

FACT SHEET

FY2010 Open Grant Program

BACKGROUND

This category is being offered to allow librarians to satisfy needs that are not now being met by current programs. It has always been a priority of the federal program to encourage innovation and risk taking. It is also an interest of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to provide librarians with opportunities to help fulfill their long range plan goals and objectives. The **Open** program will allow applicants to apply new methods to solve problems, build programs, and best carry out their library's mission and plan. These projects must meet the needs of a specific target audience. It is important that applicants speak with a consultant about their project ideas for feedback and guidance prior to submitting an application.

The **Open** LSTA grant program allows applicants as much flexibility in the development of their projects as possible. Applicants can seek awards for projects that otherwise do not fall under the current LSTA program offerings, whether the project is innovative or well applied in many libraries. The **Open** Grant will also allow the applicant to adapt programs that have been offered in the past or have proven models, such as Discovery Kits, Connecting Cultures, Business & Career Resources, and Health and Science Reference. (Information about these "Grants from the Past" programs may be found in the LSTA section at http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/lsta/opportunities/related_resources/index.php.) Finally, the **Open** Program offers libraries an opportunity to exercise maximum creativity to implement unique services in a flexible and collaborative grant-making environment. It encourages creative program development and rewards those librarians willing to engage in a higher level of effort and to take those risks.

MASSACHUSETTS LONG-RANGE PLAN

The **Open** program builds on the results of prior years' Innovative Projects. **Open** offers a less rigorous test than the Innovative program which was described in the Long Range Plan as: "[Innovative] Projects should propose activities that are new and creative, have not been tried previously in Massachusetts, will result in models that can be of value to other libraries with similar needs, and show potential to be replicated as mini-grants or targeted programs. The idea for the project is determined by the applicant within the broad, general goals of the federal program." Although the requirement for innovation has been relaxed, projects should be replicable in other libraries of a similar type.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to apply for direct grants, a library must:

- Be a member of a regional library system
- Have a long-range plan on file at the MBLC by October 1, 2007 that meets the requirements of the *Massachusetts Long-Range Plan, 2008-2012* and the *LSTA Policies and Procedures 2008-2012*. If a plan is already on file, an updated Action Plan for FY2010 must be postmarked to the MBLC by **December 1, 2008**. If a cooperating group is applying on behalf of one or more of its members, all participants must meet this requirement.
- For public libraries, remain certified in the State Aid to Public Libraries program throughout the application and award process.
- For automated resource sharing networks or other cooperating groups, each member of the group must be a member of a regional library system as a contingency of any direct grant award. An application from a cooperating group can be submitted on behalf of several members, however, as well as the entire group.

BUDGET/FUNDING

Projects may be funded for 1 or 2 years. It is anticipated that funding requests will be in a range of \$5,000 to \$30,000 (funding for regions and cooperatives may exceed this maximum under certain circumstances). Applicants are reminded that a significant program component is required for any project to assure that the target population will be directly served, and that *measurable, outcome-based goals and objectives are important to a project's approval*. Requests that are largely for materials, equipment, or staff will not be considered. As a general guide, none of these budget elements should exceed 30% of the total requested. A significant local in-kind or cash contribution is expected. Requests for library automation systems or for retrospective conversion cannot be accepted under this program. The MBLC supports nine automated resource sharing networks for libraries' automation needs and has provided funding for retrospective conversion through the state-funded MARC Conversion and MassCat programs.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent** POSTMARKED by **December 1, 2008** with the "Open" option checked off under **TYPE**. Applicants should include a project abstract (150-200 words), including goals and *activities of the project* with the letter of intent to help us put you in touch with the appropriate consultant. An informational workshop to assist applicants in completing an application for this program will be held in late January/early February 2009.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

Contact us at 1-800-952-7403:

Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Preservation Specialist, ext. 236 or gregor.trinkaus-randall@state.ma.us

Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist, ext 238 or paul.kissman@state.ma.us

Shelley Quezada, Underserved Populations Specialist, ext. 235 or shelley.quezada@state.ma.us

Beth Wade, Grants Manager, Early Childhood, Young Adult & Elderly Services, ext. 232 or beth.wade@state.ma.us

Marlene Heroux, Reference Information Systems Specialist, Academic Libraries, School Libraries, ext. 250 or marlene.heroux@state.ma.us