description:** The State Library provides interlibrary loan and reference services to eight state prisons in Louisiana. In addition, the State Library coordinates and assists public

libraries in providing services to people who are incarcerated. One prison has limited services of a degreed librarian, none of the rest of the prisons has a degreed librarian on staff, and all prisons rely on inmates assigned to work in the library.

### **Focal Area –Information Access**

#### **Intent**

- Improve users’ ability to obtain and/or use information resources

#### **Activities**

- Increase outreach to prison wardens to encourage them to provide library services to the incarcerated.
- Continue efforts to get support from the Department of Corrections for quality library services.
- Continue to provide access electronically for residents of correctional institutions.
- Continue to provide training to staff, librarians, and trustees running the existing prison libraries.
- Evaluate and promote the collection of library materials and resources for use in correctional institutions.
- Expand library services to the juvenile detention centers and parish institutions.

#### **Outcome**

- Institutional libraries will have professional library and information services to support their needs and incarcerated individuals will have access to library services critical in making positive changes in their lives.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

- This is an on-going project of the State Library.

### **B. Louisiana Collection**

**Project Description:** The State Library supports preservation and digitization of important Louisiana historical and cultural collections. Library staff receive and process donations of important Louisiana historical and cultural significance and then perform cataloging and processing on items making these accessible to users. Items are also digitized and added to a digital repository, the Louisiana Digital Library, that provides free online access statewide and beyond to historic materials, increasing their discoverability and usability while ensuring that the items are protected from damage.



## **Focal Area – Information Access**

### **Intent**

- Improve users' ability to discover information resources

### **Activities**

- Expand the Louisiana Collection through donations and acquisitions focusing on significant collections of Louisiana authors, Louisiana-related events, and Louisiana history and/or culture and make accessible to users.
- Digitize important Louisiana historical and cultural items, especially those that are fragile or rare.
- Increase collaborations with partner agencies and organizations to digitize and preserve Louisiana historic and cultural materials.
- Provide consultation, training, and educational resources to support digitization and preservation projects in Louisiana public libraries.
- Increase support to public libraries for collection-focused disaster planning and response.
- Promote Louisiana collections, both tangible and digital, to researchers, the general public, and libraries.

### **Outcome**

- Louisiana residents will have long-term access to Louisiana materials and collections.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

- This is an on-going project of the State Library.

## **C. Louisiana Public Document Depository Program**

**Project Description:** The Louisiana Public Document Depository Program, established in 1948, provides everyone in Louisiana with free access to public information published by the state government. State agencies are mandated by statute to provide copies of all public information they produce to the Recorder of Documents Office, part of the State Library. The Recorder's Office distributes documents to depository libraries across the state, including the State Library, which is a historical depository. This means the State Library receives and retains in perpetuity at least one copy of all tangible public documents. The Recorder's Office also receives public documents produced electronically and retains those in an online digital archive, maintained in perpetuity offsite. The library performs

original cataloging and processing of all of these public documents in all formats in order to make the information readily findable and accessible to users.

**Focal Area – Information Access**

**Intent**

- Improve users’ ability to discover information resources.

**Activities**

- Work with state agencies and depository libraries to ensure state public documents are readily accessible to users.
- Catalog public documents for the State Library catalog and the Louisiana Public Document Digital Archive to make the documents permanently accessible.
- Create and maintain guides for depository libraries and state agencies regarding the Louisiana Public Document Depository Program.
- Provide outreach and instructions to public libraries on how to provide access to the Louisiana Public Document Digital Archive and promote its use to users.

**Outcome**

- Louisiana residents will have long-term access to Louisiana public documents.

**Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

- This is an on-going project of the State Library of Louisiana.

**D. Resource Sharing**

**Project Description:** Resource sharing provides equitable access to information for all citizens, by providing access to collections and resources beyond what is owned by a local library. The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) system (LoanSHARK) is used by all public libraries and provides access to OCLC’s OCLC’s Worldshare, an international sharing system that enables public libraries access to materials worldwide. The State Library also provides courier service and delivery to public and academic libraries throughout the state.

**Focal Area – Information Access**

**Intent**

- Improve users’ ability to obtain and/or use information resources

### **Activities**

- Continue to support the ILL system.
- Maintain courier service and delivery to public and academic libraries.
- Provide resource sharing training for staff in public libraries.
- Make information resources and reading materials available to all Louisianans in whatever format required.

### **Outcome**

- In making resource sharing available, libraries will be able to expand the services and resources available to their communities. They will learn from their statewide colleagues and create economies through these resource sharing initiatives.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

- This is an on-going project of the State Library of Louisiana.

## **E. Statewide Electronic Resources**

**Project Description:** Electronic resources supported by LSTA funds are available to all Louisiana residents. The State Library manages the statewide electronic resources providing access to job assistance, language learning, consumer information, health and medical information, newspapers, magazines, children's and teens books, etc. This includes Homework Louisiana, which is an online, after-school tutoring program available to all students in Louisiana from kindergarten through basic college level, as well as adult education in more than 60 subjects, including preparation for the GED. In addition, services offered include test preparation, and job search assistance and resources. As such, it is a well-used and popular service.

### **Focal Area – Lifelong Learning**

#### **Intent**

- Improve users' general knowledge and skills

#### **Activities**

- Allow statewide access to a core set of online resources and provide consistent user experience for Louisiana residents.
- Allow statewide access to Homework Louisiana to all students in Louisiana.
- Provide coordinated training resources on use and promotion of these statewide electronic resources.

- Monitor and analyze usage data and reports to ensure that needs of Louisiana residents are being met.

#### **Outcome**

- Louisiana residents will have a variety of electronic resources available for educational, professional, and personal development that meet their information needs.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

- This is an on-going project of the State Library of Louisiana.

### **E. Talking Books and Braille Library (TBBL)**

**Project Description:** This program remains a free service to residents of Louisiana. It currently serves more than 6,000 users of all ages in their homes and in institutions, including those who cannot easily read standard printed materials due to a visual impairment, physical disability, or a reading disability whether it is permanent or temporary. Access to digital media is provided through adaptive equipment. The program is affiliated with the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS). Services include information access and talking book-lending, literacy programs, and outreach services. TBBL offers large print materials, digital audiobooks, descriptive videos, Braille materials, and NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD).

#### **Focal Area – Information Access**

##### **Intent**

- Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources.

##### **Activities**

- Increase user ability to access TBBL services.
- Increase outreach to partner agencies and organizations serving vision and print disabled populations to enroll new users.
- Provide training for public library staff on serving individuals with disabilities.
- Provide information and training to public libraries, state agencies, and organizations on TBBL services.

##### **Outcome**

- The State Library will offer library services to Louisiana residents who are unable to read or use standard print materials as the result of visual or physical impairment or reading disability. Use of TBBL will help them achieve personal independence and improve quality of life.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

- TBBL is a major on-going project.

## **Goal 2      Improve Library Services**

The State Library will support libraries and library staff as they adapt library services to 21<sup>st</sup> century needs while continuing to provide traditional library services. It is important for the State Library to identify and deliver training opportunities and provide support for librarians, staff, and trustees to improve services, to understand new technology, and to develop policies for their library. Libraries also play a part in solving the problems of low literacy in Louisiana, and have a critical role in supplying lifelong learning opportunities, as well as workforce development.

**Needs Addressed:** Access to Information, Programs for Targeted Audiences, Training and Professional Development, Technology Support

#### **LSTA Priorities Addressed:**

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;
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;

## **PROJECTS**

### **A. Continuing Education and Consulting**

**Project Description:** The State Library provides continuing education and consulting for all segments of public library service.

A strong and effective program of continuing education of librarians includes a steady supply of timely, relevant offerings as well as access to online training opportunities which can be used at a time and location convenient to Louisiana library staff, administrators, and trustees. Louisiana librarians should know that they work in an environment where learning never stops. It is important for the State Library to identify and deliver training opportunities which provide professional support that assist librarians, staff, trustees and others in effectively improving services, understanding technologies and developing policies.

Support for public libraries is also provided by the State Library through consultations, site visits, and assistance and support as requested on library policies, law, procedures, best practices, etc. The State Library also produces publications, guides, manuals, and templates for use by public libraries, including the directors' handbook, trustees handbook, and Louisiana library laws books.

#### **Focal Area – Institutional Capacity**

##### **Intent**

- Improve the library workforce

##### **Activities**

- Continue a robust program of training for public library staff, including in-person workshops, as well as online webinars and workshops.
- Continue to offer, improve, and expand Library Support Staff Certification courses and continuing education opportunities geared to public library support staff.

- Continue to offer training, leadership courses, orientation and guidance for new directors, trustees, and administrators, as well as help and guidance with strategic planning efforts.
- Continue to provide conference for frontline library staff and create opportunities for staff to increase statewide collaboration and share insights and best practices across public libraries.
- Offer online, on-demand, self-paced workshops to allow Louisiana library staff more opportunities to address basic library skill development.
- Seek partnerships and collaboration with other libraries and institutions to increase continuing education opportunities and resources for library staff.
- Maintain relationships and communication with public libraries, through site visits and consultations, to ensure that State Library remains responsive to public library needs and to provide libraries with the resources they need to grow and develop.
- Develop, revise, and/or update State Library publications, including the Director's Handbook, Trustee's Handbook, and Louisiana Library Laws, to provide directors, trustees, etc., so that they have the most up-to-date resources to use in decision making.

#### **Outcome**

- Library staff, administrators, and trustees in the state will report increases in their levels of knowledge, skills and abilities regarding statewide services.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

- This is an on-going project for the State Library.

### **B. Broadband and Technology Support**

**Project Description:** Louisiana is unique in that it has offered dedicated (non-dial-up) Internet access at every public library facility since 1998. Every library in Louisiana continues to provide broadband for patron use. Broadband Internet access is a foundational public library service, especially in Louisiana where only 60.5% of Louisianans have broadband Internet at home and 19% have no connection anywhere.

The State Library provides support for every system in filing E-rate applications, the funds necessary to provide broadband. The State Library also provides technology support to the public libraries as it is critical for libraries to maintain and expand their libraries' IT infrastructure and services. State Library staff offer much needed IT training, consulting, and IT support and assistance to public libraries.

## **Focal Area –Institutional Capacity**

### **Intent**

- Improve library operations

### **Activities**

- Provide library staff training, exposure to emerging technologies, and programming on IT topics and trends.
- Keep libraries current on emerging technologies and provide decision support for technology procurement.
- Advise and support public libraries in maintaining and improving technology in their libraries, includes providing assistance on system and network administration, technology procurement, hardware installation and maintenance, backup and recovery, security, etc.
- Continue to assist public libraries' in applying for E-rate assistance and utilizing other grants and opportunities to develop and improve IT infrastructure and equipment.
- Seek partnerships and collaborations to increase broadband access and literacy statewide.

### **Outcome**

- Louisiana libraries will continue to provide broadband and Internet access to all Louisiana residents. Library network infrastructure will improve and libraries will have support and assistance in expanding broadband access and offering new technologies.

### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

### **Timeline**

- This project is on-going at the State Library.

## **C. Literacy**

**Project Description:** Education levels and endemic poverty continue to be critical issues in Louisiana. The State Library is committed to promoting literacy and lifelong learning. The State Library: (1) coordinates the statewide Summer Reading Program, which is part of the national Collaborative Summer Library Program; (2) provides summer reading program training statewide; and (3) also purchases materials and supplies to implement the programming. This enables local libraries to offer events throughout the summer months for Louisiana residents of all ages.



The State Library also coordinates the Louisiana Readers' Choice Program. The Program fosters a love of reading in the children and teens of Louisiana by motivating them to participate in the recognition of outstanding books.

The State Library also provides early literacy training and resources for library staff, so that they can implement early literacy programming in their libraries.

### **Focal Area – Lifelong Learning**

#### **Intent**

- Improve users' formal education

#### **Activities**

- Provide continuing education to support public libraries efforts in both adult and child literacies. This would include sessions to help create life skills and work-skills programs for public libraries to replicate.
- Continue membership in the national Collaborative Summer Library Program and provide leadership for summer reading programs.
- Train public library staff in how to implement literacy programs.
- Partner with offices in the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism to promote the Summer Reading Program throughout Louisiana.
- Expand and promote the Louisiana Readers' Choice Program.
- Seek partnerships and collaborations to promote literacy programs throughout Louisiana.

#### **Outcome**

- Louisiana residents will benefit from quality learning opportunities and the critical role libraries play in promoting literacy and education.

#### **Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

#### **Timeline**

- Support for literacy programs has been on-going for many years and will continue.

## **Goal 3      Community Engagement**

The State Library and libraries will continue to support and engage with their communities through collective impact initiatives and services. The State Library will also continue to work to

develop and build the capacity of its public libraries to create and implement effective strategies that will have a measurable impact on awareness of the value libraries provide to their communities and increase usage of library resources.

**Needs Addressed:** Access to Information, Programs for Targeted Audiences

**LSTA Priorities Addressed:**

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.

**PROJECTS**

**A. Communications**

**Project Description:** Public libraries have strongly expressed a need for enhanced communication, promotion, and marketing of statewide library services and resources. While the State Library and public libraries provide many initiatives, programs, and services, many people in the state are not aware of what is available in Louisiana’s libraries, such as the statewide electronic resources, Homework Louisiana, summer reading and other literacy programs, TBBL, and the Louisiana Book Festival. The State Library will develop and implement coordinated communications and online media programs for public libraries that will raise awareness of statewide initiatives, programs, and activities funded through LSTA.

**Focal Area** – Civic Engagement

**Intent**

- Improve users’ ability to participate in their community

**Activities**

- Update the State Library website to make it easier to access, navigate, and use.
- Develop and implement coordinated communications and online media programs for public libraries to raise awareness of local, state, and federally funded programs and initiatives.
- Develop ways for public libraries to share information about statewide programs and resources at their libraries.
- Develop a marketing and promotion toolkit for all LSTA programs.

**Outcome**

- The State Library will provide leadership and strategies for raising awareness and increasing use of library services, resources, and programs.

**Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

- This is an on-going project for the State Library and will continue.

**B. Louisiana Book Festival**

**Project Description:** The Louisiana Book Festival (LBF) was established as a project of the Louisiana Center for the Book in the State Library. The LBF is an annual, free literary event that takes place around the Capitol and the State Library in Baton Rouge. The LBF is the Louisiana Center for the Book's primary event in achieving its mission to promote literacy, reading, and education and to showcase Louisiana authors, publishers, and books about Louisiana or set in Louisiana. It also includes culinary arts, visual arts, and Louisiana music. It has become an internationally-known festival and is a credit to the literary heritage of Louisiana.

**Focal Area – Lifelong Learning****Intent**

- Improve users' general knowledge and skills.

**Activities**

- Continue to present the Louisiana Book Festival to promote literacy, books, and reading.
- Continue to offer high-quality programs at the annual Louisiana Book Festival.

- Provide outreach programs for the Louisiana Book Festival, including programs targeting underserved populations.
- Provide Center for the Book programs throughout the year, including Poetry Month, Black History Month, and Woman’s History Month.
- Continue to monitor and track festival trends and responses from all stakeholders involved: authors, presenters, attendees, volunteers, partner organizations, etc.

**Outcome**

- Louisiana residents benefit from a high-quality state festival which celebrates and promotes Louisiana’s literary and cultural heritage.

**Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

- The Louisiana Book Festival takes place annually.

**C. Strategic Partnerships**

**Project Description:** Local communities need a library that is well-integrated into community-based activities and decisions. Libraries have a safe, trusted reputation, and strong communities will work with their library to coordinate, cooperate, collaborate, and communicate to address community needs. Libraries should coordinate library users and non-users, decision makers, and community partners to help their community. In our changing world, it is critical for libraries to share resources and knowledge.

**Focal Area – Civic Engagement**

**Intent**

- Improve users’ ability to participate in their community

**Activities**

- Develop strategies and a plan for the future direction of not only the State Library, but also public libraries within the state.
- Address the changing roles of libraries.
- State Library will partner with other state agencies to make effective use of library services by their respective clientele.
- Assist libraries to identify and develop partnerships and collaborative efforts in their community.
- Encourage public librarians to become civic leaders, and position the library as an essential, neutral community hub.

**Outcome**

- The State Library will provide leadership and strategies for libraries to become valued partners in their community and remain an essential community service.

**Expenditure of Funds**

- LSTA funds will be used for, but not limited to, personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, printing, travel, and training to support programs and activities to assist in meeting this goal. Federal regulations and guidelines will be followed, along with guidance from IMLS, to ensure appropriate expenditure of LSTA funds.

**Timeline**

- This will be an on-going project for the State Library.

## Coordination Efforts

### Crosswalks

FOCAL AREA	INTENT	PROJECT	STATE GOAL
Lifelong Learning	Improve users' formal education	Literacy	Goal 2 – Improve Library Services
Lifelong Learning	Improve users' general knowledge and skills	Louisiana Book Festival	Goal 3 – Community Engagement
Lifelong Learning	Improve users' general knowledge and skills	Statewide Electronic Resources	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Information Access	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources	Institutional Library Services	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Information Access	Improve users' ability to discover information resources	Louisiana Collection	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Information Access	Improve users' ability to discover information resources	Louisiana Public Document Depository Program	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Information Access	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources	Resource Sharing	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Information Access	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources	Talking Books and Braille Library	Goal 1 – Enhance Access to Information
Institutional Capacity	Improve the library workforce	Continuing Education and Consulting	Goal 2 – Improve Library Services
Institutional Capacity	Improve library operations	Broadband and Technology Support	Goal 2 – Improve Library Services
Civic Engagement	Improve users' ability to participate in their community	Communications	Goal 3 – Community Engagement
Civic Engagement	Improve users' ability to participate in their community	Strategic Partnerships	Goal 3 – Community Engagement

## **Partnerships**

The State Library of Louisiana prioritizes partnerships and coordinated efforts with a variety of entities when distinct assets can be combined to meet shared goals that better our state. The State Library's primary partners are other libraries, mainly public libraries, but also academic, school, and special libraries. We work with a number of agencies and organizations to improve access, health and wellness, literacy and learning, and workforce development for all residents in Louisiana. We especially partner with other state agencies to increase inter-agency cooperation so we can expand services and leverage resources which will benefit all Louisiana citizens.

## **State Agencies:**

Board of Regents

Department of Children and Family Services

Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism (Cultural Development, Louisiana Seafood, Louisiana Tourism, State Museum, State Parks, and Volunteer Louisiana)

Department of Education

Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Department of Transportation and Development

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Division of Administration (Office of Broadband Development and Connectivity and Office of State Procurement)

Governor's Office

Lieutenant Governor's Office

Secretary of State's Office (State Archives)

Workforce Commission

## **National, Regional, and State Organizations:**

American Library Association

AMIGOS Library Services

Collaborative Summer Library Program

Historic New Orleans Collection

Library of Congress Center for the Book

Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled

Louisiana Digital Consortium

Louisiana Historical Records Advisory Board

Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities

Louisiana Library and Book Festival Foundation

Louisiana Library Association

Louisiana Library Consortiums

LYRASIS

National Federation of the Blind Louisiana

Utah State Library Division

## **Evaluation Plan**

On-going monitoring and evaluation of LSTA-funded projects will be accomplished using data from the quarterly Louisiana Performance Accountability System (LaPAS) reports, the annual public library directors' satisfaction surveys, the public libraries' annual statistical reports, workshop and webinar evaluations, biennial TBBL patron surveys, vendor data reports, and other means of assessment.

## **Stakeholder Involvement**

The stakeholders included in the 2023-2027 plan are the public library directors, boards, and staff; the LSTA Advisory Committee; and State Library department heads and staff. Planning for the next five years has encompassed multiple activities:

- A review of the accomplishments of the past five years;
- A review of the most recent annual survey among public library directors;
- Two focus group sessions with the LSTA Advisory Committee;
- Four public library focus groups held via webinar;
- One facilitated staff planning session via webinar to assess and identify overarching needs at the State Library; and
- A review of various statistical publications.

On an annual basis, the State Library conducts satisfaction surveys of public library directors and makes adjustments in services as needed. In addition, monthly Zoom meetings are held with public library directors. Throughout the year, workshop and webinar evaluation forms are used to assess satisfaction with training and to seek new topics for training. After the annual Louisiana Book Festival, evaluation forms are collected and reviewed. Public library directors and the State Library staff analyze the annual statistical report to look for trends.

Stakeholder involvement in the five-year plan included the four facilitated online focus groups with public library directors, the staff planning session, and the facilitated focus group sessions with the LSTA Advisory Committee. Results of those discussions are provided in the Needs Assessment portion of this plan.

## **Communication and Public Availability**

Once approved by Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the new five-year plan will be posted to the State Library's website and distributed via email to the LSTA Advisory Committee, the public library directors, and legislative and governing officials. It will be distributed throughout the state via the Louisiana Public Documents Depository Program.



Progress in accomplishing the goals will be reported annually in the *State of the State Library* address at the Louisiana Library Association conference, in the state's LAPAS reporting system, and at various meetings with public and academic library directors, as well as at the annual Public Library Staff Day conference. Any changes to the plan will be made with stakeholder involvement and sent to IMLS for approval.

## Monitoring

All Louisiana state agencies are required to input quarterly statistics into the Louisiana Performance Accountability System (LaPAS). These statistics are composed of both output and outcome measures and show progress toward goals; this website is available to the general public. Many of the performance measures used in evaluating this five-year plan are the same ones reported on the State system.

The State Library collects annual statistics from the public libraries currently via BiblioStat Collect, reports the findings to IMLS, and publishes an annual report in both print and electronic form. This will be a major resource for tracking and monitoring success of statewide programs. Responsibility for gathering statistics and feedback and evaluating success of programs will rest with the Deputy State Librarian and the Associate State Librarian for Library Development.

## Resources Consulted

[Louisiana saw fifth highest population loss in U.S. in 2021, according to new estimates | Local Politics | nola.com](#)

[New Vintage 2021 Population Estimates Available for the Nation, States and Puerto Rico \(census.gov\)](#)

Louisiana Comprehensive Literacy Plan, 2021. Department of Education. [Louisiana Comprehensive Literacy Plan \(louisianabelieves.com\)](#)

## **LSTA Advisory Committee 2022**

### **Public Library Representatives**

Heather McEntee, Director, Bossier Parish Library  
Marjorie Harrison, Director, Calcasieu Parish Public Library  
Amanda Taylor, Director, Concordia Parish Library  
Delbert Terry, Director, DeSoto Parish Library  
Krishanda Harrison Sanders, Director, East Carroll Parish Library  
Celise Reech-Harper, Director, Rapides Parish Library  
Barry Bradford, Director, Tangipahoa Parish Library  
Charlotte Bourg, Director, Vermilion Parish Library  
Howard Coy, Director, Vernon Parish Library  
Leann Benedict, Director, St. Charles Parish Library  
Stacie Lynn Verrette Davis, Director, West Feliciana Parish Library

### **State Library Board Representatives**

David Johnson  
James Lee