

2009 STATE GRANT PROGRAM

Small Libraries in Networks Expansion

FACT SHEET

Background

The Public Library Initiative (PLI), the Board's 1999/2000 public library planning process, recommended that all public libraries serving municipalities of under 10,000 population, affiliate with, or join, an automated resource sharing network. The Board felt that public library membership in networks was critical to providing equitable, high-quality library services; and that it was imperative to boost network membership.

Therefore, in fiscal years 2002 and 2003, the Board first offered support for the Small Libraries in Networks program, using funds provided in a state supplemental budget for library technology. Beginning in fiscal year 2004, the program was frozen at existing levels. The supplemental budget had expired, and no new state funding was available. Ongoing support for the 63 program participants was moved to LSTA.

In FY2008, the Board awarded \$70,000 to provide a partial offset to the membership of 12 libraries that became network members since 2003, and nine libraries that became full members of a network just before the program was implemented. In addition, five existing Small Libraries in Networks libraries that had increased their level of network participation (from Online Internet or Online Affiliate to Full member), had their offset increased. This funding also supports, twenty-six dial-up libraries have moved to broadband Internet connectivity through the efforts of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System. Since account 7000-9506 was essentially level-funded in FY08, it was not possible to increase award for the addition of libraries to this program. Therefore, the same awards that were made in FY07 were continued in FY2008.

Small Libraries in Networks outlines three levels of service: Online Internet, Online Affiliate Membership, and Full Circulating Membership (including C/W MARS Mininet).

- **Online Internet** libraries offer public access to the Internet through an online (always on) connection rather than through a dial up connection.
- An **Online Affiliate Member** uses the automated resource sharing network database to record information about its current acquisitions, commits to entering all of its holdings within 3 years, offers public access to the network online catalog, and offers public access to the Internet.
- A **Full Member** enters all of its holdings into the network database; enters its patron file; uses the network as its circulation system, as its catalog and for cataloging. Full members offer Internet access to the public

Purpose of this Grant Offering

With the possibility of new Small Libraries in Networks funding through account 7000-9506 (Library Technology and Resource Sharing) in FY2009, the Board wishes to open up the Small Libraries in Networks Program to new participants, and to begin to realize the goal of the original program by providing an annual offset to all small public libraries, including those that joined networks before the

program's inception and those ready to join a network. The Board also wishes to make further progress toward the goal of ensuring that every public library in the Commonwealth is able to offer the public broadband connectivity to the Internet.

Scope of this Offering

This grant program implements only the ongoing funding component of the PLI program; it does not provide for equipment or an offset to network startup fees. Libraries participating in this Small Libraries in Networks expansion should also be aware that support is dependent on maintaining increased funding levels in account 7000-9506. The Board cannot guarantee persistent, annual offsets for libraries participating in the expansion program.

Eligible Libraries

Only public libraries are eligible. Libraries must be located in an eligible municipality (see attached list). For the "Online Affiliate" and "Full Member" participation levels, the public library must be in a municipality that was certified to receive State Aid to Public Libraries in FY2008.

For the "Online Internet" program, only main public library buildings (not branches) are eligible. In addition, the library does not otherwise have broadband access (*e.g.*, cable or DSL) available to the public, and no complimentary or free broadband options are available to the library. Libraries participating in this program will no longer receive support under the "MLIN I" (dial-up) program.

The following priorities will be observed when grant awards are made.

- 1) Libraries that are participating in the Small Libraries in Networks program in FY2008
- 2) New Online Internet (Broadband Only) libraries
- 3) Libraries that wish to join a network for the first time as an Online Affiliate Member or Full Member
- 4) Libraries that wish to move up to a higher level of participation within the program.

Any funds remaining after the four priorities above have been met will be used to begin to offset membership costs for public libraries in eligible municipalities that are current network members, but have not participated in the Small Libraries in Networks program. Municipal EQV (Equalized Valuations) will serve as the basis for prioritizing awards in this category.

Timing of this Grant Round

This grant round is being run now in anticipation of providing service to applicant libraries beginning in the fall of 2008 (FY2009). This time frame is necessary for the following reasons:

- It provides planning time for both libraries and networks
- It provides some time for libraries to secure local funding and local support
- It provides time for the networks to implement changes in existing telecommunications systems

Eligible Applicants

Automated resource sharing networks and Regional Headquarters are eligible to apply.

Application Process

Networks and Regions (Online Internet program only) will be the applicants. They will receive and administer the grant funds on behalf of the public libraries. Individual public libraries will not apply directly and will not have to administer these grants.

Applications sent to Networks and Regions	April 30, 2008
Networks and Regions work with libraries to be certain they understand the program and their responsibilities	April – August, 2008
Applications due (from networks and regions)	August 25, 2008
Board votes grant awards	October 2008 Board Meeting

Anticipated Funding

In FY2008, \$70,000 in Library Technology and Resource Sharing went to Small Libraries in Networks. The expansion of the Small Libraries in Networks grant program will be implemented if there is an increase in account 7000-9506 sufficient to meaningfully address program priorities.

This is a formula-driven grant program, based on the priorities outlined in the section “Eligible Libraries”.

To Apply

Complete the application form for this program and submit an original and 1 copy to Rachel Devin at the MBLC, 98 North Washington St., Suite 401, Boston, MA 02114 by **4:00 PM on August 25, 2008**. Faxes will not be accepted.

Questions?

Questions about this grant program should be directed to Paul Kissman, Library information Systems Specialist, at 617-725-1860 or 800-952-7403.