Program Evaluation of the Library Services and Technology Act Plan For Implementation in North Carolina, 2003-2007

Prepared for the
State Library of North Carolina

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to assess the degree to which the State of North Carolina implemented its plans as outlined in the 2002 document *Library Services & Technology Act Plan For Implementation In North Carolina – 2003-2007*. The plan's goals were:

1. Achieving Equity in Library Service
2. Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change
3. Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens
4. Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services

Overall, the study found that a majority of respondents from across the state believed that these goals had, in fact, been accomplished. Other data reviewed by the evaluation team also shows that the goals were accomplished.

The evaluation team reviewed numerous reports related to the work of the State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) and the state's library community in implementing the plan; administered two statewide surveys; conducted five Town Hall meetings – four half-day meetings in Asheville, Raleigh, Mooresville and Fayetteville and a one-hour long meeting at the 2006 North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) Conference in Winston-Salem; administered a short survey at the conclusion of these meetings; reviewed a number of the LSTA program report summaries including an in-depth analysis of North Carolina Exploring Cultural Heritage Online (NC ECHO) program summaries; and conducted a focus group with project NC ECHO staff. This extensive amount of qualitative and quantitative data resulted in many findings.

Some of the most important findings are that the majority of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that the above-mentioned goals had been accomplished. In addition, however, a significant number of respondents to these surveys responded as "neutral" in terms of their assessment of the degree to which the four goals had been accomplished. The assessment of NC ECHO found that the majority of respondents believed that participation in that project contributed to the accomplishment of goals 2 and 3. Findings from the survey administered at the Town Hall meetings found that respondents overwhelmingly agreed that:

- The meeting increased participants' understanding of LSTA programs in North Carolina over the last five years;
- The meeting helped participants identify the North Carolina LSTA programs that have made a difference for North Carolina libraries and their users;
- LSTA programs in North Carolina had significant impacts on improving statewide library services over the last five years; and
- This meeting assisted participants in identifying needs and priorities for the next 5 years for LSTA programs.

The review of the sample of LSTA program reports showed that the vast majority of the projects were aligned with and supported the four goal areas.

The study also collected a number of anecdotal comments regarding the role of the SLNC in accomplishing the state's 2003-2007 LSTA goals. Most of the comments resonated with this statement: "LSTA grant programs promote innovation and change. All types of libraries can benefit from LSTA programs. North Carolina libraries, even in the poorest counties have the opportunity to apply for funds and offer services they would not otherwise have."

The study offers a number of recommendations that the SLNC may wish to consider. These recommendations address:

- Exploring possible reasons for the survey response of "neutral" when respondents assessed the degree to which the 2003-2007 goals had been accomplished;
- The preparation of grant proposals;
- Managing grant-funded projects;
- NC ECHO;
- Improving future evaluation efforts of LSTA projects; and
- The development of the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan.

Perhaps one of the most important recommendations that cuts across the various areas is the need to better inform the North Carolina library community and others as to the importance, nature, impact, and quality of the various LSTA (and other) programs and activities operated by the SLNC.

Overall, the study concludes that the state has accomplished the four goals for 2003-2007 in the areas of achieving equity in library service, creating a climate for innovation and change, that libraries and librarians lead in support of learning and discovery for children and teens, and enabling the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services. But in addition, findings from the various data collection efforts also show that, were it not for the numerous programs and activities of the SLNC, the overall extent and quality of library and information services in North Carolina would have been diminished during 2003-2007.

1.0. Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) requires that state libraries administering Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds evaluate the impact of LSTA funds on library services in the state. This is the second cycle of LSTA funding administered by the State Library of North Carolina (SLNC), for the 5-year period 2003-2007.

The 2002 document *Library Services & Technology Act Plan For Implementation In North Carolina – 2003-2007*[1] articulates the SLNC's goals for administering these LSTA funds. This evaluation assesses the impact of LSTA funds in North Carolina over the course of 2003-07, towards meeting the Plan's four goals:

1. Achieving Equity in Library Service
2. Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change
3. Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens
4. Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services

This evaluation therefore has but a single evaluation question: To what extent have the four goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan been met?

1.1. Methodology

This evaluation was a mixed-method effort, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, and a variety of data collection instruments.

Two brief surveys were administered to assess the state-wide impact of SLNC grants of LSTA funds in meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. The first survey elicited data from librarians around North Carolina on the local and state-wide impacts of all grants on individual libraries' services. The second survey elicited data only from librarians in libraries that had received grants to support a North Carolina Exploring Cultural Heritage Online (NC ECHO) project, on the impact of NC ECHO grants on these cultural heritage institutions. The first survey was administered in two formats, on paper at the Town Hall meetings and on the web; the second survey was solely web-based.

Four Town Hall meetings were conducted in several locations around North Carolina: Asheville, Raleigh, Mooresville and Fayetteville. Additionally, a one-hour long Town Hall meeting was held at the 2006 North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) Conference in Winston-Salem. Collectively, these five meetings are referred to as the "Town Hall" meetings. The purpose of these Town Hall meetings was to collect

[1] This document is available online at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/plan2003-07.pdf

librarians' perceptions of the impacts and benefits that have resulted from specific projects funded by SLNC grants of LSTA funds. A brief, paper-based survey was administered at the conclusion of each Town Hall meeting to assess the meetings' effectiveness in evaluating the state-wide impact of thse funds.

LSTA grant program report summaries were reviewed. These program reports were submitted to the SLNC by libraries that had received LSTA grants from the SLNC during the 2003-2007 reporting period. The review of these program reports included both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative review described the number of awards received by library type or organization, as well as the number of awards granted for each of the SLNC's program areas. The qualitative review assessed a sample of the program reports in terms of (1) assisting the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan, and (2) the degree to which basic evaluation content was present in the program reports themselves.

An in-depth content analysis was conducted of LSTA grant program report summaries of grants awarded for NC ECHO projects. The evaluation team also conducted a focus group with NC ECHO staff members.

The evaluation team reviewed numerous documents and reports. These documents included summary reports prepared over the past 5 years by the SLNC, documents available on the SLNC's website, and the previous LSTA evaluation report prepared in 2001, the document titled *Evaluation of the Library Services & Technology Act Plan for Implementation in North Carolina*[2].

Table 1 summarizes the various data collection efforts and the time period of those efforts. For further detail on the methodologies employed in the various components of this evaluation, please see Appendix A.

Table 1: Time period of data collection efforts in this evaluation

Data collection methodology	**Time period**
General survey (paper)	17-20 October 2006
General survey (web)	1 October – 15 December 2006
NC ECHO survey (web)	1 November – 15 December 2006
Town Hall meetings	5, 17-20 October 2006
Town Hall meeting evaluation	17-20 October 2006
LSTA grant program review	November – December 2006
NC ECHO grant program review	December 2006 – January 2007
General document review	September, December 2006 – January 2007

[2] This document is available online at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/LSTAEvalReport1101.pdf

2.0. Findings

2.1. General survey

The surveys administered on paper and on the web elicited both qualitative and quantitative data. This section reports on the data collected by the general survey concerning all LSTA grant-funded projects.

A total of 369 librarians completed the general survey of the local and state-wide impacts of all grants on individual libraries' services. Of these, 152 surveys (41%) were completed by librarians at the Town Hall meetings, and 217 (59%) were completed either by librarians who attended a Town Hall meeting but completed the survey at a different time, or by librarians who did not attend a Town Hall meeting.

2.1.1. Quantitative analysis of survey questions

Table 2 indicates the demographics of the survey respondents according to the type of library in which the respondent is employed.

Table 2: Type of library in which respondent is employed

Library type	Percent
Public	48%
School	30%
Elementary school	17%
High school	8%
Middle school	5%
College/University	18%
None selected	3%
State library	1%

By way of comparison, Table 3 shows the types of library systems in North Carolina, according to the 2006 Directory of North Carolina Libraries[3].

Table 3: Library systems in North Carolina

Library type	Number	Percent
Public	77	39%
Community College	58	30%
Independent College & University	41	21%
University of North Carolina System	20	10%

The types of library systems shown in Table 3 are all eligible to apply for LSTA grants. Additionally, there are 2,338 public schools in North Carolina, according to the North

[3] This document is available online at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/ld/directory2006.pdf

Carolina Department of Public Instruction's 2005-2006 Facts & Figures document[4]. All of these 2,338 public schools are also eligible to apply for LSTA grants.

Note that the types of library in which survey respondents are employed is not representative of the population of libraries in North Carolina. This is typical when respondents are self-selected from a population, as the survey respondents were.

The rest of this section presents analyses of the responses to the survey questions. To see the data collection instrument employed, see Appendix B: Data Collection Instruments.

Table 4: Percentage of responses to survey questions regarding LSTA funding to the respondent's library

Survey question	**Response**		
	Yes	**No**	**Don't know**
Did your library apply for LSTA funds from the State Library of North Carolina in the 2003-07 award period?	63%	18%	19%
Has your library received LSTA funds for the 2003-07 award period?	59%	20%	22%
Are you aware of plans to apply for future LSTA funds at your library?	50%	50%	NA

It is important to bear in mind that the third question in Table 4 is ambiguous: if the respondent replied No, that may mean either that there are no plans for the respondent's library to apply for future LSTA funds, or that there are plans but that the respondent is unaware of them.

Table 5: Percentage of responses to survey questions regarding the LSTA Plan's four goals

Survey question	**Response**				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Achieving Equity in Library Service has been met during the past 5 years?	18%	40%	38%	2%	2%
To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Creating a	16%	43%	36%	3%	1%

[4] This document is available online at: http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/fbs/resources/data/factsfigures/2005-06figures.pdf

Climate for Innovation & Change has been met during the past 5 years?					
To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens has been met during the past 5 years?	11%	40%	46%	3%	<1%
To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services has been met during the past 5 years?	22%	42%	35%	1%	1%

2.1.2. Analysis of open-ended survey questions

The general survey included a number of open-ended questions that asked respondents for comments regarding their assessment of the degree to which the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan had been accomplished. A final open-ended question asked respondents if they had any suggestions for the SLNC's next five-year plan. Response rates ranged from 17% – 29% of all respondents to these open-ended questions. All of the various comments received from these five questions are reproduced in Appendix C. This section of the report summarizes these responses and relies as much as possible on the actual language provided by respondents.

In terms of context it is useful to remember Table 2, above. The responses to the survey overall had the following breakdown by institutional affiliation:

- School library: 30%
- Public library: 48%
- College/University library: 18%
- Other: 4%

A similar distribution of institutional affiliations occurred in the responses to the open-ended survey questions. In instances where significant discrepancies occurred, however, they will be noted below.

Open-ended questions provide an opportunity for respondents to offer, in their own words, their views, opinions, and comments broadly related to their assessment of the

degree to which the SLNC met the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan during the last five-year period. In addition, the open-ended questions resulted in comments that assisted the evaluation team to better gauge why respondents assessed the SLNC's progress on the four LSTA goals in the manner they did. Finally, the detail of responses to these questions may be of use to SLNC staff to better understand the range of concerns and issues considered by librarians throughout the state.

Goal 1: Achieving Equity in Library Service

The survey asked: To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Achieving Equity in Library Service has been met during the past five years? 27% of survey respondents completed this open-ended question. The comments offered regarding this question are in the context that 58% (187) either strongly agreed or agreed that the goal had been met; 38% (120) were neutral; and 4% (11) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal had been met.

Of those that either agreed or strongly agreed that the goal had been met, a number of themes in the comments could be identified, including:

- **Rural Libraries:** Support for rural libraries is an important factor that helps to achieve equity.
- **Technology:** A number of libraries that received support for new or upgraded computing technology, Internet access, telecommunications and other technology believe that the grants helped to achieve equity.
- **Conferences:** Grants that provide support for library staff to attend conferences and meetings that they otherwise could not attend helped to achieve equity.
- **Collections:** Many respondents, especially from the school library context, commented on the importance of the LSTA grants for upgrading and expanding collections – which would not have been supported locally.
- **Training:** A number of the grants resulted in library staff and others obtaining a range of training and continuing education that they could not have obtained otherwise.
- **Marketing:** Due to a number of marketing grants that libraries received, increased use of the library from minority and/or disadvantaged groups resulted.
- **Hispanic services:** Respondents offered specific examples of how Hispanic Services Grants either started services to the Hispanic community or extended those services to more users.
- **NCknows:** Some respondents noted that the statewide digital reference service improves equity of access to resources that could not be obtained locally.
- **NC ECHO:** Participation in digitization projects assisted small libraries to digitize unique collections and make them available statewide.

A number of these respondents echoed the comment shared by one respondent, that "the LSTA grant has helped our library remain competitive in our equity of access as compared to larger library systems."

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal of Equity in Library Service had been met based that view on a number of concerns. These included that grant reviewers may not appreciate the capacity of small libraries to receive and implement grants; and lack of grant support for technology development in school libraries.

Goal 2: Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change

The survey asked: To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change has been met during the past five years? 21% of survey respondents completed this open-ended question. The comments offered regarding this question are in the context that 59% (188) either strongly agreed or agreed that the goal had been met; 36% (114) were neutral; and 4% (14) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal had been met.

Of those that either agreed or strongly agreed that the goal had been met, a number of themes in the comments could be identified, including:

- **Career Enrichment:** The career enrichment grants allow paraprofessionals to attend conferences and expand their knowledge and skills – which they then share with their co-workers.
- **NC ECHO:** These digitization projects are reported as being very innovative and have provided significant change (in terms of increased access to collections) throughout the state.
- **Technology:** The Technology Planning Grants, including wireless grants, allowed libraries to think about and plan for innovative ways to deliver library services and stay on the "cutting edge with emerging technologies."
- **Training:** The workshops supported by the LSTA grants stimulate creativity in libraries.
- **Hispanic services:** In one instance the recipient of this grant noted that it resulted in a dynamic new relationship between the library and the Hispanic community.
- **Planning:** Support for various types of planning encourage libraries to develop strategies to provide innovative and creative services which would not have occurred without the support for planning.
- **Communication:** Innovation and creativity have been enhanced simply by the SLNC visiting the various libraries around the state and by SLNC and library staff listening to the needs of North Carolina constituents.

An example comment in this section that others repeated was that "LSTA grant programs promote innovation and change. All types of libraries can benefit from LSTA programs. NC libraries, even in the poorest counties have the opportunity to apply for funds and offer services they would not otherwise have."

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal of Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change had been met based that view on a number of concerns. Some specifically noted that they could not recall any examples of innovation and creativity;

technology programs cannot always be "unique" as required by the LSTA program requirements; there is inadequate accountability for grants; and that there is a need for the SLNC to better disseminate information about innovative projects it funded.

Goal 3: Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens

The survey asked: To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens has been met during the past five years? 17% of survey respondents completed this open-ended question. The comments offered regarding this question are in the context that 51% (160) either strongly agreed or agreed that the goal had been met; 46% (143) were neutral; and 3% (11) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal had been met.

Of those that either agreed or strongly agreed that the goal had been met, a number of themes in the comments could be identified, including:

- **Cooperation between teachers and students:** The grants provided a catalyst for school librarians to demonstrate a leadership stance to better work with teachers and students.
- **Collections:** Updated and enhanced collections were critical initiatives that supported learning and discovery for children, especially in the health and sciences area.
- **Technology:** Strengthening the technology infrastructure, including new workstations, software, and other items, was essential in support of learning and discovery for children and teens.
- **Marketing:** Developing and implementing a marketing plan increased access to and use of online resources for children.
- **National visibility:** Receipt of an LSTA grant helped two school librarians earn National Board Certified Teacher awards.
- **Training:** The training support by the LSTA grants allows better service for children and teens.

One person commented, "with our improved collections we have greatly enhanced our ability to guide students in selecting resources that best meet their personal and academic informational needs. Providing better resources has led to increased circulation in all of our schools."

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal of Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens had been met based that view on a number of concerns. One person "didn't know" what this goal was; another felt that more attention needs to be directed to the middle and senior level school age children; that the SLNC needs to do more for public schools; and that a statewide initiative specifically targeted to children and teens is needed.

Goal 4: Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services

The survey asked: To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services has been met during the past five years? 17% of survey respondents completed this open-ended question. The comments offered regarding this question are in the context that 64% (199) either strongly agreed or agreed that the goal had been met; 35% (108) were neutral; and 2% (6) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal had been met.

Of those that either agreed or strongly agreed that the goal had been met, a number of themes in the comments could be identified, including:

- **NC LIVE:** This statewide project showed that the State Library provided leadership in making this service available to libraries throughout the state.
- **NC Master Trainer and other training:** The master trainer program is thought to be the first of its kind in the nation and provided statewide support for training librarians that might not otherwise been available. Organization of various statewide workshops and other continuing education by the State Library is also essential.
- **Grant process:** Participation in the LSTA grant process forces the library to re-think and better plan library services and resources. One respondent wrote: "Not only has the SLNC made grants available, they have provided good direction for writing the grants and support during the entire process."
- **Technology:** The various types of support provided by the State Library in this area are essential to libraries and demonstrate not only an award of resources but assistance in how best to use those resources.
- **NC ECHO:** The digitization programs developed, supported, and administered by the State Library provided a direction that likely could not have been accomplished without the State Library.
- **NCknows:** The planning and implementation of this statewide digital reference service helped libraries provide services and access to resources that otherwise would not have been available.
- **Leaders:** The NC LIVE classes have created leaders. Library staff returned from these classes, enlightened and empowered to teach patrons about NC LIVE.
- **Interlibrary cooperation:** The SLNC's efforts in leading North Carolina in interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries has been one of the notable achievements of the State Library.
- **State Library staff:** The State Library staff are wonderfully helpful in providing feedback and support, "they are also very open to new ideas and fold those new ideas into future grant categories."

A number of other respondents commented along these lines: "without them we would be a pathetic little library that could not adequately serve our students;" "the leadership has been invaluable;" and "the SLNC does a great job leading the library community."

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the goal of Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services has been met during the past five years based that view on a number of concerns. Indeed, for this particular response there were a number of quite lengthy comments:

- I am concerned that while the SLNC has become quite the skilled technical administrator of programs such as LSTA and State Aid, it has been less than effective in fostering breakthrough ideas and concepts in library and information services in NC. The major breakthrough ideas, concepts, and initiatives that I have participated in, witnessed, or been made aware of have all come from somewhere other than the SLNC.
- At some points during the past 5 years, it seemed that SLNC spent much of its time trying to create a stronger justification for itself rather than exploring/driving true innovation in library programs and services.
- Unfortunately, I have found the calibre of State Library sponsored training/workshops to be on the poor end of the spectrum. Certainly not challenging or pushing any boundaries of innovation. I suppose that my overall perception that the State Library has little to no effect on my professional life may also be taken as evidence that it may not effectively serve a leadership role – at least not one that percolates down to front line staff.

In considering these comments it is well to remember that only a very few respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the SLNC had served as a leader in library and information services. Those that did disagree, however, raised a number of concerns.

Suggestions for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan

The open-ended survey question that asked for suggestions for the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan resulted in the greatest number of responses and length of responses of all the open-ended questions: fully 50% of respondents to the survey responded to this particular question. It is important to point out, however, that the percentages the types of library in which respondents are employed are significantly different between the responses to this question and the responses to the overall survey: 56% of respondents to this survey question were affiliated with school libraries, compared to 30% affiliated with school libraries for the overall survey. Additionally, 27% of respondents to this survey question were affiliated with a public library, compared to 48% for the overall survey.

The evaluation team has developed a set of recommendations for the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan from the responses to this question: see section 3, Recommendations.

Conclusion

When considering the responses to the open-ended questions one should remember that only a limited number of total survey respondents answered these questions. The responses to the open-ended questions, however, provide a rich set of insights as to respondents' assessment of the success with which the state met its four primary five-

year LSTA goals during the past five years as well as suggestions for the next five year period. A significant number of the responses to the suggestions for the future originated from those associated with a school institutional setting.

The responses to the open-ended survey questions cover a broad range of topics and viewpoints. Overall, however, the majority of respondents to these questions agreed or strongly agreed that the SLNC had successfully been meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. In addition, there was considerable positive support and several examples provided in the responses to support this conclusion.

A critical finding, however, is that many respondents were "neutral" in their responses to the closed-ended questions that assessed the degree to which the SLNC's four goals had been accomplished; that is respondents had no opinion as to whether the four goals had been accomplished or not. Indeed, the number of "neutral" responses to these closed-ended questions was significant:

- Goal 1: Achieving Equity 38% Neutral
- Goal 2: Creating climate for innovation and change 36% Neutral
- Goal 3: Learning and discovery for children and teens 46% Neutral
- Goal 4: State Library as leader in library services 35% Neutral

There were few clues in the comments from the open-ended questions to allow clarification of why the rate of "neutral" responses was so high. It is not clear if respondents were unaware of the four goals, unable to determine if the goals had been accomplished, believed that only minimal progress was made on the goals, or simply did not care about the goals.

The evaluation team believes that the most likely explanation for this neutrality is that respondents were either unaware of the four goals prior to filling out the survey, or if they were aware of the four goals, they were unclear on how to interpret them. The four goals are articulated in the document *Library Services & Technology Act Plan For Implementation In North Carolina – 2003-2007*, along with many outcomes and output measures for each. Thus on the one hand, one might be inclined to believe that respondents should have a clear understanding of the four goals. On the other hand, however, it is unlikely that every librarian in the state has read the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. The evaluation team hypothesizes that this is the cause of the neutrality: with little exposure to the outcomes and output measures that would enable interpretation of the four goals and their purpose in guiding the SLNC's activities, many respondents could not reasonably assess whether the goals had been met, and opted to not provide an uninformed opinion. The SLNC may wish in the future to explore possible reasons for the response of "neutral" on these questions.

The general sense that one has after reading the responses to the open-ended survey questions is that there is strong support for the various existing grant programs provided by the SLNC. For virtually every area covered, there is the sense that "were if not for [fill-in the name of the grant program] our library could not have [fill-in a range of

benefits].” Despite this positive support for existing programs, however, comments also noted the need for more programs, more support for existing programs, and better and easier ways for librarians to obtain this support.

2.2. Town Hall meetings

Four Town Hall meetings were conducted in several locations around North Carolina: Asheville, Raleigh, Mooresville and Fayetteville. These meetings were open to any and all librarians and library staff in North Carolina. Additionally, a one-hour long Town Hall meeting was held at the 2006 North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) Conference in Winston-Salem. This meeting was spefically targeted to school library professionals. The purpose of these Town Hall meetings was to collect librarians’ perceptions of the local and state-wide impacts and benefits that have resulted from specific projects funded by SLNC grants of LSTA funds, towards meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the 2003-07 LSTA Plan. A brief, paper-based survey was administered at the conclusion of each Town Hall meeting to assess the meetings’ effectiveness in evaluating the state-wide impact of these funds.

2.2.1. NCSLMA Evaluation Meeting

Thirteen school library professionals particpated in this hour-long evaluation meeting held at the 2006 NCSLMA Conference in Winston-Salem on October 5, 2006. Several themes and recommendations emerged from this evaluation session, presented here in the context of the four goals articlated by the SLNC in the 2003-2007 LSTA plan:

Goal 1: Achieving Equity in Library Service

- **Collection development grant opportunities are necessary, both in terms of economics and academics:** Several participants received LSTA-funded collection development grants, with award amounts ranging from a fraction of the available funds to receipt of maximum award amounts. These participants used the monies to develop or enhance different collection areas, most notably in the sciences and English as a Second Language materials. While all who acknowledged receipt were appreciative, some participants proffered recommendations to provide renewal opportunities at a future time, or to allow for schools that received a fraction of the funds at time of award the opportunity to reapply at a future date to receive the maximum amount of dollars available. One participant, in conveying her appreciation for the grant, commented, “we fight for every little penny we get.”
- **Impact of LSTA funds evident at local level:** Improved collections, made possible through LSTA monies, led to an increase in library awareness within their own schools and school systems, and has enabled school libraries to better meet the demands of their respective schools’ core curriculum. One participant described the scope of this impact by noting, “Kids saw it, parents saw it, and administration saw it. It was in the newspaper.” Participants commented on

quantifiable results arising from the acquisition of LSTA funds, providing evidential statements on improved collection age and increases in circulation.

- **LSTA funds help leverage local support:** Several participants provided anecdotal evidence of infusions of LSTA-funded grant monies contributing to improved local support of library services and materials. The effects of LSTA funds, in terms of new materials and increased circulation, are felt years beyond the actual receipt and execution of the award. One participant noted that a number of schools in her county received LSTA funds during the reward period under review, with the impact reverberating throughout the county.
- **School libraries as a first source of quality, pertinent materials:** One participant noted that, previous to receiving an LSTA collection development grant, she sent her students to the public library, unable to meet their needs with the collection available at school. Now, she says, "I no longer have to send them to the public library." LSTA monies enable school libraries to provide for students at their point of need, rather than serve as an ancillary substitute for public libraries or other external sources.

Goal 2: Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change

- **Lack of financial support contributes to lack of innovation and change:** Many participants echoed the same opinion, that school library budgets are stagnant. Participants commented on the difficulty of enhancing existing services and collections with little or no local funding infusions to do so. While LSTA funds may be available for collection development, these funds were available on a dollar-for-dollar match basis in 2003-2004 and on a 50% match basis in subsequent program years. If there are no dollars available for a match, then some participants struggle in identifying opportunities that will allow for their library to apply for an LSTA award. This frustration bears itself out not only in response to collection development grant opportunities, but also collaboration grant opportunities with other area institutions. One participant demonstrated her frustration at attempting to identify collaborative, innovative project ideas with her better-funded, public library counterpart: "We all got together and basically it was [throws her hands up in the air], you know."
- **Difficult to focus on climate of innovation in a climate of change:** A few participants noted that he or she were new to their respective schools and positions. As such, they were unaware of past LSTA plans and applications. The time necessary to acclimate new staff to their new surroundings, and the possible lack of supporting documentation for facilitating this acclimation, unfortunately results, according to testimonials of participants, in a focus on managerial and administrative change rather than innovative change for the benefit of enhanced services.

Goal 3: Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens

- **LSTA monies contribute to improved connections between student achievement and library services:** Several participants commented on the positive effect that improved library collections, resulting from LSTA funding, have had on student achievement. New materials resulted in an increase in circulation, as much as 2,000 percent at one location according to one participant, and this in turn has resulted in improved student achievement.
- **Improved connections between librarians and teachers:** Improved collections resulting from LSTA awards contributed to improved relations between teachers, librarians, and students; this sentiment was captured in the words of one participant as "serendipity." Making teachers aware of and, in some instances, involved in collection materials consideration, resulted in improved, curricular-targeted services for students. One participant described a continuing scenario at her school library: "A teacher will say do you have this book, this book, and I will say no, no, no. We need to integrate library books with literature connections that are in their text books." Continued LSTA monies for collection development cannot resolve all future instances of this scenario, but the availability of such funds may offer some degree of relief.
- **State-wide LSTA-funded programs:** While the focus of the discussion centered on the application and use of LSTA monies at participants' institutions, there are other LSTA-funded, state-wide projects that, if accessed, would have an impact at a local level. When asked to comment on two of these state-wide projects, NCknows and NC ECHO, no participants offered any commentary. One voiced that, "this is the first I have heard of it."

Goal 4: Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services

- **Individual, school, and system-wide awareness of LSTA funding opportunities:** Particpants commented on the many successful ways that LSTA funding opportunities are broadcast to school libraries. This included commentary on effective SLNC-led strategies, as well as positive comments on the grassroots efforts taking place in exchanges between school librarians within their own schools, districts, and other events, like the NCSLMA Conference. In the words of one participant, "I talked it up everywhere. We just have to get out there and be evangelists."
- **Awareness of availability of LSTA funds does not necessarily translate into applications for these funds:** Several participants commented on difficulties of seeking matching funds in times of shrinking school budgets. One participant described the grant application process as "daunting," and recommended that SLNC staff devise ways to make the application process less overwhelming, especially in light of underwhelming staff resources (personnel, resources, and time). Another participant proffered a recommendation in response, advising her colleague to seek out models based on past successful grant applications, noting

that “once you have somebody who has done it, you share that, and it helps so much.”

- **SLNC-sponsored educational opportunities benefit school library staff:** Several participants affirmatively commented on available workshops hosted by the SLNC for broadening awareness of and application for LSTA funds. One participant recommended additional workshops be held, in response to her own experience being unable to attend past workshops in her area due to scheduling conflicts. Other opportunities sponsored by SLNC promote professional development for staff. This evaluation meeting, for instance, resulted in an exchange of information, as evidenced in the previous bullet point where one participant advised another to examine past LSTA applications at other school libraries for informing local application. Another participant shared that she attended this event not to participate in the evaluative aspect of the meeting, but to simply hear more of what her colleagues at other institutions are doing.

The majority of participant comments focused, as expected, on LSTA funding opportunities targeted to school libraries. However, several comments were offered on the application of these monies across all library types in North Carolina, with a specific focus on the positive impact resulting from SLNC’s provision of LSTA monies to public libraries. One participant stated her appreciation as follows: “Thank you for serving our public libraries. For my students to do well, (they) must also be in the public library, where they are after school and in summer.”

Conclusion

Overall, participants spoke appreciatively of the opportunities SLNC makes available to school libraries using LSTA monies. This affirmation arises both from instances of direct funding, such as application and implementation of a collection development grant, and indirectly, through LSTA-funded projects at external institutions, such as area public libraries. Although the sentiment of participants was positive, several recommendations targeted at school libraries arose from the discussions:

- Modify eligibility requirements for grants by providing school libraries the opportunity to apply for full collection development grant allotments at a future date, following an initial and partial application.
- Enhance and create new tools for facilitating completion of LSTA grant applications, such as making examples of completed applications or models available online, holding more educational workshops, or making copies of these workshops available for viewing online, and facilitating a formal or informal grant mentorship program, matching an inexperienced school librarian with an experienced peer for the task of preparing a LSTA grant application.
- Enhance the promotional activities of state-wide LSTA-funded projects, such as NC ECHO and NCknows, to school libraries.

2.2.2. Half-day Evaluation Meetings

A total of ninety-nine library professionals, excluding members of the evaluation team and SLNC staff, attended the four half-day evaluation meetings held across the state. These sessions entailed a facilitator-led discussion evaluating the SLNC's impact and success in meeting the four goals set forth in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. The script for these sessions is available in Appendix B: Data Collection Instruments. Several themes and recommendations emerged from these sessions, with commonalities in scope evident regardless of evaluation location. These themes are elaborated below, along with recommendations resulting from the discussions in the evaluation sessions. An evaluation form was distributed at the end of each half-day evaluation meeting. The results from this instrument are provided in section 2.3: Evaluations from the Town Hall Meetings. In addition, this data collection instrument is available in Appendix B.

Participants

A total of ninety-nine participants took part in the four half-day evaluation meetings, held in Asheville, Raleigh, Mooresville, and Fayetteville, between 16-19 October 2006. An attendance log was maintained that identified participants and their institutions. Table 6 shows a breakdown of attendees by location and participant institution type: Public Library (Public), School Library/Media Center (School), Communty College Library (CC), Academic Library (Acad.), and Special Libraries or Other Institutions (Other).

Table 6: Participant library type by location

Location	Public	School	CC	Acad.	Other	Total
Asheville	9 (22%)	4 (16%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)	0 (0%)	21 (21%)
Raleigh	6 (15%)	7 (28%)	6 (43%)	7 (50%)	5 (100%)	31 (31%)
Mooresville	13 (32%)	8 (32%)	3 (21%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	25 (25%)
Fayetteville	13 (32%)	6 (24%)	1 (7%)	2 (14%)	0 (0%)	22 (22%)
Total	**41**	**25**	**14**	**14**	**5**	**99**

A hand count was taken at each half-day evaluation meeting identifying those participants from libraries that had received any LSTA monies, regardless of whether for an institution-specific initiative or state-wide initiative (for example, NC ECHO), from the SLNC during the 2003-2007 reporting period. Table 7 provides the tally of LSTA fund recipients by location. Participants reported receipt of a variety of types of LSTA funds across the major categories (EZ Grants, Project Grants, and Career Enrichment Grants), including planning grants, automated systems grants, basic equipment grants, technology planning grants, Internet infrastructure grants, digitization starter grants, marketing grants, school library collection development grants, strengthening public and academic library collections grants, and NC ECHO digitization grants and heritage partners grants. A number of participants reported awards of more than one LSTA grant during the five-year review period under consideration.

Table 7: LSTA funded projects per participant

Location	Participants	LSTA recipients	Percent
Asheville	21	15	71%
Raleigh	31	14	45%
Mooresville	25	17	68%
Fayetteville	22	18	82%
Total	**99**	**64**	**65%**

The majority of participants described their LSTA grant request and implementation experience as extremely positive. The sentiment that the products and outputs resulting from an infusion of LSTA grant money would "not have been possible without the LSTA" was shared by the majority of participants who received LSTA funds during the five-year reporting period. A sample of such statements is captured here:

- In describing an increase in circulation and other measures due to receipt of multiple LSTA grants, one participant stated: "We received an Automation Systems grant of $45,000. No way we would have been able to get that money locally."
- In describing award of an LSTA grant for increasing Internet bandwidth, one participant commented: "Without the grant we would have lost half of our staff since they took the brunt of [patron] dissatisfaction."
- In describing an award for installing wireless networking capabilities, one participant shared: "We would not have been able to install wireless technology in the library in as timely as a manner as wanted by students. The grant sped up the process at least a year sooner, and [resulted in] exactly what students were looking for, their expectation."
- In describing a marketing project, targeting unemployed patrons, one participant commented: "We could never have done it without LSTA dollars. [It] increased use of technology. We provide monthly training sessions for people to hone their computer skills. We have increased number of classes which are generally filled."
- In describing a grant aimed at reaching a Spanish speaking community population, one participant contributed: "Any night you go into the library, half of our patrons are Hispanic. Before our LSTA grant, we could not serve them well. Now, all of our computer classes that we offered in English we can offer in Spanish."

Discussion

Participants responded to a series of discussion questions intended to assess the impact of SLNC administered funds during the 2003-2007 reporting period. Emergent themes resulting from participant commentary are captured below, presented in relation to the posed questions.

Question One: What are the impacts and benefits that have resulted from specific LSTA projects that have been funded since 2001?

- **Impact of LSTA monies is quantifiable.** Participants provided many measured, quantifiable examples of the impact that LSTA grant money had at their institutions. This includes increases in library card acquisition; gate count; circulation; decreased collection age; Internet usage transaction statistics; and attendance figures for educational workshops, training sessions and other service events. Specific examples provided include:
    - Following an automation grant reward, searches in a library's catalog doubled one month after the catalog debuted; within six months, usage doubled again.
    - In another library's case, an automation grant resulted in a 33% increase in books traveling back and forth between a resource-sharing collective of seven libraries.
    - Reaching out to Hispanic community following receipt of an LSTA grant, one library grew its Hispanic user base to 25% of total patrons.
- **Projects resulted in improved employee morale.** Several participants offered examples of how the receipt of LSTA funds, and the subsequent projects resulting from receipt of these monies, increased employee morale within their institutions. These increases in employee morale were attributed to a variety of LSTA-funded project outcomes. For example, receipt of an Internet initiative grant resulted in improved technological capacities for staff and patrons. Educational and career enhancement opportunities made possible through LSTA monies contributed to increased employee morale by creating and promoting an environment for professional growth and success. One participant described the positive impact that educational opportunities had on members of her staff: "(The) career enrichment fund allowed our paraprofessional staff to attend NCLA. They would not have been able to attend without LSTA."
- **Projects resulted in greater awareness of libraries within their service populations.** Across all locations, participants provided many anecdotal accounts of engaging and capturing new, or untapped, communities of users. For example, a marketing grant at a public library allowed the library to connect with the businesspeople in their community, demonstrating services of import to this population. An important side effect of this enterprise was a trickle down effect: by association, the library was also engaging the families and other associates of this critical community component.
- **Infusion of LSTA monies felt long after initial receipt of funds.** Participants conveyed appreciation for the sustaining effect that the receipt of LSTA funds has had on library services. For example, several participants commented on the acquisition and continued use of equipment and other physical resources that continue to be utilized following project completion. Anecdotal examples provided include a poster printing machine, digital capture equipment, and computing components.
- **LSTA funds as leverage: An increase in local funding.** Participants provided examples of how LSTA monies resulted in a subsequent infusion of local funds.

One participant related how, following the successful implementation of two LSTA planning grants, her library received additional funding from her county government. Another participant commented that her library's "county IT department for the first time this year put our public access PCs on a three-year cycle for replacement."

Question Two: To what degree have LSTA funded projects assisted in achieving equity of library services in the state?

- **Better technological capacities resulted in better service for patrons**. Many participants commented on the positive impact that LSTA technology grants have had at their libraries. Examples of ways that libraries used these monies for enhancing patron service include acquisition of new equipment, including desktop workstations, laptops, and central servers, and upgrade of Internet connectivity, resulting in increased bandwidth capacity and speed.
- **Bridging the digital divide**. With the improved technological capacities cited above has come improved information access. One librarian described the impact that free, internet access services has had on her patrons: "We are in a very poor county. Access to the Internet has put our patrons on equal footing with those who live in San Francisco, New York City. Great thing for democracy and equality because it puts everybody on equal footing." Another participant from a rural county echoed this sentiment, commenting on the necessity to provide such services to community members: "We have people coming in who can't afford a computer at home, and even if they have a computer, cannot afford Internet, and we have people coming in to apply for job applications online because it is the only way to complete them."
- **Improved or new services targeting under-served populations in library's existing service area.** Many participants provided examples of achieving equity through targeting services to members of their communities that had, previous to receipt of an LSTA grant, been underserved. A number of participants described projects targeted to Spanish-speaking area residents. The acquisition of Spanish and ESL materials resulted in increases in library card acquisition, gate count, and circulation, and an increase in instructional services participation. Services targeted to these particular populations resulted in that segment of the population not solely being residents of the library's service community, but actually becoming patrons of the library. Examples provided of other specific populations served through LSTA funded projects include the visually and hearing impaired, senior citizens, other ESL speakers, including materials in Chinese and Japanese, and tourists and seasonal workers.

Question Three: To what degree have LSTA funded projects promoted a climate for change and innovation in the state?

- **In general, LSTA funds allowed libraries' to focus and commit to change and innovation.** Receipt of LSTA monies allowed libraries to take a planned, deliberate approach to service enhancements, rather than rely on ad hoc, or in the

words of one participant, “shotgun” approaches. This focus contributed to improved stewardship of the projects in development, and increased the likelihood of the projects’ success. LSTA funds also allow for these changes and innovations at a manageable pace. One patron described how her library implemented an LSTA funded project step-by-step, rather than one giant leap forward. This resulted in greater buy-in from staff and led, ultimately, to greater project success.

- **Libraries are able to remain competitive.** Libraries compete with other institutions or institutional departments and units for ever-depleting budget dollars. Successful and innovative LSTA-funded projects result not only in new library services and/or features; they also result in increased recognition of the value of library services, regardless of type or location. One participant captured this sentiment in discussing a past LSTA marketing grant at her institution: “We have been able to keep the library on the stove. We are competing against schools and Fort Bragg. If not the front burner, then the public library is at least on the stove.” Additionally, libraries compete with patrons’ own personal access to technologies and information. One participant provided the following scenario from her own public library’s experience living in the shadow of a large military base: “This is a large community with access on base to state-of-the-art everything and speed. When they use branch libraries, they expect us to have same thing. The rest of the community sees that too, especially those who do not have that kind of access at home.” LSTA funds, then, allow libraries to not only stay competitive with other institutions, but to stay on par with technologies available to patrons in their own homes and workplaces.
- **Changed ways that patrons use library.** One participant described how her patrons’ library use has changed as a result of multiple LSTA awards: “Even five years ago, our little tiny libraries were places people hung out and checked out books. People still hang out, but they are taking courses online, looking for jobs, and for other things, even those we don’t like that people are doing. It has changed ways people use our library.” Another participant described how her library, following a natural disaster, became a primary community resource in a time of need.

Question Four: To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects supported learning and discovery for children and teens?

- **Library as learning center: In with the new and out with old.** New materials from collection development grants allowed libraries to improve their collections, while at the same time allowing librarians to weed materials from their collections that were no longer useful. This resulted in improvements in students’ library awareness and, ultimately, student acheivement. One school librarian described the effect a collection development grant had at her library: “Our childrens’ behavior has changed. They now come in and come in for learning, not just socialization. They check out books and read quietly. We have become a traditional library again.”

- **Increased awareness of library's role in student achievement**. Participants commented on the many ways that LSTA funds have been used to engage children and teens as a community of learners. The most cited examples arose from collection development grant funds and Internet infrastructure grant funds. Rather than children and teens responding to the library environment for satisfying their information needs, LSTA funds allow libraries to proactively enhance their environments for effecting a fulfilling experience for children and teens. One librarian described the effect that a LSTA grant had at her school: "Teachers were very aware of what we were doing… Library received increased visibility; featured in school newspaper. Word spread throughout PTA community, and overall community changed, for the better." Additionally, one participant called for LSTA funds to support public library summer reading programs, resulting in a focus on student achievement as a year-round effort as opposed to a nine-month initiative restricted to the school term.
- **Effecting learning and discovery remotely, for children and teens, and through them**. Public librarians affirmatively reported on LSTA funding for improving library web content, including enhanced automation systems and the development of digital collections. By offering these and other services remotely, LSTA monies contribute to children and teens ease in accessing valuable library resources, regardless of their location. Additionally, one particpant reported on the impact that her library's improved collection, due to a collection developmmet grant, had on the greater community: "Bilingual materials that are going into home. Getting parents who are non-English speaking able to pick up words." Another participant, a school librarian, echoed this observation: "Our library is being used now not just by our students, but by our parents. We have not been able to look specifically if children are checking out books for their parents, but we want to. We are looking at doing a planning grant to see if we should expand library hours beyond regular school hours."
- **Focus on collection development in school settings, resulting in "Some Technology Left Behind".** School librarians expressed concern that their institutions were limited in the LSTA funding opportunties available to him or her and, in turn, limited in terms of impact. "I think it would be great for school setting [to] give us opportunity to go into technology, like public libraries. [School] libraries are the last place in school to get computers since classrooms are first priority. We get whatever might be left over." School librarians expressed concern that they have nowhere else to apply for funds, specifically not from the schools' local and state-level educational agencies. LSTA funds might provide some relief.

Question Five: To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects enabled the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services?

- **SLNC-administered LSTA grants provided monies when no other sources were available.** A number of participants voiced this same sentiment, that LSTA was the only source for project funds, no matter how compelling the argument posed to their respective institutions' local funding authorities. Through the

administration of the funds, the State Library is leading library development activities across all library types throughout the state. The SLNC fills a large void, this reflective statement felt nearly unanimously by all participants.

- **SLNC-sponsored professional development activities contribute to overall library awareness and effectiveness.** Participants expressed appreciation at the opportunities provided by the SLNC for enhancing staff competencies and building connections between peer institutions. Benefits from involvement in professional development opportunities are both direct and indirect, with participants of such activities benefiting personally from this exposure, and in turn sharing their findings and experience with other staff at their home institutions. One participant expressed appreciation for the reemergence of the Trustees' Workshop, which had been dormant for a number of years, describing these workshops as a "wonderful way around the state to educate our trustees" and a "wonderful use of leadership funds."
- **NCknows a valuable resource.** Participants commented on the impact that NCknows has had at their institutions, with one noting its particular application for teens since they "are the ones doing instant messaging." A number of session participants, however, were either unaware of NCknows or did not participate due to lack of knowledge about utilizing the service. One participant who participated in NCknows spoke highly of the service, stating that, "it lets [the] public know we are hip to technology, and we are providing a variety of ways for people to get information." This same participant, however, also cautions that, "it is not used heavily in comparison to other services," and called for an increase in promotion at both the local and state-wide levels.
- **Overall, participants were supportive of the current system of awarding both state-wide initiative grants as well as local competitive grants.** One participant commented that it is "important to have statewide initiatives and maybe there should be more that have not hit the table yet." Participants supported the use of both grant initiatives, several commenting on the diverse needs of libraries, whether due to library type (academic, school, public, etc.), geographic region (urban, rural, etc.), and service populations (children, teens, ESL speakers, etc.). Competitive grants allow libraries to address their specific, local needs, while the availability of state-wide initiatives allow eligible libraries to make a unified impact in library services and features across the state.

Question Six: What is the value, importance and impact of the North Carolina Exploring Cultural Heritage Online (NC ECHO) project?

- **Digitization grants allow institutions to become early adopters and innovators.** Several participants positively commented on the impact that digitization grants had at their respective institutions. It allowed for the creation and implementation of rich collections of local, unique, and valuable materials. Attendees of the NC ECHO Digitization Institute spoke highly of their experience, with a few requesting to go again. One participant spoke appreciatively of her institution's experience, an effort that culminated in a "best digitization process" digital collection award in their region of the state.

- **NC ECHO survey had impact on staff's awareness of their own unique holdings.** Participants reflected on their involvement in the NC ECHO state-wide survey assessing the unique collections of libraries and cultural heritage institutions across the state. At one half-day evaluation meeting location, thirteen of the session's twenty-two attendees had completed the survey, which entailed a site visit by an NC ECHO staff member. Beyond serving as an audit, identifying collections for fulfilling the SLNC's NC ECHO initiative, participation in the survey also raised staff awareness of the uniqueness of their particular collections. The staff, in turn, shared this newfound, or reemergent valuation of the library's collection, with their patrons.
- **NC ECHO increased library's reach through provision of online access of digitally rich collections.** Receipt of a LSTA NC ECHO digitization grant allowed participants to showcase collections via the World Wide Web, opening their distinct collections to those outside of the library's physical walls. Digitization also allowed libraries to display collections in a way that maximized users' capabilities to search and find a previously untapped collection. For example, one participant described the extent of their digitization effort – over 10,000 images. Participation in the NC ECHO initiatives allows patrons to search and access a range of materials that, if they remained available solely in analog form, would require significant more effort to identify and access on the part of library staff and patrons
- **Digitization efforts persist after completion of LSTA project timeline.** In speaking to the success of their NC ECHO projects, participants commented on their efforts to continue and sustain these digitization initiatives at the local level. Several participants provided anecdotal reports of their achievement in securing institutional buy-in and support for these digital collections, allowing these libraries to continue to grow and foster these unique collections.
- **Collections contribute to learning and discovery across age groups and academic level.** Participants from all types of institutions commented on the impact that access to NC ECHO collections has had on curricular activities. This includes school libraries, public libraries, and community college and academic libraries. One participant described it as another "tool in her arsenal of learning."

Question Seven: What suggestions can be made for future LSTA projects to increase their impact, benefits, and delivery of quality library services?

- **Bias in grant allotment by library type.** Participants made comments on which library types they perceived received an unfair, or majority, allotment of LSTA funds. Some participants commented that small, rural public libraries are less prepared to complete successful grant applications than their better-funded, larger public library counterparts, resulting in an unfair distribution of grants favoring these larger public institutions. A few public libraries voiced concerns that the majority of grant monies is distributed to academic libraries. School librarians expressed concern that they were not given the same grant opportunities as other library types, such as LSTA funds for technology, while a few public libraries objected to application of LSTA funds for school libraries. Another participant

expressed dissatisfaction with her perception that grants are awarded on a system-basis as opposed to a branch-by-branch basis. This last opinion was shared in the context of collection development grants.

- **Minimize "pain-to-gain ratio" of grant application process.** A number of participants commented on their perceptions of the amount of effort and resources necessary for planning and submitting a LSTA grant application. Some participants called for a more streamlined, simplified process, easing the time and human resources necessary to complete an application. Other participants were of the mind that, "if you really want it to happen, then regardless of the obstacles, you will make it happen." Others, however, disagreed with this call to participate, noting that a lack of staff, time, and obstacles contributes to the problem of more pain than gain, rather than a lack of determination. One participant described the calculation of the pain-to-gain ratio as one "determined by the desperation scale."
- **Recommendation for state-wide resource sharing initiative.** Participants recommended that the SLNC support a state-wide resource sharing initiative in the State's next five-year LSTA Plan. Suggestions call for material sharing across libraries of all type, akin to an OhioLink-type model of resource sharing, and a state-wide library card for all public libraries, among other suggestions. When the research team polled participants at one location on this recommended state-wide initiative, seventeen of twenty-one total participants supported this recommendation.
- **Provide more flexibility in grant categories.** Some participants commented on the difficulty of placing project ideas within the annual categories offered by the State Library. A participant described this effect of "pigeon-holing." One participant suggested that the SLNC offer LSTA grant categories that are connected to service rather than population. That way, all of a library's patrons can benefit from the resulting service or product, rather than solely a targeted segment of the population. An example to highlight this point was the initiative to replace a book mobile. Although this particular book mobile service is targeted to seniors, the library would prefer to not limit it solely to this population, but to make it available for outreach to other communities of users. Other participants recommended a "general" or "no-name" grant category, with flexible parameters demarcating broad, applicable project types and/or initiatives. This would provide librarians some flexibility, allowing libraries to match the grant funds to a needed project, as opposed to finding a project to meet a grant category and its associated scope definition. Other participants, in lieu of a general or no-name grant category, recommended a broadening of scope of existing LSTA grant categories. Another resolution offered by participants is providing descriptive examples of SLNC-defined fundable projects so that potential applicants can weigh their project ideas and assess their appropriateness in relation to the examples provided.
- **Provide guidance for libraries that have trouble negotiating local funds.** Several participants commented on their inability, regardless of efforts and ingenuity, to identify and secure local funding for satisfying the dollar match requirement for LSTA grants. Other participants offered recommendations to this quandary, one describing the securing of such matching funds as a game of "power and politics." The SLNC can take a role in guiding those libraries that

self-identify themselves as unsuccessful in petitioning for matching funds. This could take the form of consultation with a SLNC staff member, resulting in the provision of guidance and strategy recommendations, or the creation of a support network for promoting a trade of knowledge and tools between institutions accomplished in acquiring matching funds and those institutions without success, or by providing successful models online, among other resolutions.

Conclusion

Overall, participants spoke approvingly of the the state's achievements in meeting the four goals set forth in the State's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. Overwhelmingly, participants provided example after example of how LSTA monies enabled their libraries to provide services and support that might not have been possible without an infusion of LSTA funds, or at least, might not have been possible in the timeframe on which these services were implemented.

While some critical commentary and call for more action on the part of the SLNC was voiced by some participants at the half-day evaluation meetings, not all critical commentary made by participants was within the scope of the SLNC and, in particular, their administration of LSTA monies. For example, participants commented on the North Carolina state government's directive that public libraries bear the responsibility for distributing work permit forms, required for teen-aged employees in the state. In this scenario, it is possible that LSTA monies granted by the SLNC to public libraries may be indirectly diverted to perform governmental work. Additionally, school librarians commented on the challenges of meeting state and federal standards and mandates, including No Child Left Behind, within the confines of the limited financial resources available to them. SLNC provides some relief in the form of LSTA grants targeted to this particular library type – school libraries – but cannot serve as a substitute for other appropriate funding agencies at the state and/or local level.

Participants commented on the challenges inherent in attempting to establish collaborative grant projects with other libraries and, specifically, other library types. Although public libraries and school libraries appear to be natural collaborators, some participants commented on the various challenges that impede such collaboration efforts – different mission statements and objectives, different collection types, different expectations, and different budgets. In the design of future collaboration grants, the SLNC may want to consider devising an improved strategy for engaging, promoting, and supporting collaboration across libraries.

2.3. Evaluations from the Town Hall meetings

A total of 81 librarians completed the evaluation form for the Town Hall meetings. Table 8 shows the percentage of evaluation forms collected at each meeting location.

Table 8: Percentage of Town Hall meeting evaluations collected at each location

Mooresville	21%
Asheville	21%
Fayetteville	25%
Raleigh	33%

The first 3 questions in Table 9 are concerned with the educational value of the Town Hall meetings. Between 79% – 93% of respondents replied with a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, that these meetings increased their understanding of various aspects of LSTA funding in North Carolina.

Table 9: Percentage of responses to evaluation questions

Survey question	**Response**				
	5: A great deal	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1: Not at all**
To what extent has this meeting increased your understanding of LSTA programs in North Carolina over the last five years?	53%	40%	6%	0%	1%
To what degree did today's meeting help you to identify the North Carolina LSTA programs that have made a difference for North Carolina libraries and their users?	57%	35%	6%	1%	1%
To what extent did this meeting assist you in identifying needs and priorities for the next 5 years for LSTA programs?	33%	46%	17%	3%	1%
To what extent have the LSTA programs in North Carolina had significant impacts on improving statewide library services over the last five years?	63%	28%	9%	0%	0%

The first question in Table 9 is identical to a question used in the LSTA evaluation conducted for the SLNC in 2001: "To what extent has this meeting increased your understanding of LSTA programs in North Carolina over the last five years?" (See the document titled *Evaluation of the Library Services & Technology Act Plan for Implementation in North Carolina*.) The evaluation team from 2001 reported that the mean of all responses to this question was 4.3 on the same 5-point scale. (The current evaluation team did not compute the mean of responses to these questions since this 5-point scale is ordinal, and thus statistics such as mean are not easily interpretable.) Thus, the results of this question are consistent across the current and the 2001 evaluation efforts. This is strong evidence that these Town Hall meetings are valuable as education for librarians to increase understand of various aspects of LSTA funding in North Carolina.

The fourth question in Table 9 complements the four questions on the general and NC ECHO surveys about the extent to which the four goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan have been met. The findings from the evaluation form for the Town Hall meetings is consistent with the findings from the surveys, that the overwhelming majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that these goals have been met.

2.4. Sample of LSTA program reports prepared by grant recipients

Projects funded by the SLNC with LSTA funds are required to submit a project report annually via a webform. The current version of this webform is available at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/forms/lsta/lstareport.htm

The evaluation team reviewed selected project reports. The purpose of this review was to determine the degree to which these projects assisted the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. In addition, the review of these project reports provided insights into the quality of the evaluation reports themselves, and the level of knowledge of project evaluation possessed by the awardees who developed these reports.

The review of these program reports included both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative review described the number of awards received by library type or organization, as well as the number of awards granted for each of the SLNC's program areas. The qualitative review assesses a sample of the program reports in terms of (1) assisting the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan, and (2) the degree to which basic evaluation content was present in the program reports themselves.

This evaluation effort was largely concerned with the extent to which the goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan had been met. Since this evaluation effort took place during the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, program reports from the entire 2003-2007 span were not available. Thus, this section reports on those program reports that were available to the evaluation team, which include those for FY 2003 and FY 2004.

The program reports contain a field titled *State Goal*. This field indicates which of the four goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan that the grant project is intended to meet. Table 10 shows the number of program reports that are aligned with each of the SLNC's four goals.

Table 10: Percentage of program reports aligned with the goals from the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan

Goal	2003	2004
1. Achieving Equity in Library Service	63%	52%
2. Creating a Climate for Innovation and Change	3%	10%
3. Libraries Lead in Learning for Children & Teens	32%	33%
4. Enabling State Library to Serve as Library Leader	3%	4%

2.5. In-depth analysis of NC ECHO

An in-depth analysis was performed of the North Carolina NC ECHO program (ncecho.org). Data for this analysis included:

- Survey results: A modified version of the general survey discussed in Section 2.1 was administered to cultural heritage institutions that have received grants under NC ECHO. This survey elicited data on the impact of these grants on these cultural heritage institutions.
- Program reports: Each year, cultural heritage institutions that received grants under NC ECHO provide program reports to the SLNC via a webform. The current version of this webform is available at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/forms/lsta/lstareport.htm. The evaluation team conducted a content analysis of these reports.

Goal 2 from the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan is *Creating a Climate for Innovation and Change*. All NC ECHO grants are awarded primarily to fulfill this goal. However, NC ECHO grants in fact achieve all four goals from the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan:

- Goal 1. Achieving Equity in Library Service: NC ECHO (and indeed, all large-scale, statewide projects) provides access to materials to all users equally, regardless of location or demographics.
- Goal 2. Creating a Climate for Innovation and Change: NC ECHO provides a platform upon which libraries may build innovative collections and services.
- Goal 3. Libraries Lead in Learning for Children & Teens: NC ECHO provides access to materials to all users equally, and also provides materials wth which educational materials may be developed.
- Goal 4. Enabling State Library to Serve as Library Leader: NC ECHO enables the SLNC to provide leadership to libraries by providing assistance with grantsmanship, and education on digitization and other components of project management.

2.5.1. NC ECHO survey

A total of 9 librarians completed the survey of the impacts of NC ECHO grants. This response to the NC ECHO survey was low, and as with the general survey, the respondents were self-selected. As a result, the findings from this survey data cannot be generalized to all NC ECHO grant recipients. The findings from this survey data are included here, however, since the detail of responses to these questions may be of use to SLNC staff to better understand the range of concerns and issues considered by librarians throughout the state. Furthermore, there were comparably few NC ECHO grants awarded during the 2003-2007 reporting period: 3 grants awarded in FY 2003 and 13 in FY 2004 (see Table 13, below). Additional NC ECHO grants were awarded in FY 2005 and FY 2006, but program reports from those grants were not available to the evaluation team.

The evaluation team has a recommendation to avoid the problem of low response rate for data collection concerning statewide projects in the future; see the Recommendations section, below.

2.5.1.1. Quantitative analysis of survey questions

Table 11: Percentage of responses to survey questions regarding LSTA funding to the respondent's library

Survey question	Yes	No
Are you aware of plans to apply for future LSTA funds at your library?	66%	33%

It is important to bear in mind that the question in Table 11 is ambiguous: if the respondent replied No, that may mean either that there are no plans for the respondent's library to apply for future LSTA funds, or that there are plans but that the respondent is unaware of them.

Table 12: Percentage of responses to survey questions regarding the LSTA Plan's four goals

Survey question	Response				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Achieving Equity in Library Service?	33%	33%	22%	11%	0%
To what degree do you perceive that receiving	44%	56%	0%	0%	0%

an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change?					
To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens?	22%	33%	44%	0%	0%
To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services?	56%	44%	0%	0%	0%

It is important to bear in mind that, because the response rate for the NC ECHO survey was so low, statistics such as those presented here are unreliable. These are included in this report in order to be consistent with the analysis of the general survey, above. However, the evaluation team suggests that the statistics presented in this section be used with caution.

2.5.1.2. Analysis of open-ended survey questions

The NC ECHO survey included similar open-ended questions to those on the general survey. These questions asked respondents for comments regarding their assessment of the degree to which the receipt of an NC ECHO had enabled the respondent's institution to contribute to the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. A final open-ended question asked respondents if they had any suggestions for the SLNC's next five-year plan. Response rates ranged from 33% – 67% of all respondents to these open-ended questions (given a total of 9 respondents, this means 3 – 6 responses to each open-ended question). All of the various comments received from these five questions are reproduced in Appendix C. This section of the report summarizes these responses and relies as much as possible on the actual language provided by respondents.

The responses to the survey overall had the following demographic breakdown, by libraries affiliated with institutions of the following types:

- Museum: 1 (11%)
- Community College: 1 (11%)
- University/College: 7 (78%)
    - Public: 3 (33%)
    - Private: 4 (44%)

Goal 1: Achieving Equity in Library Service

Themes that could be identified in the 6 responses to this question include:

- **Made the project possible:** Without the NC ECHO grant, institutions would not have been able to conduct the digitization project at all.
- **Accessibility of materials:** Materials are available to various user communities because they have been digitized. These materials would not have been available without the NC ECHO grant. These materials are especially valuable to make available if they are primary source materials or rare.
- **Decline in collection budgets:** With the decline in budgets for collection development, making materials available online is especially important. Digitization of cultural heritage materials does not, of course, provide an adequate substitute for other library collections, but it provides an important supplement to these collections.
- **Enabling hardware purchases:** Without the NC ECHO grant, institutions would not have been able to purchase computer hardware (for example, scanners), to digitize materials to make them available.
- **Definition of the term "equity":** Is the purpose of this goal to provide grants to small (and therefore the most needy) institutions, or to support outreach to diverse user communities, or some other purpose? This needs to be more clearly communicated so that institutions can accurately evaluate whether they have helped the SLNC meet this goal. The successes of projects in meeting this goal also need to be clearly communicated, which will provide materials for marketing and PR of NC ECHO projects and LSTA-funded projects in general.

Goal 2: Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change

Themes that could be identified in the 4 responses to this question include:

- **Digital librarianship:** Considering how libraries can provide access to materials online is a useful challenge. This is sometimes seen by library staff as competition with the tasks of traditional librarianship. NC ECHO staff can provide support and education to demonstrate that these are in fact complementary.
- **Standards and guidance:** The guidelines and assistance provided by NC ECHO staff with regard to project management, metadata standards, publicity, etc. were

critical in enabling the staff of the partner institution to conduct the funded project.

- **User studies:** NC ECHO grants provide the resources for institutions to conduct studies of user needs in a range of user communities.
- **Provide grants to smaller institutions:** More grants should be awarded to smaller institutions.

Goal 3: Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens

Themes that could be identified in the 5 responses to this question include:

- **Integration with classroom education:** The NC ECHO grant enabled the institution's staff to work with teachers to create resources that teachers could use in the classroom.
- **Customized materials:** The NC ECHO grant enabled the creation of educational materials designed for specific user communities.
- **Local history and living history:** The NC ECHO grant enabled materials to be put online that are concerned with specific areas of the state, and that help bring local history to life for students.
- **Outreach:** The NC ECHO grant's focus on local materials has enabled the institution to engage in other community programs, for children, young adults, and adults.

Goal 4: Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services

Themes that could be identified in the 4 responses to this question include:

- **Availability of materials:** The NC ECHO grant made it possible to digitize materials and make them available online that otherwise could not have been made available.
- **North Carolina's unique resources:** The NC ECHO grant made it possible to make North Carolina's unique resources available to the general public.
- **Support:** NC ECHO staff provide support and assistance with projects that is as or more valuable than the grant funding itself in enabling the staff in the partner institution to conduct projects.
- **Visibility within the state:** The NC ECHO program needs to conduct more publicity and outreach, to increase the visibility of the funded projects within the state.

Suggestions for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan

Themes that could be identified in the 3 responses to this question include:

- **NC ECHO staff as support for partner institutions:** NC ECHO staff should continue to remain accessible and provide assistance to partner institutions during the course of projects.
- **Marketing:** More publicity and outreach for NC ECHO needs to be conducted, to raise the visibility of this program.

2.5.2. Analysis of program reports prepared by grant recipients

As mentioned above, projects funded by the SLNC with LSTA monies are required to submit a project report annually via a webform. The evaluation team analyzed all reports from NC ECHO projects in depth, separate from the pool of LSTA program reports sampled and analyzed above. The reports analyzed were for grants awarded to NC ECHO partner institutions, including those from projects funded under the NC ECHO Digitization Grant, NC ECHO Digitization Starter Grant, and NC ECHO Heritage Partners Grant programs, both single-year and multi-year grants. The reports analyzed did not include those from grants awarded to the SLNC to support the NC ECHO project itself under the Statewide Leadership grant program. Reports from Statewide Leadership grant projects were analyzed in the review of selected project reports (see section 2.4, above), and were thus not included here in order to maintain a distinction between grants to NC ECHO partner institutions and grants to all other recipients.

These program reports include both qualitative and quantitative data. This section reports on the in-depth analysis of NC ECHO program reports.

2.5.2.1. Quantitative analysis of program reports

This evaluation effort was concerned with the extent to which the goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan had been met. Since this evaluation effort took place during the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, program reports from the entire 2003-2007 span were not available. Thus, this section reports on those program reports that were available to the evaluation team, which include those for FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 13 shows the number of NC ECHO grants that were awarded in FY 2003 and FY 2004. In FY 2003, NC ECHO projects comprised approximately 2% of the total number of projects funded by the SLNC using LSTA funds; in FY 2004 this was approximately 8%.

Table 13: Number of NC ECHO grants per year

	FY 2003	FY 2004
NC ECHO Digitization Grant	1	6
NC ECHO Digitization Starter Grant	2	6
NC ECHO Heritage Partners Grant	0	1

Table 14 shows the dollar figures for NC ECHO grants that were awarded in FY 2003 and FY 2004, both the LSTA amount expended and the amount matched by the cultural heritage institution funded by the LSTA grant. In FY 2003, NC ECHO projects comprised approximately 1.5% of the amount of total LSTA funds expended by the SLNC; in FY 2004 this was approximately 10%. These percentages are consistent with the percentages of NC ECHO grants that were awarded in FY 2003 and FY 2004.

Table 14: NC ECHO project financials

	FY 2003		FY 2004	
	Sum	**Average**	**Sum**	**Average**
LSTA Funds Expended	$61,889	$20,630	$426,831	$32,833
Cash Match	$4,995	$4,995	$111,054	$76,708
In Kind Contributions	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total Cost	$66,884	$22,295	$525,065	$40,390
Number of Persons Served	29,786	9,929	6,134,285	471,868

The last row in Table 14 does not contain financial data, but numbers of users served by the NC ECHO project. The question on the project report form eliciting this data reads as follows:

> The number of persons who used or benefited DIRECTLY from the services under the project. This number should not include the total population of the service area or the potential population to be reached. Ideally, each person should be counted only once even though he/she may have used the service several times.

It is not clear from this question how cultural heritage institutions should count the number of users who benefit from a project, nor if all institutions use the same methodology to count. Nevertheless, Table 15 follows from these figures, showing the number of NC ECHO grants in FY 2003 and FY 2004 that had various groups as their primary user community.

Table 15: Primary user communities of NC ECHO projects

	FY 2003	FY 2004
Adults	2	13
Young adults and teens	1	1
Children	0	7
Statewide public	3	13

2.5.2.2. Analysis of open-ended questions from program reports

The LSTA project reports include several open-ended questions. Open-ended questions provide an opportunity for grant recipients to offer, in their own words, their views, opinions, and comments broadly related to their projects, the tasks that were involved in it, and its results. The open-ended questions resulted in comments that assisted the evaluation team to understand the details of what is involved in launching and managing an NC ECHO project. The detail of responses to these questions may also be of use to SLNC staff as the basis for recommendations for the SLNC's 2008-2012 LSTA Plan.

Program reports included the following open-ended questions that asked respondents for comments regarding several aspects of the projects for which their institution was funded:

- Project Purpose: Briefly describe what you did, for whom (i.e., target audience), and for what expected outcome or benefit.
- Project Activities/Methods: What activities or methods were used; i.e., how did you carry out the project?
- Project Outputs: Provide measures of project or program performance (e.g., number of participants, number of objects scanned, number of workshops taught) to tell numerical results of the project.
- Project Outcomes: Describe the changes (or indicators of changes) in the target audience's skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude, status, or life condition brought about in part as a result of this project. Include a description of the ways outcome information was gathered, such as through surveys, pre- and post-tests, or other systematic measures of intended outcomes.
- Other Results: Describe any results not documented in Project Outputs or Project Outcomes, e.g., unexpected benefits, spin-off projects, etc.
- Anecdotal Information: Share stories, comments, feedback, and observations about how people used the products or services of the project, especially how they benefited from them.

This section of the report summarizes the data from project reports from NC ECHO projects and relies as much as possible on the actual language provided in the reports. It should be noted that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the open-ended questions on the program report form and the results presented here. In many reports, much of the same data was repeated in several fields; in particular, much narrative was repeated in the Project Outputs and Project Outcomes fields. Instead of being organized by the fields on the report form, therefore, this section is organized by common themes that could be identified in the responses to the open-ended questions in the reports.

Funds awarded for NC ECHO grants were expended primarily for two purposes:

- To purchase equipment necessary to begin digitization, and
- To pay staff, usually part-time and/or student employees (many projects also employ student volunteers).

The materials digitized for these projects are primarily the following:

- Archival and special collection materials (books, letters, 3D artifacts, etc.) unique to the funded cultural heritage institution(s),
- Local history and North Carolina-related materials,
- Photographs, maps, and other graphical materials, and
- Genealogical materials.

These four types of materials naturally have considerable overlap. For example, many genealogical materials include unique photographs, diaries, etc., that also have local historical significance.

Many projects created materials to supplement the original source material. These supplementary materials include:

- Instructional materials, created for and often in collaboration with K-12 educators,
- Scholarly and research materials, including bibliographies, created for and often in collaboration with college and university faculty,
- Transcriptions of handwritten textual materials (e.g., letters), and
- Finding aids, either "born-digital" or digitized versions of finding aids that existed previously in print.

The original source supplementary materials were created to add value to the original source material by providing context for the user to interpret the materials, or by increasing the usability of the materials.

The digitized original source material and the supplementary materials were the major outputs of these NC ECHO projects, as stated in the project grant proposals. However, these projects produced a number of other outputs, including:

- Presentations at conferences,
- Articles in peer-reviewed journals,
- Articles in local newspapers and stories on local television,
- Workshops for library patrons,
- Patron education & technology literacy instruction, and
- Documentation of project processes provided to other institutions.

Launching and managing a project of the scale of these NC ECHO projects is a considerable undertaking. The full range of activities involved in the lifecycle of these projects include:

- Selection of materials to digitize,
- Digitization of materials of a variety of formats,

- Assessment of original materials to determine if any need conservation prior or subsequent to digitization,
- Selection and installation of hardware and software, both to perform digitization and to manage digitized materials,
- Creation of supplementary materials to add value to the original source material,
- Creation of metadata for digitized materials,
- Design and creation of a website for the project,
- Marketing for the project,
- Coordination between project partner institutions, and
- Data collection from relevant user communities.

The major activities that took place in these projects span the range from planning the project to carrying out and managing the project activities to launching and publicizing the project as a new library service. Viewed in this light, these activities are not significantly different from those involved in launching any new library service or collection. This is a significant point: digital library work involves formats of materials and technologies that may be new to many libraries and other cultural heritage institutions, but the tasks and activities involved are similar or the same as those that libraries and other cultural heritage institutions have traditionally performed.

One activity that libraries and other cultural heritage institutions have traditionally performed is evaluation, and evaluation is likewise a large part of NC ECHO projects. Several program reports stated that it was too early in the course of the project to determine adequate and accurate measures. In the words of one program report: "systematic measures of intended outcomes are just beginning to be realized." However, some measures that were used and some that were being developed to evaluate NC ECHO projects include measures of:

- Use and usefulness of the website and materials by specific user communities (e.g., the local community, scholars, genealogists, etc.); these measures include: frequency of use, number of pages viewed per session, purpose of visit (e.g., school, personal interest), etc.,
- Awareness of the site within specific user communities,
- Usability of the site,
- How users found out about or were referred to the site, and
- Questions received by the library's reference services (desk, email, chat, etc.) resulting from uses of the website and materials.

The use and usefulness of the website and materials include traditional weblog statistics: number of hits to the website per unit of time, from specific IP addresses. Weblog statistics are a commonly-used measure of website use, but they are problematic and must be interpreted appropriately. One issue with weblog statistics is that they are frequently inflated. Every file that a user downloads is counted as a "hit": HTML files, graphics, videos, etc. Thus, if a webpage contains multiple images, it is counted as multiple hits every time a user views that page. Another issue with weblog statistics is that an IP address is not a reliable proxy for a user. Several program reports state that they receive

high use from northern Virginia, which would indicate that NC ECHO has a large number of users in the Washington DC area. However, northern Virginia is the location of one of AOL's East Coast server farms, and so many AOL users (and possibly users of other internet service providers), regardless of their actual geographic location, will appear to be located in northern Virginia.

NC ECHO project grant proposals state the intended benefits of the project. However, there are always additional, and often unforseen benefits and costs to any project. Benefits of NC ECHO projects, beyond those stated in the project grant proposals, include:

- New or increased collaboration between partner institutions, including development of ideas and plans for future collaborations. As stated in one report: "The partners recognize that their individual strengths and weaknesses compliment each other to make collaboration the logical avenue for providing access to their special collections. [One partner institution] holds valuable historic resources but do not have the technical infrastructure or personnel required to realistically implement such an undertaking. [Another partner institution] has the technology and expertise, but its special collections are not as deep as its partners."
- New or increased collaboration between partner institutions and other local institutions, including local history organizations, newspapers, etc.
- New or increased collaboration with faculty and students at the partner institutions.
- Donations of loans from the local community: some reports state that members of the local community have come forward with relevant materials to be digitized and included in the collection.
- Decreased turnaround time in fulfilling requests for some materials, since digitized materials can be sent by email rather than having to rely on sending photocopies by postal mail.
- An increase in the number of volunteers at the institution, usually volunteering specifically to work on the NC ECHO project.
- Technology literacy instruction for library staff, and increased comfort with the hardware and software used in the project.
- As a corollory to this last point, increased confidence levels within many cultural heritage institutions generally, with regard to the institution's ability to launch and manage other large-scale digitization projects.
- Increased use of the library's website.
- Increased interest in the library's unique holdings.
- Due to increased use and interest from user communities, several institutions have pledged more resources for equipment and future digitization efforts.

Negatives of NC ECHO projects include:

- Some projects experienced delays to the launch date, due to project management problems: for example, lack of necessary software, inadequate staffing, inadequate space for project staff, technical problems (e.g., setting up servers).
- Due to the above, some instututions digitized fewer materials than stated in the project grant proposal. To be fair, however, some institutions digitized more materials than stated in the project grant proposal.
- Staffing levels required for project are unsustainable: after the NC ECHO grant runs out, some institutions are not willing to hire full-time or student employees on a permanent basis.
- Managing the coordination and collaboration between partner institutions was a challenge.

In considering these negatives it is well to remember that only a few respondents made these comments. Possible solutions to these negatives are addressed in section 3.0: Recommendations.

2.5.3. Meeting with NC ECHO staff

In January 2007, the evaluation team met with members of the NC ECHO staff. This meeting was an unstructured focus group, to elicit data about the NC ECHO project from the perspectives of those most closely involved in it. Themes that arose during this meeting include:

- **Data about collections and institutions is a moving target:** As of December 2005, a total of approximately 900 cultural repositories have been identified in all 100 counties in North Carolina. As of this writing, 733 of these 900 institutions have completed the *NC ECHO Survey of NC Cultural Repositories*. The data possessed by NC ECHO staff on the holdings of each of these institutions is what each institution self reported, and in many cases numbers of items held were estimates. Additionally, the 733 institutions that have completed the *NC ECHO Survey of NC Cultural Repositories* have done so between between March 2001 – December 2005, so much of this data may be out of date, for example as institutions have expanded their collections. NC ECHO staff keep on top of these changes as best as they can, but with 900 cultural repositories only 5 staff members, this is a major challenge. It is therefore important for all stakeholders to understand that the data presented on NC ECHO's website is likely to be out of date. There are several mechanisms that may be put in place to maximize the currency of the data possessed by NC ECHO staff and presented on the NC ECHO website; these are discussed in the Recommendations section, below.
- **Distributed management of projects:** The decision was made early on that NC ECHO would not hold the materials digitized by partner institutions, but would instead enable partner institutions to maintain their own digital materials. This is still seen as the best approach, both logistically and in terms of maintaining relationships with partner institutions. Many partner institutions want to maintain

control over their own collections and the software used to manage those collections, and it is more realistic for the SLNC to not take on the role of maintaining digital content for cultural institutions around the state over the long term.

- **NC ECHO is a "cultural matchmaker":** Given that NC ECHO deliberately does not take on the role of managing projects or maintaining content for partner institutions, NC ECHO's ability to enforce the use of specific software or procedures is necessarily limited. This is also seen as the best approach. NC ECHO staff make frequent recommendations to partner institutions concerning hardware and software (e.g., scanners, content management systems). NC ECHO staff also acts as "matchmakers" between institutions that may benefit from collaboration, as well as between institutions with questions about software or procedures and institutions that may be able to answer these questions.
- **Content management software:** As of this writing, NC ECHO is making use of a data harvesting and repository software application called Blue Angel. The Blue Angel application suite may not be suitable for some anticipated needs. NC ECHO staff have been reviewing other software applications to supplement or possibly replace Blue Angel, including CONTENTdm, which at present looks to be the most promising content management system for maintaining NC ECHO's collection of collection-level metadata.
- **Planning grants are important:** LSTA Project Planning Grants are important as a learning opportunity for institutions, with regard to both the scope of projects and the processes and procedures required to manage projects. Planning Grants are especially important for collaborative projects, since managing a multi-institution project compounds the challenges. At present, before any institution may apply for an Heritage Partners Grant, that institution must apply for a Planning Grant. It may be worthwhile to consider requiring Planning Grants prior to awarding other types of NC ECHO grants.
- **Different funding habits for different institutions:** Certain partner institutions have demonstrated their ability to manage projects and produce good results over the course of multiple grants. These tend to be the larger partner institutions, with established infrastructure and more resources at their disposal. Grant proposals from these institutions will be reviewed with these previous projects, and the established record of these institutions, in mind. Grant proposals from other institutions will be reviewed for feasability more rigorously. The evaluation team agrees that this is a perfectly reasonable method for reviewing grant proposals. It is clear, however, that there is more than one model of proposal review and project management that are viable for NC ECHO projects, and it may be worthwhile to clearly articulate these for the benefit of future grantees.
- **Connections with other statewide projects:** LEARN NC maintains a list of lesson plans that were created using resources held by NC ECHO partner institutions, but it is not clear that this list is either complete or current. A closer relationship with LEARN NC, as well as other statewide projects such as NCknows and NC LIVE, could be to the benefit of all projects.

- **More workshops are planned:** As of this writing, NC ECHO staff is working on modifying the continuing education courses offered, and offering a broader range of courses tailored to current needs.

The themes that arose during the meeting with members of the NC ECHO staff complement findings concerning NC ECHO from other data collection efforts, and as such provide fodder for a number of recommendations, below.

It is clear from both the NC ECHO grantees and staff that NC ECHO is a valuable project, providing the opportunity for cultural institutions to share historic and locally unique records and documents that otherwise would have been difficult to access by citizens of North Carolina and the world. As such, NC ECHO is an important service, both within and without the state of North Carolina, and supports several of the SLNC's and LSTA's goals. It is also clear from both the NC ECHO grantees and staff that NC ECHO is a complex project, that requires a great deal of time both by NC ECHO staff and staff at partner institutions to manage the many projects. It is critical for future smooth operation that NC ECHO be fully staffed, so that the project may be well-managed within the SLNC, and so that partner institutions may receive the full benefit of the expertise of NC ECHO staff.

3.0. Recommendations

This section presents recommendations from the evaluation team to the SLNC, for inclusion in the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan, or in management of future grant funding efforts. These recommendations arise from the data collection efforts described above. Collectively, the SLNC and the libraries around the state that have been funded by LSTA grants have learned a great deal over the course of the 2003-07 LSTA Plan to date. In large-scale efforts, however, especially in those on the scale of an entire state, it is not always possible for all stakeholders to know what is known by other stakeholders. This section presents those "lessons learned" that the evaluation team has identified during this evaluation project, as well as suggestions for future work and changes to existing practices.

3.1 About the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan

More grant programs: There is strong support for the various existing grant programs provided by the SLNC. Despite this, however, there is demand for more grant programs, targeted to specific types of libraries, service to specific user communities, and other organizational and demographic breakdowns. There is also demand for more support for existing programs. Unfortunately these two things are mutually exclusive, without an increase in LSTA funding to the state of North Carolina.

3.2. About NC ECHO

More workshops: NC ECHO staff already offer a number of workshops and continuing education opportunities on a range of topics. However, there is a demand for even more workshops: on more topics, at more convenient times and in more convenient locations, online as well as in person. Some specific recommendations for increasing the number and convenience of workshops include:

- Offer a workshop on how to conduct focus groups.
- Offer a workshop on implementing and using Content Management System applications.
- Offer a workshop on project management, including topics such as: managing project workflows, creating Gantt charts, etc.
- Provide more "webinars" so that part time and clerical staff can attend.

Assistance with project management: A workshop on project management was mentioned above, but this is a large enough topic that it is worth addressing as a specific recommendation. Some reports mention that the amount of effort involved in the project was more than the institution had anticipated, and a Planning grant would have been a useful precursor. NC ECHO staff can provide consultation to assist institutions to assess the amount of effort that will be involved in a project, assist with project planning, creation of realistic timelines, etc. This may be done either prior to an institution submitting a grant proposal or once an institution has received a grant.

Develop differentiated grant programs: Certain partner institutions have demonstrated their ability to manage projects and produce good results over the course of multiple grants. As discussed above, grant proposals from these institutions are reviewed with these previous projects, and the established record of these institutions, in mind. Grant proposals from other institutions are reviewed for feasability more rigorously. More than one model of proposal review and project management already exists. It may be worthwhile to develop multiple grant programs; for example, differentiated by prior NC ECHO grant status, size of the institution, or amount of available resources.

Mechanism to update NC ECHO survey data: NC ECHO staff maintain the data collected by the *NC ECHO Survey of NC Cultural Repositories* on the approximately 900 cultural repositories in North Carolina. This data changes with some frequency, as staff turns over, institutions expand their collections, etc. It would be useful for institutions to be able to edit some of their own data from the *Survey of NC Cultural Repositories*; particularly the data concerning staff and contact information. Precisely what data would be most useful for institutions to be able to edit and over what data NC ECHO staff should maintain control requires further study.

Provide software consultations: Evaluating software applications is time-consuming and requires a great deal of prior knowledge, and many librarians do not have one or the other or both of these. NC ECHO should assist partner institutions, where possible, in evaluating software applications, specifically Content Management Systems. Some

participating institutions, for example, are using Microsoft Access as a CMS. This works acceptably for small collections, but does not scale up well.

Content management software: As of of this writing, NC ECHO is making use of a data harvesting and repository software application called Blue Angel. The Blue Angel application suite may not be suitable for some anticipated needs. NC ECHO staff should continue to review other software applications to supplement or replace Blue Angel, including CONTENTdm, which at present looks to be the most promising content management system for maintaining NC ECHO's collection of collection-level metadata.

Provide template or example documents: Every participating institution needs to create certain types of documents during the course of a project. Requiring each institution to create these dcuments from scratch is requiring each institution to reinvent the wheel. NC ECHO staff can collect exemplary documents, or create template documents of different types, and provide these to participating institutions as needed. Types of documents for which templates or examples would be useful include:

- Job descriptions for Project Manager, student workers, etc.
- Materials for marketing and outreach to specific user communities (i.e., teachers, etc.)
- Donation paperwork: Some materials digitized in NC ECHO projects were privately owned, and loaned to the institution temporarily to be digitized. In some project reports the hope was expressed that these materials would someday be donated to the institution, e.g., in wills.

3.3. For the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan

The extent of topics covered in the responses to this question from the surveys is exceptionally broad, and includes the following:

- Grants
    1. Encourage grants to have greater collaborative components
    2. Be sure to include marketing components in grants
    3. Provide more training on how to complete grants
    4. Do not require matching funds
    5. Provide a longer time to complete the grants
    6. Reinstitute building grants, or provide other guidance to libraries seeking funding for construction[5]

- Establish statewide library card / delivery system / resource sharing.
- Simplify the grant application process.
- Support greater collaboration across different library types.

[5] It is important to note that since the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) passed in 1995, replacing the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), that grant funds cannot be used for construction. Nevertheless, many librarians who responded to the various data collection efforts in this evaluation, perhaps unaware of this change in policy, requested the reinstatement of building grants.

- Provide more “webinars” so that part time and clerical staff can attend.
- Continue funding NC LIVE, NC ECHO, NC knows, Planning grants, and Master Trainer programs.
- Continue programs that benefit the entire state.
- Need to have better basic technology skills for those just beginning projects.
- Allow schools to reapply for grants after they have received one.
- Provide better support for literacy programs.
- Provide help in using new technologies such as RSS feeds, blogs, wikis, iPods and podcasting, RFID, e-books, etc.
- Options for LSTA expenditures should be specifically outlined.
- Increase the availability of online tutorials especially related to technology.
- Identify breakthrough and innovative library programs and services and create funding challenges to inspire others to copy these programs.
- Improve training opportunities.
- Don’t target training to “the lowest common denominator.”
- Allow peer reviewers of grants to have the same impact on awards as State Library staff. Perhaps use a blind review process.

These topic areas provide only a flavor of the extent of the suggestions respondents offered. Those interested in the full range of responses to this question should read the text of the actual suggestions offered (see Appendix C). Further recommendations include:

Provide more flexibility in grant categories: Some librarians have found it difficult to categorize project ideas within the funding program areas offered by the SLNC. Alternative program areas may be called for: the SLNC may wish to create more program areas, or create a “general” program area, with flexible parameters demarcating broad, applicable project types and/or initiatives.

State-wide resource sharing initiative: Many librarians suggested an initiative to share library materials across the state, across libraries of all type, akin to an OhioLink-type model of resource sharing. This could involve a state-wide library card for all public libraries.

Assistance finding local funding: Some LSTA-funded program areas require matching funds, which some smaller libraries and libraries in poorer counties are unable to find. In order to increase the equity of LSTA funding, the SLNC could provide some guidance to libraries that have had trouble obtaining local funding. This could take the form of consultation with a SLNC staff member, resulting in the provision of guidance and strategy recommendations, or the creation of a support network for promoting a trade of knowledge and tools between institutions accomplished in acquiring matching funds and those institutions without success, or by providing successful models online.

Assistance establishing collaborative projects: Some libraries have had difficulty locating other libraries with which to collaborate on projects. In the design of future

collaboration grants, the SLNC may want to consider devising an improved strategy for engaging, promoting, and supporting collaboration across libraries.

3.4. For future evaluation efforts

Clearer instructions for grant recipients filling out the program report form: Projects funded by the SLNC with LSTA monies are required to submit a project report annually via a webform. The evaluation team reviewed a sample of these project reports. These reports contained a great deal of useful data, without which the analyses reported above would not have been possible. However, there were some problems with how data was reported in these project reports, which arose from grant recipients not having adequate knowledge of evaluation methods. One example of this is the fact that there was a high degree of overlap between the narratives in the Project Outputs and Project Outcomes fields on the project reports. The project reports are useful as they are currently constructed. However, the SLNC should provide clearer instructions for filling out the program report form, including more explicit "scope notes" for the open-ended questions.

Establish evaluation metrics: Again, grant recipients do not have adequate knowledge of evaluation methods. The SLNC should establish measures and metrics for evaluating projects. Metrics may be specific to grant programs, types of libraries, project goals, etc. The SLNC may also wish to create template data collection instruments for grant recipients, and provide instruction in how to perform data collection and analysis. This would help to ensure a greater degree of consistency in future evaluations, as well as providing more reliable longitudinal data about grant programs.

Continue to solicit assistance from project managers: If a statewide project is analyzed in depth in a future LSTA evaluation (as NC ECHO was in this evaluation), the assistance of the project manager should be solicited, to get maximum distribution of any data collection instruments used, as well as to encourage librarians in the libraries participating in the statewide project to respond to the data collection instruments.

Continue to hold Town Hall meetings: Both the present and the 2001 LSTA evaluation efforts found that Town Hall meetings are valuable as education for librarians to increase understand of various aspects of LSTA funding in North Carolina. Town Hall meetings should be employed in future summative LSTA evaluation efforts such as this one, near the conclusion of the SLNC's 5-year LSTA funding cycle. The SLNC may also wish to consider conducting Town Hall meetings during the course of the LSTA funding cycle, perhaps annually or around the halfway mark of the funding cycle, as a method for increasing understanding and awareness of LSTA funding in North Carolina.

Reasons for neutrality: Many survey respondents were "neutral" in their responses to the closed-ended questions that assessed the degree to which the SLNC's four goals had been accomplished. The evaluation team believes that the most likely explanation for this neutrality is that respondents were either unaware of the four goals prior to filling out the survey, or if they were aware of the four goals, they were unclear on how to interpret them. This, however, is a testable hypothesis. The SLNC may wish to explore possible

reasons for the response of "neutral" on these questions, as these reasons may have a significant impact on the SLNC's ability to meet the goals set forth in the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan, and may provide directions for future outreach efforts.

4.0. Successes of the LSTA Program

The LSTA is one of the most important means by which the federal government supports library services in the United States. Based on a formula, each state in the nation receives an annual amount that can be used to support a range of library and information services in that particular state. Typically the state library in each state has the responsibility to develop specific service and program goals that are then used as a roadmap for spending the LSTA award. For the most recent fiscal year (2006-2007), for example, the SLNC awarded grants totaling $3,642,589[6]. Thus, it is essential that the SLNC and residents of the state can demonstrate the success and impact of this annual award.

The five-year plan that guided the 2003-2007 spending of LSTA monies in North Carolina targeted four primary goals related to:

1. Achieving Equity in Library Service
2. Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change
3. Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens
4. Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services.

As shown in this report, the majority of respondents providing information to the evaluation team either agreed or strongly agreed that the SLNC had accomplished these goals. In addition, the review of other sources of information by the evaluation team also concludes that the SLNC accomplished these goals.

Although an important conclusion of the study is that these goals were, in fact accomplished, the stories behind this conclusion are as important as accomplishing the goals. In the various Town Hall meetings, focus groups, individual discussions held by the study team with librarians, State Library staff, and others, the study team heard numerous examples of the importance and impact of the LSTA funded programs. For example, LSTA programs made it possible for:

- Librarians that could rarely leave their library district for continuing education to travel to another city in North Carolina to obtain education and training on numerous topics;

[6] See: LSTA Grant Awards, 2006-2007, June 12 , 2006, http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/LSTA/AwardsList06-07.htm, and LSTA Grant Awards, 2006-2007 (Mid-year Cycle), December 18 , 2006, http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/LSTA/AwardslistMid06-07.htm

- Historic and locally unique records and documents that would have remained difficult to access to be digitized and made available online throughout the state and the world;
- New materials and collections to be added to a host of school libraries around the state that could not have been purchased otherwise;
- Collaborations to occur across different types of libraries working on a range of projects;
- Librarians to obtain career development skills and new knowledge that enhanced their leadership to provide better information services for the local community;
- Spanish speaking residents to obtain Spanish language materials and assistance at their local library;
- Local libraries to better market services and programs;
- Residents to obtain jobs with the assistance of job banks, employment information, training in resume writing, and other assistance;
- Many libraries across the state to obtain or upgrade to new computer workstations and enhanced information technology;
- Local libraries to develop plans to build new buildings, develop better information technology applications, and better meet the information needs of residents; and
- The SLNC to take a leadership stance to develop such programs as NC ECHO and NCknows, the statewide digital reference service.

These are but a few of the benefits that resulted from the various LSTA programs and grants provided by the SLNC.

In addition to these successes it is also important to note that there are a number of very successful statewide projects developed and implemented by the SLNC and funded by LSTA in whole or in part. For example, study participants frequently cited NCknows – the statewide virtual reference service – as an example of how increased access to information and resources has occurred in North Carolina. They noted that now anyone, in any part of North Carolina, can chat with especially knowledgeable reference librarians and get answers to questions (and other information) as needed. Projects such as this one, and others like NC ECHO have had a significant impact on increasing state residents' access to information and services not previously available.

Study participants also frequently mentioned the high quality, dedication, and professionalism of the SLNC staff. Participants told evaluation team members incidents where SLNC staff went "the extra mile" to help a particular library or librarian. One staff member stayed extra time at a library to help repair information technology; another arranged to meet with the trustees to discuss the importance of a particular library service; yet another provided critically important assistance to help a library submit a grant proposal.

In short, during this five year period, the SLNC – with the assistance of the broader library community in North Carolina – accomplished the goals articulated in the SLNC's 2003-2007 LSTA Plan, and implemented a number of high-impact and quality statewide initiatives. LSTA funds enabled the development of library programs and services that

would not otherwise have been possible in North Carolina, both at the local and the state levels. Resources unique to North Carolina, including many rare and primary source materials, have been made available online to the general public. Educational materials have been developed, and integrated into classroom education, as well as also made available online to the general public. Clearly, there are areas where the development and implementation of the next five-year plan can be improved and those are noted previously in this report. Overall, however, the residents and library community of the state of North Carolina are considerably better off in terms of their access to and use of library-based information services because of LSTA funding and the efforts of the SLNC. And these impacts extend well beyond the boundaries of the state of North Carolina: the greatest impact of LSTA funds within North Carolina is possibly that it has enabled the talents of the library community in North Carolina to expand its influence from the local level to the statewide, national, and worldwide level.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team wishes to extend thanks to the State Library of North Carolina for the opportunity to work on this evaluation project. Thanks also to all staff of the State Library of North Carolina who helped make this evaluation possible, especially Mary Boone and Penny Hornsby. Thanks also to Frannie Ashburn, Beth Crist, Pam Jaskot, Raye Oldham, Grant Pair, Vicki Wheeler, and Angie Cox for their work setting up the Town Hall meetings, and the NC ECHO staff for their time and assistance in providing detailed data.

Appendix A: Methodology

This section describes in detail the methodology employed in this evaluation. The data collection instruments employed in this evaluation are reproduced in Appendix B.

General survey

A brief survey was administered to assess the state-wide impact of SLNC grants of LSTA funds in meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. This survey elicited data from librarians around North Carolina on the local and state-wide impacts of all grants on individual libraries' services.

This survey was administered in two forms: online on the web, and on paper during the Town Hall meetings. The web-based survey was made available for submissions from late September to early December 2006, so as to provide the maximium possible opportunity for respondents to fill out the survey. The paper-based survey was administered at the conclusion of the Town Hall meetings, so as to ensure responses from most meeting attendees.

The paper-based version of this survey is reproduced in Appendix B.

NC ECHO survey

A second survey was administered to assess the state-wide impact of NC ECHO grants in meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan.

This survey elicited data only from librarians in libraries that had received grants to support an NC ECHO project, on the impact of NC ECHO grants on these cultural heritage institutions.

Town Hall meetings

Five Town Hall meetings were conducted in several locations around North Carolina. The dates and locations of these meetings are as follows:

- 5 October 2006, in Winston-Salem, in conjunction with the North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) conference (www.ncslma.org/Conference.htm). This was the only Town Hall meeting held in conjunction with a conference, due to the fact that the LSTA Advisory Committee believed that school librarians would be a difficult audience to attract to Town Hall meetings otherwise.
- 17 October 2006, in Asheville, at the University of North Carolina at Asheville.
- 18 October 2006, in Raleigh, at Wake Technical Community College.
- 19 October 2006, in Mooresville, at the Mooresville Public Library.

- 20 October 2006, in Fayetteville, at the Cumberland County Public Library and Information Center, Headquarters Branch.

Emails were sent to several listservs (see Appendix A) announcing these meetings, and inviting participants. These meetings were open to any and all librarians or other staff from any and all libraries in North Carolina, whether or not those libraries had received an LSTA grant during the previous 5 years.

The purpose of these Town Hall meetings was to collect three types of data:

1. librarians' perceptions of the impacts and benefits that have resulted from specific projects funded by LSTA grants,
2. librarians' perceptions of the extent to which specific LSTA-funded projects have contributed to meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan, and
3. suggestions for future goals, funding priorities, or projects that may be incorporated into the SLNC's 2008-2012 LSTA Plan.

The discussion questions addressed in these Town Hall meetings are reproduced in Appendix B.

The evaluation team took notes during these Town Hall meetings, and attempted to capture comments made by attendees. These notes were analyzed to identify recurring themes in attendees' comments. These themes are presented in the Findings section.

Evaluations from Town Hall meetings

At the conclusion of the Town Hall meetings, attendees were asked to fill out a one-page evaluation form, reproduced in Appendix B. This evaluation form elicited data about the extent to which the Town Hall meetings themselves were educational, increasing the attendees' knowledge and understanding of LSTA-funded programs in North Carolina, and the function and goals of LSTA funding.

This evaluation form was adapted from a similar form used by the evaluators who conducted the 2001 LSTA evaluation for the SLNC. (See the document *Evaluation of the Library Services & Technology Act Plan For Implementation in North Carolina August 1997*, Appendix A: Evaluation Form Used at Regional Meetings, page IV-3.) Using a form similar to the 2001 version in the present evaluation enabled comparisons to be made concerning the educational value of the Town Hall meetings as reported in 2001 and as administered for this program evaluation. The data from the evaluation forms and comparisons with the 2001 data are presented in the Findings section.

LSTA program reports prepared by grant recipients

Projects funded by the SLNC with LSTA monies are required to submit a project report annually via a webform. The current version of this webform is available at: http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/forms/lsta/lstareport.htm

The evaluation team reviewed selected project reports. The purpose of this review was to determine the degree to which these projects assisted the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. In addition, the review of these project reports provided insights into the quality of the evaluation reports themselves, and the level of knowledge of project evaluation possessed by the awardees who developed these reports.

The review of these program reports included both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative review described the number of awards received by library type or organization, as well as the number of awards granted for each of the SLNC's program areas. The qualitative review assesses a sample of the program reports in terms of (1) assisting the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan, and (2) the degree to which basic evaluation content was present in the program reports themselves.

Sampling

The SLNC provided the evaluation team with copies of the project reports for 2003 and 2004. There were 158 reports in 15 program areas in 2003, and 162 reports in 14 program areas in 2004. There were two NC ECHO-related program areas in 2003, and three in 2004. The project reports from NC ECHO projects were removed from this pool of project reports, for in-depth analysis.

To insure that a representative sample of projects were reviewed, the evaluation team developed a stratified random sample approach. First, project reports for each year were categorized by their program area. Next, a random sample of 20% of all projects within each program area was drawn, with a minimum of 1 report selected for each program area.

Many grants were awarded in some program areas (55 School Library Collection Development Grants in 2003, for example), and only 1 or 2 grants were awarded in some program areas. As a result, program areas in which 4 or fewer grants were awarded are over-represented in our sample. This approach insures that the evaluation reports assessed are *representative* of those awarded for a particular year across the various program priority areas. The approach does *not*, however, allow for generalization of findings to specific program priorities.

The size of the sample of project reports was 34 for 2003 and 30 for 2004.

Quantitative Analysis

All of the project reports for 2003 and 2004 were reviewed. This review identified the type of library or other institution type that received the grant, and the program area under which the grant was awarded.

Qualitative Analysis

A review was conducted of the 34 selected program reports for 2003 and the 30 for 2004 that resulted from the sampling process described above. That review identified the degree to which each project report offered evidence that the project assisted the SLNC in meeting the four goals articulated in the 2003-2007 LSTA Plan. The review also assessed the quality of each project report in terms of a number of evaluation criteria related to conducting program evaluation. The criteria used by the evaluation team in conducting this review is presented here:

1. **Degree to which the evaluation report supports accomplishment of the four State Library of North Carolina 5-year LSTA Goals.**

	Very much	**Somewhat**	**Not at all**
Achieving equity in library service	3	2	1
Creating a climate for innovation & change	3	2	1
Supporting learning and discovery for children and teens by libraries and librarians	3	2	1
Enabling the state library to serve as a leader in library and information services.	3	2	1

2. Degree to which the evaluation report includes specific evaluation content.

	Very clear	Somewhat clear	Not clear
Evaluation goals	3	2	1
Measures	3	2	1
Data collection methodology	3	2	1
Findings	3	2	1
Recommendations	3	2	1

NC ECHO program reports prepared by grant recipients

As stated above, the project reports from NC ECHO projects were removed from the pool of LSTA program reports sampled. These NC ECHO program reports were set aside for an in-depth review of the NC ECHO program. This review provided both a quantitative analysis of projects in terms of audience served, money spent, etc., and a qualitative analysis to identify themes that emerged from these reports with regard to project management, activities undertaken, and benefits and costs of these projects.

Appendix B: Data Collection Instruments

This section contains copies of all data collection instruments used in this evaluation.

General survey

State Library of North Carolina
LSTA State Plan 2003-07 Evaluation

The State Library of North Carolina (SLNC), the agency that administers our state's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds, is currently evaluating its 2003-2007 plan: *Library Service & Technology Act Plan for Implementation in North Carolina 2003-2007, August 2002* <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/plan2003-07.pdf>. This survey is the first phase of this evaluation. This evaluation will assess the state-wide impact of LSTA funds in meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the current LSTA plan:

1. Achieving equity in library service;
2. Creating a climate for innovation & change;
3. Libraries and librarians lead in support of learning and discovery for children and teens; and
4. Enabling the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services.

The SLNC values the input of all North Carolina library staff to inform a comprehensive and instructive evaluation of the state's LSTA Plan. You, your staff, and others at your institution with an interest in the SLNC's LSTA grant-making program are encouraged to participate.

Please give your completed survey to any member of the evaluation team. If you prefer, you can complete this survey online at:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=980002576272
An information sheet about this study will be handed out during the evaluation meeting.

Introduction

1. Please indicate the name of the library you represent:

2. Please indicate your position:

3. Did your library apply for LSTA funds from the State Library of North Carolina in the 2003-07 award period:
   - □ Yes
   - □ No
   - □ Don't know

4. Has your library received LSTA funds for the 2003-07 award period:
   - □ Yes
   - □ No
   - □ Don't know

5. Are you aware of plans to apply for future LSTA funds at your library:
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

LSTA 2003-07 Goals

The four goals set forth in the current LSTA plan (stated above) guided the SLNC's LSTA funding activities during this five-year funding cycle, including planning, policy development, and grant-making. Please indicate the degree to which you perceive that these goals have been met at your library:

6. To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Achieving Equity in Library Service has been met during the past 5 years?
   - □ Strongly agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ Neutral
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly disagree

7. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 6; for instance, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply skip this question.

8. To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change has been met during the past 5 years?
   - □ Strongly agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ Neutral
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly disagree

9. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 8; for instance, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply skip this question.

10. To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens has been met during the past 5 years?

    □ Strongly agree
    □ Agree
    □ Neutral
    □ Disagree
    □ Strongly disagree

11. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 10; for instance, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply skip this question.

12. To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services has been met during the past 5 years?

    □ Strongly agree
    □ Agree
    □ Neutral
    □ Disagree
    □ Strongly disagree

13. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 12; for instance, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply skip this question.

Future LSTA Goals

14. Please provide any suggestions you have for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan. If you do not have any comments to share, then simply skip this question.

Conclusion

The evaluation team may wish to follow up by phone to clarify one or more of your responses to this survey. If you choose to participate, a member of the evaluation team will contact you via telephone within 2 weeks of your submitting this survey.

15. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up phone interview after you submit this survey?
    - □ Yes
    - □ No

16. If you answered Yes to the previous question, please provide us with your contact information below. If you answered No, then simply skip this question.
    Name:
    Email:
    Phone Number:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your input is greatly valued by the evaluation team and the State Library of North Carolina.

Please give your completed survey to any member of the evaluation team, and pick up an information sheet about this study.

NC ECHO survey

State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) LSTA NC ECHO Evaluation Exit this survey >>

1. Introduction

The State Library of North Carolina (SLNC), the agency that administers our state's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds, is currently evaluating its 2003-2007 plan: *Library Service & Technology Act Plan for Implementation in North Carolina 2003-2007, August 2002*; http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/plan2003-07.pdf.

This survey is the second phase of this evaluation. It is administered to cultural heritage institutions that have received grants under NC ECHO. This survey is intended to elicit data on the impact of these grants on these cultural heritage institutions.This evaluation will assess the state-wide impact of LSTA funds in meeting the four goals set forth by the SLNC in the current LSTA plan:

1. Achieving equity in library service;
2. Creating a climate for innovation & change;
3. Libraries and librarians lead in support of learning and discovery for children and teens; and
4. Enabling the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services.

The SLNC values the input of all North Carolina library staff to inform a comprehensive and instructive evaluation of the state's LSTA Plan. You, your staff, and others at your institution with an interest in the SLNC's LSTA grant making program are encouraged to participate.

This evaluation is being conducted by Dr. Jeffrey Pomerantz in the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Clicking the Submit button at the end of this survey constitutes your agreement to participate in this study. Please click here for more information on this study and how we will protect your privacy.

1. Please indicate the name of the cultural heritage institution you represent:

2. Please indicate your position (please select one):

3. Are you aware of plans to apply for future LSTA funds at your institution:

- Yes
- No

Next >>

State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) LSTA NC ECHO Evaluation Exit this survey >>

2. LSTA 2003-07 Goals

The State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) identified 4 goals in its 2003-2007 LSTA plan. These 4 goals are:

1. Achieving equity in library service;
2. Creating a climate for innovation & change;
3. Libraries and librarians lead in support of learning and discovery for children and teens; and
4. Enabling the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services.

These 4 goals guided the SLNC's LSTA funding activities during this five-year funding cycle, including planning, policy development, and grant-making. Please indicate the degree to which you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to meet these goals:

4. To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Achieving Equity in Library Service?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 4; for example, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply leave this field blank.

6. To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 6; for example, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply leave this field blank.

8. To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 8; for example, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply leave this field blank.

10. To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11. Please provide additional comments in relation to question 10; for example, a brief example. If you do not have additional comments, then simply leave this field blank.

<< Prev Next >>

State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) LSTA NC ECHO Evaluation Exit this survey >>

3. Future LSTA Goals

12. Please provide any suggestions you have for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan. If you do not have any comments to share, then simply click "next."

<< Prev Next >>

State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) LSTA NC ECHO Evaluation Exit this survey >>

4. Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is greatly valued by the State Library of North Carolina. Survey responses from all participants during the course of this evaluation study will be collected and analyzed to inform a comprehensive evaluation of LSTA-funded projects in the state of North Carolina between 2003 and 2007. The evaluation team may wish to follow up with by phone to clarify one or more of your responses to this survey. Would you be willing to participate in a brief phone interview to follow up from this survey? If you choose to participate, a member of the evaluation team will contact you via telephone within 2 weeks of your submitting this survey. This phone interview will last approximately fifteen minutes. Please click here for more information on this study and how we will protect your privacy.

13. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up phone interview after you submit this survey?

- Yes
- No

14. If you answered Yes to the previous question, please provide us with your contact information below. If you answered No, simply select "done."

Name
Email
Phone Number

<< Prev **Done >>**

Discussion questions handed out at the Town Hall meetings

North Carolina LSTA Evaluation Discussion Sessions
October 17-20, 2006
State Library of North Carolina

The State Library of North Carolina will be conducting *Library Services and Technology Act* (LSTA) Evaluation Discussion Sessions to obtain input from the North Carolina library community regarding various aspects of the states LSTA program between 2001-2006. Information from these sessions will be used by the State Library of North Carolina to evaluate the state's LSTA program and submit a report on this program to the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The discussion sessions, which will include a lunch, will be held from 9:30 AM – 1:30 PM at the following dates and locations.

October 17 (Tuesday)	Asheville	UNC Asheville
October 18 (Wednesday)	Raleigh	Wake Technical Community College
October 19 (Thursday)	Mooresville	Mooresville Public Library
October 20 (Friday)	Fayetteville	Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center

The sessions will be conducted and moderated by Dr. Charles R. McClure, Francis Eppes Professor and Director of the Information Institute at Florida State University. The discussion topics to be addressed will focus specifically on:

- What are the impacts and benefits that have resulted from specific LSTA projects that have been funded since 2001? Please refer to specific projects in your comments.
- To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects assisted in achieving equity of library services in the state?
- To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects promoted a climate for innovation and change in the state?
- To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects supported learning and discovery for children and teens?
- To what degree have the LSTA-funded projects enabled the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services?
- What is the value, importance, and impact of the North Carolina *Exploring Cultural Heritage Online* (NC ECHO) (www.ncecho.org) project?
- What suggestions can be made for future LSTA projects to increase their impact, benefits, and delivery of quality library services?

Individuals may bring written statements on the above topics that can be given to the moderator or offer their comments orally at the time of the discussions session. Please note that the discussion sessions are intended to focus on the above topics only – other topics will need to be considered at other meetings. We look forward to seeing you at one of these sessions!

For additional information please contact Penny Hornsby, at the State Library of North Carolina PHornsby@library.dcr.state.nc.us.

Information sheet about the study handed out at the Town Hall meetings

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Information about a Research Study
IRB Study # 06-0509
Version Oct 10, 2006

Title of Study: State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Program Evaluation

Principal Investigator: Jeffrey Pomerantz
UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School of Information and Library Science

Study Contact telephone number: 919-962-8064
Study Contact email: pomerantz@unc.edu

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
You are being asked to take part in a research study. To participate in the study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, or you may withdraw your consent to participate in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study. You may keep this information form. You should ask the researcher named above, or any members of the evaluation team, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?
The purpose of this research study is to learn about the SLNC's five-year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan for 2003-2007. It will evaluate and assess the state-wide impact of LSTA funds in meeting four goals set forth by the SLNC at the plan's inception: 1) achieving equity in library service; 2) creating a climate for innovation & change; 3) libraries and librarians lead in support of learning and discovery for children and teens; and 4) enabling the State Library to serve as a leader in library and information services.

You are being asked to participate in this study because the SLNC values the input of all North Carolina library staff to inform a comprehensive and instructive evaluation of the state's five year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) 2003-07 Plan. A PDF of the State Plan can be found at http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/lsta/plan2003-07.pdf

How long will your participation in this study last?
This evaluation meeting will last approximately four hours. You may choose to leave the evaluation meeting at any time.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
You will be provided the opportunity to give a brief, five to seven minute, prepared, public address on an LSTA-funded project or service. Attendees of the evaluation meeting will be asked to discuss: (1) the SLNC's five-year LSTA Plan, 2003/07; (2) their perceptions, attitudes, and opinions about the success of this plan in general; (3) LSTA-funded projects and services, in particular; and (4) how these can be improved. No questions will be directed to you individually, but instead will be posed to the group. You may choose to respond or not respond at any point during the discussion. Research team members in attendance will take notes during the discussion. The evaluation session will not be audio- or video-recorded.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?
Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge. Your participation is important to help us evaluate the SLNC's LSTA Plan for 2003/07. While you may not benefit personally from being in this research study, you will be contributing to the improved information and education needs of North Carolina residents locally, regionally, and state-wide.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?
We do not think you will experience any discomfort or risk from participating in the evaluation meeting. Even though we will emphasize to all participants that comments made during the evaluation meeting should be kept confidential, it is possible that participants may repeat comments outside of the group at some time in the future. Therefore, we encourage you to be as honest and open as you can, but remain aware of our limits in protecting confidentiality.

How will your privacy be protected?
Every effort will be taken to protect your identity as a participant in this study. All data collected at this evaluation meeting will be stripped of all personal information. Your contributions will only be reviewed by members of the project team and select representatives of the evaluation study's sponsors, the SLNC. Personal information received in the course of the data collection (name, institutional affiliation) will be secured in a locked file drawer in the locked office of the Principal Investigator.

Participants will not be identified in any report or publication about this study, so no one in your community, or elsewhere, will know how you responded to the web-survey questions.

What if you have questions about this study?
You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact the researchers listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Thank you for helping us with this study.

Evaluations from Town Hall meetings

LSTA Town Hall Meeting Evaluation
October 2006

1. To what extent has this meeting increased your understanding of LSTA programs in North Carolina over the last five years? (please circle one)

A great deal				Not at all
5	4	3	2	1

2. To what extent have the LSTA programs in North Carolina had significant impacts on improving statewide library services over the last five years? (please circle one)

A great deal				Not at all
5	4	3	2	1

3. If you still have questions about the LSTA program in North Carolina, please note them here:

4. To what degee did today's meeting help you to identify the North Carolina LSTA programs that have made a difference for North Carolina libraries and their users? (please circle one)

A great deal				Not at all
5	4	3	2	1

5. To what extent did this meeting assist you in identifying needs and priorities for the next 5 years for LSTA projects? (please circle one)

A great deal				Not at all
5	4	3	2	1

6. Please note here any other comments you have on today's meeting:

Appendix C: Responses from Open-ended Survey Questions

This section reproduces all of the respondents' comments to the open-ended questions on the general survey, the NC ECHO survey, and the Town Hall meeting evaluations.

These comments are reproduced here as submitted, including all errors of spelling, grammar, and fact. Additionally, please note that some respondents' comments refer to programs not funded by the LSTA.

General survey

To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Achieving Equity in Library Service has been met during the past 5 years?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 6; for instance, a brief example.

1) It is too difficult for small libraries to get funded because of ingrained attitudes to grant reviewers (including some State Library staff) about the capability and competence of the staff of small libraries, and the needs of small libraries. Just because someone is lodged in a position at a large library with more staff and more resources does not mean that they are more capable or competent at planning, imnplementing, or evaluating LSTA projects or making them successful. 2) If any LSTA funds are used to support a proprietary agreement with OCLC, they should be withdrawn. LSTA is designed to provide equity of services to all libraries. There is nothing equitable about the way OCLC, an over-blown 'non-profit' bureaucracy, charges libraries for levels of membership depending on their ability to pay.

1. Bringing technology to libraries in rural areas. 2. NC LIVE providing great online resources in everyone in the state.

1. Our marketing grant - 97,000 website hits. 14.8% customer base increase. The staff collaboration to achieve those goals are simply not measurable. 2. LSTA for rural libraries is the best shot in the arm we have in terms of reaching our public and expanding services!

2nd year in media center.

A good plan will privide services to all on an equal footing.

A variety of grant programs allows libraries the opportunity to improve in the specific areas they need, whether it's technology, collections or planning--not just in an area designated by the LSTA committee and State Library.

Agree, but only in technology. I do not see equity in basic library services.

Am new to my school. Have little info at this time.

As a low-funded library system, the LSTA money we received allowed for equity in library service. The system received a LSTA grant for our automated system. We would not have such a system if it were not for LSTA money.

As far as I am aware, I agree.

Being part of the Master Trainer program has allowed us to provide a quality level of training that was not available prior to having a staff member be selected for that service. The funding for the Washington DC Computers in Libraries Conference made it possible to attend a national event that would otherwise have been unavailable to our staff.

By weeding and acquisitions, we have improved the average age of our collection almost 20 years.

Computers purchased thru LSTA grant funds are used by students and families who do not have computers at home.

[Library] is unable to provide per its 1987 mandate 'an indexed inventory spanning all significant information resources availablee to the Department, including computerized databases.'

[Elementary School] used LSTA funds to update current collection to better meet the needs of the growing Hispanic population.

Don't know what this is.

Equity is hard to define but LSTA has had statewide impact. For individual libraries needing funding, the amount of paperwork can be overwhelming and may keep libraries from needing help from applying.

Equity issues go both to monetary awards as well as equity of needed staff resources to apply, implement, and sustain the grant's objectives. It is a cumbersome process and people with no expertise in grant writing and implementation are competing against larger systems, libraries who have staff whose job it is to write and implement grants. It is amazing that my library has been able to get a grant award based on that knowledge. I guess we were just lucky.

Equity or parity in library services still depends heavily on the level of community affluence surrounding each public library. Furthermore, where policies, procedures, technology and finance are concerned, too much of the success of each public library

rests in the hands of nearly every other local decision-maker but the library director and library staff.

Grant funds were used to improve the juvenile nonfiction collection.

Has allowed our library to have access to technology in a way that would not have been possible if we had to rely on local funding.

Hispanic Services grants enabled us to start services to the Hispanic community by offering materials, computers, and Spanish-speaking staff. We are able to sustain those services through regular funding.

I am a new employee in [County Public Library], so I don't have enough experience to judge.

I am a recipient of a grant and without that aid I would not have been able to attend the AASL conference.

I am sole staff for 500+ student body. Some have more. Short on technology -- only two computers for research purposes.

I appreciate that our library was included in LSTA funding, however outside of this, I am generally not aware of the benefits to other libraries in NC.

I can only speak to one of these goals - the climate of innovationa and change. An LSTA professional development grant enabled me to attend the SLA annual conference in Baltimore this year. These grants provide a unique opportunity for librarians in the state to meet with colleagues, exchange ideas and learn new technologies and practices.

I don't see the relationship between SLNC and my library. I don't know how the SLNC has impacted my library.

I have never worked in a system where there was no funding for library or technology from the school board! Likewise for staffing, i.e., media assistants and full-time technology specialists. Where does N.C. spend this money? There is no need to re-invent the wheel with IMPACT (not that that's what is happening). I came from a system where LMS's and CRS's were classified as teachers and where we had scheduled collaboration time with every grade level. Is N.C. looking at models in other states? I don't mean to assume anything, but I am stunned by the 'status' of school libraries and media specialists in N.C.

I have no basis on which to form an opinion.

I have only been at my position for three months and do not feel like my answers give an accurate picture of the SLNC's goals.

I have peers who have made a positive change in their collection due to LSTA grants!

I haven't been here long enough to comment on this.

I think that this issue is especially noticeable in the area of technology, which is very expensive for small, rural libraries.

I think the State Library is trying hard, but you really can't make up for a poor local tax base in some locations.

I work part time as out reach so I am not in the library most of the time

I would echo the comment made during our meeting - the difficult and cumbersome application and management requirements of the grants are an equity issue in that small libraries have difficulty and, in some cases, are unable to apply.

I'm afraid I can't be very helpful on this survey. I am new to the state, and my library has had experience with only one grant. I can't comment on whether the goals have been met overall.

Inequities still exist.

It has allowed us to put upgraded computers in branches otherwise would not have been able to.

Just within our district there are huge disparities in collections. This is not a reflection on what you've done. This grant has helped so much - there is just so much need in our state.

Laptops for checkout allow for use anywhere in the building, which is sensitive to different learning needs. More than ever, we are encountering students with needs for learning assistance, and they have accomodation plans for the classroom. The most common accomodation is for separate and distraction-free testing. They had no option for separate and distraction-free use of library computers, but having laptops for checkout and wireless access gives students more options. 80% of our students are on financial aid. Many of them cannot afford laptops or computers at home.

LSTA funding has helped smaller libraries obtain computer equipment, has helped with initial digitization projects, and has helped with building adequate collections.

LSTA Funds are one of the most important avenues for funding significant needs not otherwise fully budgeted in many less well-funded libraries. Exampbles are funds for collection development in school libraries, funds for public libraries, and automation in small private college libraries.

LSTA grant has helped our library remain competitive in our equity of access as compared to the larger library systems near our community.

LSTA is difficult to implement at the state level, with its need to serve all types of libraries. There is not a lot of money and there are many needs. Equity is tough to define across different types of libraries. The last five years of LSTA has been only moderately successful.

More training in grantsmanship would even the playing field for some who have attempted but failed to receive LSTA funding. There are many great ideas out there in library land and certainly deserving libraries who are headed by some who just have trouble getting their ideas on paper.

More/better internet access. Improvements in public library websites.

My library was awarded an LSTA project planning grant to plan for library outreach services. In my community that has meant planning library outreach services to meet the informational and recreational reading needs of Hispanics. While we are still in the planning phase this grant has already resulted in improved services to this group of underserved people because we are learning so much about how to reach them and what library services are meaningful to them.

N/A

N/A

N/A

NC-LIVE has been an extraordinary benefit to small and medium sized libraries.

None applied for.

Not familiar with this.

not given any information re LSTA

Only to the extent that schools have taken advantage of it.

Our library would have very old, slow computers without LSTA grants.

Our planning and marketing grants helped us to advertise our services to folks who did not normally think of the public library as a resource in their lives.

Provided a means for libraries to receive funds to support otherwise unempowered institutions in collection development, technology, and an overall better presence within their communities.

Provided books to ESL students who had none before LSTA. Provided current print resources at an appropriate reading level for our full range of students. Provided books that were appealing to middle school students becuase of their currency, especially biography.

Providing internet access to those who cannot afford computers and/or internet access helps acheive equity in our small, rural county. We are also able to deliver services to homebound patrons and Spanish-speaking patrons. LSTA funding for technology and materials helps free up funds to serve other/additional populations.

Received a grant to provide additional materials to English as a Second Languge students, who were not well-served previously.

Receiving the LSTA grant has allowed [County Schools] to greatly reduce inequity in the various collections at our 38 schools. It has allowed us to provide more equitable access to appropriate resources at each school and has helped us ensure equitable numbers of resources are available at each school.

Require funds for media centers at school level.

Rural counties and towns benefit. Academic libraries are benefitting (small and large). Older population has participated. Diverse groups become library users.

Sadly, I think this is one of the only ways some school libraries will be able to improve their collections. It is very valuable.

Schools that did not receive full amount ($10,000) should be able to apply for the remainder (ex. $4,000 first time, $6,000 second time).

See comments at end.

Site-based management and Title 1 versus no Title 1 make equity a joke. I appreciate that the state finds value in school media specialists, but it does not support the flexible access and flex scheduling (proven to be best for students) by giving funds. We need books, technology, and assistants! I do not blame SLNC for this but realize that equity can't be possible without financial support.

Sorry, but I am not personally aware of the success of the statewide LSTA plan so I can't answer these questions. All I know about (in this 5 year phase) is one school's collection grant. I have a favorable impression but no personal/professional experience.

Strengthening Library Collections grants help smaller libraries or libraries with smaller collection development budgets meet the needs of their patrons. Automated System and Internet Infrastructure grants help patrons across the state to have equal access to technology and broaden their knowledge base. Increased bandwidths raise staff morale and help meet patrons' expectations.

The $12,000 we receive at our school site enabled us to improve our reference collection and increase the average age of the overall collection.

The Basic Equipment Grants (we received one) have helped to provide internet access/computer access to students and patrons who would not have had any computer access.

The collection development grant is helpful for us as we brought municipal library collections up-to-date in children's non-fiction (900s).

The competitive grant format inherently favors larger libraries.

The grant helped me update my science collection which was badly needed.

The grant provided me with the means to meet goals of providing a more current collection for our staff and students through specific planning for needs and the funds to meet those needs.

The grants for collections and technology have been directed to institutions that really need the help. Our partnerships in digitization (NC ECHO) have assisted a couple of smaller organization in digitizing their resources. The NC ECHO products promote equity of access to unique materials by making them accessible via the Internet.

The LSTA program has helped all NC public libraries achieve far greater equity of library service through the implementation of Internet techology. Also, the various planning grants have enabled public libraries of all sizes to develop and implement effective planning for future development.

The question refers to being awarded grant money which our school has not received. However, based on the comments that were shared by the group, I would respond with strongly agree.

The State Library hs a goal which requires a great deal of money to acheive. Rural libraries have improved and in many instances have been made better because of the LSTA support. County government does not always prioritize the library as a high priority.

The technology grants have helped many libraries develop a more robust technology infrastructure.

There just isn't enough money to go around. SLNC has done a good job of picking projects that effect the state as a whole.

Unfortunately, a prior director did not see the benefit of applying for a Gates Grant when they were made available. Our Basic Equipment Grant allowed this library to acquire up-

to-date computer equipment and put us on a more even basis with those libraries that benefited from the Gates Grants.

Upgrading PACs in system has allowed a segment of our population, patrons with hearing disabilities who had not been library users in the past, in weekly 2-3 times.

[County Library] through LSTA grants has been able to purchase children's and Spanish language book to upgrade its collection and provide a greater depth of service to these clienteles. In addition, the library has been able to open a computer lab in a remote location from the library facility and now has Internet capacity for patron from 4 to 12 stations.

We are a small regional public library system in a poor and rural part of North Carolina. All of our four county branches now have approx. 8 up-to-date public access PCs which we would not have, I am almost certain, if LSTA grants had not been available. The patrons are also poor and many would not have access to the Internet without our providing it. We also have a modern library automation system for circulation that also provides a public access catalog and our records are in OCLC for statewide and national resource sharing. Again, not at all certain, without LSTA assistance in first acquiring the System.

We are improving in providing access to print materials but students are still very limited in accessing materials of personal interest, which are the very materials that make them genuine lifelong learners. Proving the value of better print materials to my teachers and principal causes them to increase ongoing financial support of the print collection, so that the collection continued to improve.

We can provide data to show increased circulation numbers over the LSTA year and beyond.

We developed a technology plan which continues to be important and was recognized within the college as an important activity. We have been able to provide access to more technology in more places throughout our main library. We had a marketing grant, too, which helped us to address a very important issue. And we participated in the Community College LibQual project.

We have used our grant funds to provide services that we would otherwise not be able to offer here. Most recently I used funds to provide equipment to offer free in-house Internet training to our patrons. Most of those patrons who attended our classes would not have been able to take classes at the local community college because of time or money constraints. The result of those classes is increased knowledge of how to find information online.

We need a public library/public school endeavor. School libraries have no budgets at the beginnning of terms - 4 schools received zero funds from local money, 2005-2006. No Child Left Behind and Leandro Money was abundant at this time for more personnel.

We participate in NC Knows. We participate in children's programs.

We received the grant this year and have not yet used the funds. I'm sure grant will greatly improve my collection and service.

Well-funded large libraries are given full access to OCLC/SOLINET cataloging, while small libraries that cannot afford the 'Full-User' fees must fend for themselves to get adequate cataloging. LSTA may or may not fund the proprietary agreement between OCLC and the State Library. If it does, the agreement should be dissolved until this inequity is corrected. Creating our own self-sustaining network, as other states have done, would be preferable to joint services with an agency that rolls out products and services in an inequitable manner.

We've had many changes in our library during the past 5 years. We staff members have not been made aware of the SLNC's Achieving Equity in Library Service goal. We have adapted to the changes and I feel that the changes have been for the good of the library.

While I do believe that the goal was to try to provide more equity, the problem is not with the awards of the grants. The problem is that most smaller library systems such as the one I have do not have enough staff to put the time into writing the grants much less actually implementing them. So, year after year, we see grants going to people with money such as [Library], and the little guys are caught having to do without due to circumnstances beyond our control.

While the staff at the State Library are very helpful when I apply for a grant, the process is time consuming for us. We are a rural library in a poor county and have a small staff. Most days it is all we can do to keep the doors open and serve the public. The types of grants we can apply for would help us achieve some measure of equity if the process was simplified.

With site-based management, media center budgets, staffing, and scheduling vary widely. I agree that LSTA funds go far in addressing the worst needs, but so many media collections are woefully inadequate.

Wonderful to have opportunity to improve collections.

To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change has been met during the past 5 years?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 8; for instance, a brief example.

After today's discussion, do see how this has been met. Do think need to realize funding needs to be for realistically sustainable programs and those can be done by others.

Again, I don't know what the SLNC has done to affect the climate at my school.

An example of this at the [County Public Library] is the creation of a Hispanic Services Librarian. This position eventually evolved into a full-time, permanent county-funded position. Now at our library, Hispanics are served.

as above

Based on grant proposal, innovation, and changes are a long process and show results.

Career Enrichment grants have allowed for paraprofessionals to attend conferences, workshops which expanded their knowledge and skills and they have shared with their co-workers.

Consequently, teachers have planned increasingly in-depth and challenging research using the print collection. As we have taught more research skills, study abilities increased. I now have 7th and 8th graders who can do independent research at the beginning of the school year because they have mastered skills in 6th grade.

Digitization projects have been innovative and have provided easy access to valuable library materials.

Do not know

Don't know because I am too new.

Don't know what this is.

Getting new books was great but there was a change in administration and media specialist from writing the grant to implementing it so some of the books I brought have not been as useful as I would like.

Grant funding has enabled library staff to improve outreach services to children.

have no idea how this would affect our library

I am hearing a lot of buzz about IMPACT and collaboration. Also, as more technology is integrated into the classrooms, the more teachers recognize that we information specialists have skills they need to tap.

I am not aware of this goal.

I am relatively new to the state and can't address this issue directly without knowing more. I do know that North Carolina libraries are as innovative as any I've seen in other states.

I believe that the basic equipment grants and Internet infrastructure grants helped achieve a climate of innovation and change. We are seeing people in our libraries, using computers, that we have never seen before.

I believe that the SLNC has attempted to create a climate for innovation & change; however, I believe that the nature of technology is such that it is constantly changing and that our libraries are often not funded enough to keep up with the changes. Wo while the SLNC is promoting innovation, it appears that the more support is put towards making libraries current which is as it should be. Otherwise the libraries which are well funded also get the support for innovation which widens the gap of equity and is counterproductive to the first goal.

I feel that the creation of the innovation/demonstration grant category helped a great deal. The multi-year LSTA grant [County Library] received for Hispanic Services Outreach translated into a dynamic new relationship between the Library and the Hispanic Community. But I return to the issue of decision-making authority. The SLNC has not helped local public libraries resist the usurping of library technology decision-making. Thus, in more than a few locales, non-library technology staff are regularly creating climates that thwart innovation in library services.

I have no basis on which to form an opinion.

I have not really dealt with LSTA and innovation. Perhaps this is because all the public schools grants are limited to print materials.

I have only been at my position for three months and do not feel like my answers give an accurate picture of the SLNC's goals.

I haven't been here long enough to comment on this.

I just don't know what has been done, other than funding, to address this.

I still have a fixed schedule for classes that meet twice a week. We do not have a Tech. facilitator in our school. The IMPACT Model is not in place at all.

I think the State Library may have been able to do more leadership in terms of innovation if they hadn't been going through so much staff change themselves.

I used part of our grant to start a 'Graphic Novel' collection. The [Local newspaper] did an article about our Graphic Novel collection and it made the front page of a Sunday edition.

I'm sorry to say, but I can't think of any example to bear this out.

Increasing infrastructure. Computers and automation.

It would be helpful to have additional training opportunities from SLNC that focus on new technologies and opportunities for libraries. The grants are there to support initiatives in this area; sometimes the knowledge of what could be done is lacking at the local level. NCPLDA has done some programs along these lines.

Libraries receiving technology to meet 21st century learning expectations -- access to databases, services, etc.

LSTA grant programs promote innovation and change. All types of libraries can benefit from LSTA programs.

Mostly the funding for schools has simply helped us to catch up!

N/A

NC libraries, even in the poorest counties, have the opportunity to apply for funds and offer services they would not have otherwise. LSTA funds allow them to keep up or catch up technologically so that their patrons have equal access to information and services.

Not sure

Not true of school library collection grants (books are not seen as innovation).

Once again, my response would be strongly agree based on the remarks from the group.

Our library has definitely entered the new millenium and there is a feel that we are just on the threshold of greater achievements to the benefit of our county and our library patrons.

Planning grants assist libraries with the full range of program analysis and planning for the future. While this can be done in-house, the ability to hire a consultant to assist and moderate improves the quality of the results.

Planning grants very useful - lends credibility to our library to have State Library to support planning by fiscal assistance and recommendations (as in giving [Library] grants).

Planning is the first step in change.

[Public Library] was awarded the Innovation Grant for [Project] and it has been extremely successfulin reaching an age group that doesn’t normally frequent the library.

Providing additional monies to libraries to purchase or upgrade automation technologies gives those libraries without proper funding from county or city government the assistance they need to be innovative, it allows the libraries to provide the public new

technologies that may not be available in their personal environment. It helps the libraries to be more responsive to the public needs.

Public libraries provide many patrons who do have computer or Internet access an opportunity to participate in Cyperspace and help to decrease the distance of the Digital Divide. NC Live as well provides patrons the ability to search for articles in journals electronically as well as find information in electronic reference tools as Gale Electronic Reference.

Public Library Leadership is great. New personnel and new programs in effect.

Recognition through out the state of library services and technology advancements available at each library.

Requiring that monies be spent for media center only - funds cannot be 'hijacked' by site-based management.

Same as above

see above

Technology is very important, but the exisiting program does not offer enough opportunities for innovative, creative demo projects (programming, service to special populations, outreach, etc.).

The Community College LibQual project caused a number of immediate changes/improvements at participating libraries and a few at non-participating colleges. I feel certain that ongoing discussions will prove fruitful in terms of innovation and creativity.

The current plan calls for projects to be unique. There needs to be a way to duplicate good projects. This does not need to be the majority of the money. LSTA should be for innovative unique projects, but best practices should be documented and able to be replicated.

The [State Agency Library] puts on a monthly program that relates to some aspect of the Environment or to natural resources. It does not however have an up to date collection nor any relavant databases.

The focus on digitization and electronic access across the state has been an important positive aspect.

The LSTA grant certainly made a major improvement in my Media Center.

The LSTA grant program has allowed us to foster a sense of accomplishment among our librarians who would have otherwise been unable to boost their collections on such a

large scale. It has also assisted us in fostering collaborative relationships with principals and system leaders as we have shown the positive impact of the resources purchased with grant funds.

The LSTA program has signicantly fostered a climate of innovation and change in terms of technology. This climate has fostered the development of important new resources, such as NC-NC ECHO. While some headway has been made in raising public awareness of libraries and their importance to a community, the various marketing efforts have not been nearly as successful as in the area of techology.

The LSTA Technology Planning Grants allow libraries to think about and plan for innovative ways deliver library services. It is important for libraries to stay on the cutting edge with emerging technologies so that we can remain relevant in the lives of today's youth.

The NC ECHO grants have proviced the breathing room to allow institutions to test new applications in a way that benefits the entire state. For example, we will be porting NC ECHO images to LUNA and will also be using LUNA for a locally supported project (university photographs). One of our projects drew together collections that reside in Asheville, Durham, and Raleigh. It's exciting to have a thematic collection become readily accessible in the virtual environment.

The professional development grants contribute to this goal

The State Library has undergone many changes in the past few years. We look forward to perhaps greater stability, continuity, and new ideas.

The wireless LSTA grant has allowed our library to take a leadership role in piloting wireless access on the [Community College] campus. This is a need that was certainly there. More and more students expect to have wireless access on campus, especially in the library. Having the funding available has pushed the process along and allowed the library to serve as a model for the college.

They have consultants that visit libraries throughout NC to provide assistance in devloping ideas, assessments, and direction to becoming successful in writing and administering grants. The goal of creating a climate for innovation has been met by simply listening to the needs of NC constituents. [Library] recieved one of the first Innovation Grants given through LSTA.

This program gives us the opportunity to be innovative and to try to make changes in our libraries. Without this impetus, it would sometimes seem very desperate and hopeless.

Unfortunately, there is not enough accountibility for grants. [Public Library] was not committed to providing the best service through its LSTA grant it received in 2005. The [Author] Portal languishes on the city's server and is not utilized by the public nor staff. The money the library received for it: $7,875 was wasted.

Until recently, there has not been nearly enough opportunity for demonstration grants of a truly innovative, creative kind.

We need state people (from DPI, SLNC) to visit each school and explain the value of flex scheduling/access and collaboration of teachers with media specialists and with tech. facilitators to the staff. We need advocates who don't just 'preach to the choir,' but to those who need the info.

We never hear directly about the innovation projects that are funded.

What is innovation? And what does a fundable innovation idea look like?

While there have been some innovative programs, I think this area could be significantly improved by a less narrow focus.

Without outside grant money it is difficult to move ahead into new service areas and technologies. The planning grants provide a way for new ideas and directions to be implemented and put on the agenda.

Workshops have been provided that stimulate the creativity in library staff across the state. thanks!

Would like more comprehensive info about other libraries' LSTA projects.

To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens has been met during the past 5 years?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 10; for instance, a brief example.

A fixed schedule is a stumbling block for collaborative learning and projects. I have communication with staff but I am the one implementing the lessons and ideas that create the finished product. I am a break for the teachers.

Agree, but only in technology. See answet to number 7.

As an academic library representative, I don't feel knowledgeable enough to answer this question.

As I have worked with teachers and students successfully, in print research, I have shared this expertise by presenting collection development workshops to my colleagues at state conferences. We're attempting to expand the number of children doing genuine, thoughtful research.

At [Community College], we have not received a grant related to Children and Teens, but harkening back to my public library days, I can say that I have seen a tremendous impact on children and teens.

Better training for our staff allows better service for out teen aged college students.

Circulation in our updated areas has greatl increased. Our 12-15 year olds are enjoying these books (pleasure reading) as well as using them extensively for assignments. I have enough resources to serve 30-35 students at one time. However, we have had federal funds eliminated with NCLB, so total resources are down. LSTA is more needed.

Do not know

Don't even know what this goal concerns and I work with children every day. Better communication is needed and school librarians should be included.

Don't know

Don't know.

for teens especially: Online conversations are avaible. There is a recognition of the need for innovative connections with this hard to reach population. That's a start. Then, you listen and try to construct ways of delivering information to all of us who are seeking ways to reach them. Making it accessable to ALL parts of the state is a very important thing!

I am new to this position, but know that our school is not where it should be in these areas.

I assume the YA position and training opportunities are in part supported with LSTA funds.

I do agree with the comment made in one session that less emphasis should go towards funding grants for early learners and more towards services to middle schoolers and teens.

I don't know what has been done.

I feel that there should be more directed at the middle and senior level school age students.

I have no basis on which to form an opinion.

I have not been involved with any LSTA grant in this area.

I have only been at my position for three months and do not feel like my answers give an accurate picture of the SLNC's goals.

I haven't been here long enough to comment on this.

I know that [Library] has not applied for few grants it is eligible for simply because the director's ideology (namely her oppositon to the Federal's mandate to filters). This as a result has hampered programs and services for children and teens.

i think if we worked better and more organized we can achieve more in getting children & teens to join library activities if we work as a team

I think that automation grants should be available, at least, to low wealth counties for school libraries! Technology dollars through NC DPI target classrooms/labs in schools.

I think the major LSTA effort here was 'The Very Best Place to Start' and Kid Squad, both of which were not that well received at my library.

I wish quiz bowl was not in its last year.

I'm not as familiar with this goal, since I'm in an academic library. However, the materials available through NC ECHO represent a rich resource of primary materials suitable for enriching the educational experience at many levels.

In many public libraries more needs to be done to capture the teens. Much has been done for children.

It helped me provide resources for teachers and students in areas of interest and state science curriculum.

Joining the consortium for Summer Reading Programs has benefitted our library tremendously from providing programming ideas and 'freebies for the kids' to improving the quality of the promotional materials used.

LSTA Collection Development Grants have helped make this a reality. The school libraries in my community have very dated materials and students rely on their public library for learning support. The Project Planning Grant allowed us to significantly enhance two subject areas of our collection at two branch libraries where school students need this support of learning.

Many schools get no money dedicated to their libraries - this may be the only money they get.

N/A

N/A

Need to do more for public schools. Very low percentage of school children visit public libraries regularly compared to their school library.

Not conversant enough about other libraries' projects and outcomes.

Not enough information or knoweledge of how learning and discovery have been met for children and teens.

Not involved in this area.

Not my area.

Not sure.

Often to the exclusion of other clientele

Our library has more print and non-print resources through LSTA grants. Consequently, more materials are available for check out and viewing in the library.

Somewhat

SRP activities and the vouchers especially have given us more buying power.

Strengthening collections and technology grants have brought more teens and middle schoolers into our buildings.

Strongly agree due to comments.

Summer Reading Program joining with other states has been a great help. We are looking forward to other events such as Trade Secret Workshops, etc.

Summer Reading PRogram materials are not snappy and/or appealing to kids

Summer reading program much needed. Our marketing grant increased access to and use of online resources for children.

The [State agency Library] is under the [State agency] and houses an example collection of K-15 books and curricular activities. Its location, however, makes it hard for anyone to browse the collection and rarely do they do so.

The health section of juvenile nonfiction was dismal. Grant funds enabled a revamping of the entire section.

The materials purchased with our grant money revitalized interest and use in several collection areas.

The program material provided by the State Library and the direction from the staff has been wonderful. We would not have had the quality of programs without the State's help.

The SLNC has done good work planning summer reading support activities. It has done good work creating additional training opportunities for public library youth services staff. But it must do more than create and prop up weak slogans if it is to be more successful garnering additional meaningful support for library youth services funding.

The two Media Coordinators at our school have both earned National Board Certified Teacher awards. Winning the LSTA grant helped toward that goal.

We appreciate the support with our Summer Reading Clubs.

We are all struggling with innovative ideas for working with children and teens. The discussion lists are somewhat helpful. A statewide initiative, like NC-LIVE, would be so useful to local libraries who don't have a lot of staff to research and/or fund ideas at the local level. We have not found Start Squad to be very useful to our youth.

We are an academic and do not work with children or teens.

We are trying bt administration does not support.

We have been promoting, but don't know if we have data of usage. NC Knows 24/7.

With our improved collections we have greatly enhanced our ability to guide students in selecting resources that best meet their personal and academic informational needs. Providing better resources has led to increased circulation in all of our schools.

Would like to see more grants dealing with programming for teens and children. I feel that this has not been an important focus of LSTA grant categories.

To what degree do you perceive that the SLNC's goal Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services has been met during the past 5 years?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 12; for instance, a brief example.

A leader must be available to provide resources. SLNC has done this with grants and grant information.

Again the NC Master Trainer program was on of the first in the nation.

Allowed to offer programs about grants they are offering - they keep their eyes open and look to see state and national trends - marketing, sponsorship, etc.

Although NCLIVE has been around awhile I think that the State Library served as a leader making this available to libraries throught the state.

Between NC Live, NC Knows, and the many LSTA grants, our State Library makes most of our services possible! Without them we would be a pathetic little library that could not adequately serve our students. Not to mention that we likely couldn't pass SACS accreditation without all the State Library provides.

Don't know

Don't know what this is.

Equally important to me as my MLS is my participation is State Library Workshops, programs and retreats. I received a career enrichmant grant my first employed year as a librarian; I took the Master Trainer Program and numerous workshops.I went from a volunteer in 2003-2004, to a reference/instruction/supervisor in 2004-2005 to a director in 2006. I owe this to the formal and informal training that provided by the State Library.

Examples include NCLIVE, SRP, technology training which is outstanding.

Great process forces you to seriously examine library needs and future.

I am a newcomer to the North Carolina library system. The support and information I have received from the State Library staff has been invaluable.

I am concerned that while the SLNC has become quite the skilled technical administrator of programs such as LSTA and State Aid, it has been less than effective in fostering breakthrough ideas and concepts in library and information services in NC. The major breakthrough ideas, concepts, and initiatives that I have participated in, witnessed, or been made aware of have all come from somewhere other than the SLNC. The SLNC has responded through providing LSTA funding for some of these ideas. It has been fairly ineffective as a coordinator/catalyst/leader for library and Information Services development. At some points during the past 5 years, it seemed that SLNC spent much of its time trying to create a stronger justification for itself rather than exploring/driving true innovation in library programs and services.

I am glad we have SLNC. I have learned a lot from SLNC.

I am not sure the State Library takes advantage of LSTA as much as they should. I hope so! They are very tireless workers. The PR workshop we recently had opportunity to attend was very useful. Need more of these kinds of retreats.

I believe that the SLNC has become well positioned as a leader in library and information services, especially in the areas of technology, preservation and continuing education (Master Trainer Program). I think more effort needs to made in the area of marketing and public relations.

I do not feel qualified at this time to speak to the success of the SLNC in reaching their goals state-wide. I am planning to apply for my first grant this year.

I have only been at my position for three months and do not feel like my answers give an accurate picture of the SLNC's goals.

I have seen the State Library make a greater outreach to schools over the last 20 years.

I haven't been here long enough to comment on this.

I probably wouldn't be aware of the State Library if it wasn't for these grants. The staff, particularly by Penny, has been wonderfully helpful.

I think for the State Library to lead NC into the future, stated goals and expectations for each public library needs to be listed prominently on the State Library's web site, in the literature, and in meetings. They should urge all directors (regardless of their politics) to apply for as many grants as possible and implement the requirements to make libraries eligible for these grants. Though some webpages may be blocked by filters, the overall effect of receiving LSTA grants would be very positive. Plus, there needs to be more accountabilty in how the grant funds are spent to make sure something useful is being done with it.

I think SLNC has been less of a leader and more of a conduit.

I think that the State Library has been able to provide informative computer-app workshops, but we need to go more toward practical training for para-professionals now as budgets get tighter and jobs go more toward library assistants with less formal training.

I think their training sessions have been invaluable to many librarians with limited development budgets. Also, they have provided an overall context that has allowed NC ECHO to be a successful project.

I was able to participate in a marketing workshop that the State Library provided with LSTA funds.

I would like to see more participation of HBCU in LSTA programs. I would like to see more collaborative projects with major institutions in the state.

If SLNC had not offered these grants, our improvements would not have happened as rapidly. We would have slowly crawled into the 21st century, but the grants helped us walk swiftly.

If there was no federal grant program, the State Library would be much less relevant to libraries other than very small and poorly staffed systems.

It hurts to say so, but I think that the SLNC has taken a step backward in this area.

Little or no awareness in the school community (students, teachers, administrators, superintendent, school board) that SLNC was the source of these funds, or that we even received the grant. We are really a school first (under DPI) and hardly a library at all.

LSTA will not make SLNC a leader. The personnel do that. This appears to be happening now. The staff is helpful and positive; more so in the last year than the last four. LSTA is a tool to assist both the State Library and the libraries of the state. The regulations are stringent but not draconian. Loosen up the regulations. The previous State Librarian apparently did not understand that LSTA was to be used creatively.

My only contact with the State Library that might have to do with leadership is through training opportunities offered by the SL. Unfortunately, I have found the calibre of State Library sponsoered training/workshops to be on the poor end of the spectrum. Certainly not challenging or pushing any boundaries of innovation. I suppose that my overall perception that the State Library has little to no effect of my professional life may also be taken as evidence that it may not effectively serve a leadership role-- at least not one that percolates down to front line staff. one exception might be the State Library's role in keeping NCLIVE funded and afloat. That alone is worth a lot.

N/A

NC Echo and NC Knows serve all the librarians and patrons throughout the state. NC Echo projects will continue to serve for a lONG time in the future as well. That gives us much more bang for the buck.

NC ECHO projects/infrastructure/collection development.

NC Live is great!! But why the password? Just let everyone access it.

NC Live, NC Echo, NC Knows, and the Master-Trainer programs help libraries across the state to provide services and staff/patron training that otherwise would have not been possible.

Not aware of their leadership?

Not just last five years but for as long as funding has existed.

Not sure.

Often the State Library is referred to as a role model.

Penny Hornsby Jim Rosinia

Plans to apply for digitization grant if available to provide improving special, unique collections. Local leadership enhanced by Career Enrichment grants. Trustees conference.

Since we are an independent school, we are not familiar with and do not get to take advantage of a lot of the benefits that public schools are able to take advantage of. The main thing I wuld live to have some help with from the State Library is the state providing NC Live for private school children as well. Funding from the state should be for all school children in North Carolina and not just school children in public schools. Please provide support for this effort.

SLNC does a great job leading the library community.

SLNC not been evident with school libraries since 2003 as far as I know.

State library definitely a leader in library and information services. Example: Master-Trainer program offers motivation to MC libraries (often before local or county information technology departments).

Strongly agree due to comments.

The classes on NC Live sponsored by the State Library are great for staff personal development on the job and to stay abreast on new tools available for the public.

The funding and support from the SLNC in addition to the training opportunities has greatly assisted libraries and library leaders.

The leadership has been invaluable. Not only has the SLNC made grants available, they have provided good direction for writing the grants and support during the entire process.

The NC LIVE classes have created leaders. Our library staff have returned from these classes, enlightened and empowered to teach patrons about NC LIVE.

The NCKnows Leadership Development program was outstanding, as is the Master Trainer program.

The NCKnows project has been a great project for all libraries who have taken advantage of it. This service is greatly appreciated and we in the field appreciate the leadership taken in this area by the State Library.

The staff has shown great leadership over the last five years. Libraries today provide many more services to the public than ten years ago. The State Library has provided the

training needed to incorporate new technology to serve the public. LSTA grants have allowed the poorer counties to, if not keep up, at least stay in the race.

The State Library has been a leader in automation, digitization, NC Live, and many other areas in the state. Leading NC in interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries has been one of the notable achievements of the State Library.

The state library offers a variety of training classes to enhance the knowledge of library staff.

Their presence and support are known and appreciated by school community, etc., staff, but not necessarily known to community and policy making groups.

There have been some very strong statewide leadership projects by the State Library.

They are wonderfully helpful in providing feedback and support. They are also very open to new ideas and fold those new ideas into future grant categories and training.

This goal has been met through the competent leadership of our state librarians. There were periods when a Director of the State Library was being recruited and with the strong organizational structure that was in place they provided even better service for the state.

Through continuing education & the Master Trainer program the State Library has helped NC libraries keep abreast of changes in services and skills.

What you are offering school libraries is a tremendous opportunity to make a real different in the kinds of updated, relevant materials they bring to the curriculum needs of the school.

While this may not be not be directly related to LSTA funds, the Mint Museum Library (and the museum itself) benefits greatly by our ability to be affiliate members of SOLINET/OCLC since the State Library pays for this level membership for libraries in North Carolina. For a small special library in a non-profit institution, this is a godsend.

Please provide any suggestions you have for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan. If you do not have any comments to share, then simply skip this question.

1. Be sure to incluide a marketing component. 2. Give local, county, or regional systems options with funding for projects to meet unique needs of our particular service area.

1. Small grants. Keep small grants for special projects available. 2. Online CE (continuiing education) opportunities. 3. State-wide library cards. 4. Trustees training. 5. County commissioners training.

1. Unique projects; 2. Replicates Best Practices

1. What's next? How to deliver programs and services beyond library computers; 2. Digital art and music online (ARTstor?); 3. RFID technology?

21st century skills. Push! Promote!

A specific percentage allocated for books, for tech., for non-book media. Advocate to politicians who make decisions/laws about schools.

Adopt a suggested state-wide research model such as Bigle.

Allow for schools to win an LSTA grant more than once.

Allow multiple brach libraries to apply for more than one collection development grant. Would like to see summaries of grants which are funded each year. Would like to see a state initiative towards resource sharing/state library card/state-wide delivery services.

As a following to the suggestion of more collaborative grants, I would recommend making collaboration an option, but I don't think that it is necessary to create a separate category. I would encourage a continued balance between statewide initiatives and local project needs. NC Live, NC Knows, NC Echo, Master Trainer are all fabulous and should continue.

Bookmobile grant. Remodeling library facilities. Help to fund services so we don't have to 'shoehorn' the grants to get what we need. Reporting - cut down on duplication.

Bookmobile replacement grants would help rural areas a great deal. A statewide library card will be no better than ILL thru the mail - without a statewide delivery/courier service.

Building grants should be re-instituted. Otherwise, great grant opportunities.

Consider offering a statewide library card/delivery system/resource sharing/catalog that would encourage collaboration among all types of libraries. Please consider offering grant writing training to library staff. Most libraries cannot afford to hire grant writers.

Continue funding LSTA grants for school media centers.

Continue to fund a train the trainer program. Continue to allow opportunities for all staff to travel to conferences and network in-person with other members of the profession.

continue to fund NC ECHO grants

Could evaluation tools be provided at the website?

De-emphasize competitive grants especially for programs. Make multi-type pay for itself by using LSTA to hore additional liaison consultants, i.e., additional youth services consultant to deal with public schools, etc.

Definitely continue basic equipment grants and the automation grants since these are often difficult to fund.

Digitization is becoming increasingly important and should be one focus in the next five year plan.

Do look at ways to help libraries that really need to get funding to get it. Simplify application process (if possible). Look at matching grants.

Do not require matching funds.

Don't exclude a school from receiving if there is a different media coordinator there now. Regarding question 4, one school in the district this year received LSTA funds. Regarding question 15, I don't think I have enough knowledge or experience with LSTA.

Easier application process, less paperwork.

Electronic resource options across similar fields of interest. Support options for professional organizations that benefit multiple librarians within their own group.

Emphasis on providing continuing education opportunites is essential. The workshops for NC-LIVE are excellent. Many part-time staff are however unable to participate in these; having more webinars targeting the clerical and paraprofessional staff would be wonderful. The value of the upcoming conference for Trustees remains to be seen but is a much needed step toward providing these responsible persons with education/training. I hope such efforts are expanded beyond this limited meeting. Funds for building construction/renovation are direly needed. Under 'access to services' I would love to see money become available. Leadership from the State Library on technology advancements/opportunities is needed for those of us without much technology background. Difficult to plan for the future when we haven't the basic knowledge of pros/cons of a concept.

Equity in services/technology

For public schools, provide at least a two-time non-matching funds grant. The matching funds requirement is keeping schools from being able to apply. Provide grant-writing resource position for k-12 schools.

Funding for planning is critical. Rural libraries with few resources are hard pressed to find the means to employ qualififed assistance. Literacy efforts could be encoraged if program funding were available - another area that needs attention in rural NC.

Statewide projects - particularly those that would enable access to electronic resources would enrich every library.

Guides to what purchases seem to get used most or work best.

Having worked in two other states, North Carolina's effort at providing LSTA-funded services for persons in various kinds of state institutions is extremely weak. LSTA could also provide library-based literacy programs. We lay claim to being literacy providers when it suits our purposes, but there are few viable library literacy programs in North Carolina. I think the State Library staff are great and do not mean to offend anyone on the staff with my comment about attitudes in response to Question #7.

Heritage Partners. Outsourcing Digitization. Books. Update Equipment.

I agree with staff having master's degrees but, when an indivual has had experience 10 years or more, I think they should have consideration for that experience. There are things that experience will teach you that a book will not. Being able to deal with patrons is a learned commodity. It is very important when dealing with the public.

I am just beginning at this school, and was disappointed to find that once a school has received a grant, they cannot reapply. The grant my predecessor received was only $2,500. I feel that she felt she couldn't commit dollar for dollar as was the previous requirement. I want to make a grant application for the full $10,000, and I will work as hard as it takes to get the requested 'over and above' funding.

I am new to North Carolina. The LSTA grants that the library has received has enabled the technology provided to customers to be on a adequate level for contemporary library service. From the point of view of collections and service, we are not at adequate levels to date (but working on it). The competitive grants are invaluable.

I believe it is important for some LSTA funds to be directed to initiatives that affect/benefit the entire state, although I recognize that needs at the local level are often great.

I do not know if our county system has used LSTA for technology. They do almost all of the planning, purchasing, etc. for us. Ideas: provide technology or furniture options for individual school grants. We have no furniture budget and this is an access issue. Ours is pre-computer age. Provide options for software subscription databases, curriculum support (accelerated reader quizzes to match book purchases, for example). If you do get a collection development grant, in 4-5 years, those items may be dated and need weeding. Online resources access or long-term grant options would help keep up the improvements long-term. Also, expanding options for public schools into technology areas would increase administrative and community awareness and 'buy-in' because 'everyone' wants more and better technology, even if they don't want more 'old fashioned' books. Regarding Question 5, plan to apply, I have some ideas, but I may not be eligible.

I feel that grants to improve collections would be beneficial to library patrons. I would also like to see grants help libraries take advantage of the emerging technology of RFID. Grants to help paln for and implement RFID would help NC libraries lead in innovations.

I hope the SLNC continues to offer planning, project, and technology planning grants. It is difficult to convince local government to fund consultants. Also, I see NC ECHO as, to use a cliche, 'the gift that keeps giving.' I would echo what the school librarian said about the school and public library collaboration. I was enlightened today. I would like to see some grant monies available to facilitate this.

I hope you continue to make funding available for basic computer equipment and access. I know the goal is to get libraries to the point of including these expenses in their local budgets. Unfortunatly, try as I might, I'm not seeing this happen in the immediate future. We will continue to need support as well, for any major updates and upgrades to service. We just do not have access to a large pool of funds for such improvements.

I stopped answering (questions) because I have only worked at [University] for five months, too new to have opinions yet.

I think one thing that would be good and that we could use at our library is grants for programs, especially those serving minorities. Programs for all ages.

I think that each constituent group should be polled separately. I think that the options for LSTA expenditures should be specifically outlined so we are all clear about what we can do.

I think the State Library should take a lead in helping local libraries keep up with technology to a greater extent.

I wish there were some way to use requests from some of the larger libraries as templates for requests from libraries with small staffs. While no two libraries are identical, most rural libraries have the same problems to some degree. We all try to provide the same services and all the citizens of North Carolina should have reliable access to those services. On the other hand, there are some grant categories available that we would not be able to take advantage of even if the funds were just given to us, due to the size of our staff.

I would like to be able to apply more than once for this grant for my school. I am new to the school and it needs so very much!

I would like to be able to reapply for another LSTA grant during the next 5 years. Since our county matches this grant for us, winning another grant would really give our Media Center a boost.

I would like to see additional seminars and classes available to librarians and staff to improve job skills and allow those in the library field to network with each other. Events also could be done on a regional basis where several closely located counties could come together to sponsor events.

I would like to see more done with technology innovation at a local level. Development of online tutorials, reference by text messaging, etc. Also, information literacy.

I would like to see the next 5-year plan continue the planning grants. There was a time when professional planning was pretty much limited to the larger library systems, but through this grant program, even the smallest libraries are able to plan professionally. Keeping our libraries positioned at the forefront of technology is also important. More still needs to be done to better market our public libraries.

I would like to see the State Library collection development grant to be available to schools for a second tine after a set number of years, possibly as often as five years.

I would like to see what kind of leadership training the State Library would choose. There are so many sub-contractors willing to 'teach' this in one day workshops. On the other end there are a couple of expensive programs such as the Harvard intensive. I can't remember its name, but I read a review of the proceedings. Somewhere in between these extremes must be a character building style of leadership camp that would be cost effective for librarian-directors-to-be. Or perhaps a leadership enrichment grant could become available to send libraians to an expensive intensive.

I would recommend that SLNC do the following as it sets goals for the next 5-year LSTA plan. 1. Structure funding inniatives that strenghten youth programs such as summer reading. 2. Place conditions on Counties and Cities that receive State Aid to prevent them from circumventing their libraries' LSTA funding goals. 3. Identify breakthrough and innovative library programs and services and create funding challenges to inspire others to copy these programs. 4. Continue to develop LSTA funding challenges that help strenghten the concept of library as a commity partner critical to any planning efforts and vital to any community's response to its social, educational, and economic development challenges. 5. Regain its past aggressiveness in creating conferences, workshops, seminars that helped it become the technology, programming and services development leader it was ten years ago.

[Community College] has not participated in the 2003-07 grant cycle for several reasons. During the last evalution cycle, I expressed interest in having the ability to provide hands-on instruction for Information Literacy. Although the Internet Infrastructure grant was made available, we, in the meantime, received a 24 seat computer lab as part of the Library of Congress AAM initiative through the Charles Taylor project to bring technology into a number of community colleges in western NC. In addition, we have had a turnover of 75% of our small staff during this time frame and we have not been in a good situation to commit to the grant-writing process. And went through SACS re-

accreditation. We have benefitted greatly from past (1997, 1998-99, and 1999-00) LSTA grants and expect to participate in the future.

If possible simplify the paper process.

If there were a way to spread available collection development funds more widely I think it might be useful. Print resources may age even faster making less purchasing more often and by more different schools a way to go - if restrictions don't prohibit!

Improve training opportunities. One problem to remedy would be to use actual experts on various fields/topics, rather than just yanking SL staff from the hallways and giving them programs to run (my best guess for the trainer selection method). Also, SL sponsored training and workshops tend to be aimed at the lowest common denominator--covering only the fundamentals, which frankly, any professional can be assumed to know. The reuslt is that these programs wind up being dull, minimally informative and totally unchallenging.

Improved communication needs to be a goal if you want full representation from the library community.

Increased technology. Increased staff.

Individual school libraries do not have access to capital outlay funds to replace aging furniture or add lounge type furniture to make casual, comfortable seating areas.

Innovation grants -- loosen restriction that makes them available only if project is new to NC. Maybe make grants available for libraries to copy others' projects.

Involve the State Legislature to mandate that some state monies are available through DPI or individual county schools to support the grant money available through LSTA. 'There has to be a law' to support the educational institutions in NC.

Keep the professional development grants

Longer time to complete actual grant.

LSTA Funding has been a very important source of funding for our library. Please continue. Funding for consortial and group projects is a very good use of resources. Using LSTA funds to support NC LIVE is a great way to use these funds. One issue facing community college libraries is the idea of balancing online resources with print collections. What is the right mix? How do you know? What should we do with limited state resources and a growing distance learning population? Can we develop collection development clusters within community colleges or regions among different types of libraries?

Many libraries need funds for construction of new libraries and new branches. Libraries continue to need grant funding for purchase of materials.

Marketing, P.R., Sponsorship.

Maybe you could offer collection development minigrants that support certain areas of the curriculum that are tested such as science books.

Money for smaller devices like MP3 portable listening devices which libraries can check out to patrons. To download digital audiobooks for checkout.

More clearly defined needs assessment of each type of library. More projects that are not competitive grants but address needs that arise from the assessments.

More collaboration between school media grants, Echo, public and academic libraries. Smaller communities can benefit from more allowable collaboration. State Library should strive to make the library community seamless.

More flexibility - in a larger portion of the dollars.

More information on eligibility requirements. Consideration on proposal to drop matching requirements, at least as one-time opportunity. Could the State Library find some way to become involved with DPI as an advocate for public school libraries? Could sample (elements of) successful grants be shared? Could the State Library help target other-funding agencies that might help with collection development?

More marketing tools for individual libraries to use with their communities to gain more financial support.

More statewide programs. Simpler application process. Eliminate planning grant pre-requirement. Support projects which enhance visible impact - wow factor!

More time in the grant application process would be helpful. Currently there is a two month window to apply. In our county one month is absorbed by the county government requirements (finance review, county commissioner approval). The remaining month does not allow for State Library staff review. Additionally, because grants are awarded in June it is often September before we can get started die to county government requirements.

Para-professional and fundamental cataloging (MARC specifically) training

Please consider an option for no match. If your budget continues to be cut and your school is almost 90% free and reduced lunch, there are no matching funds. My library misses out on funding available; we're being punished for being a poor school. My principal supports the media program but he only gets a certain amount of money to cover all the needs of our school.

Please consider offering workshops to train library staff to write grants.

Please continue to help us support print collections for our school children. For many of my students, the school library is their only access to books, as distance and schedules keep them from accessing the public library. Regarding question 3, applied for LSTA funds in 2001.

Please state up front that you can only apply once in the time frame.

Provide a grant category for development (collection, systems, etc.) based solely on financial/physical needs of the institution.

Provide more training and resources for Impact. Regarding question 3, received LSTA funds to attend this conference.

Public Libraries and Universities collabrating to improve resources available to the public and students.

Push for local and state funding for all school libraries in N.C. and stop calling them media centers. Libraries are diverse providers of information in all formats: print, non-print, and electronic. Where are school libraries mentioned in the Future-Ready Students document? Reading? If we do not have the resources (money and people) to excite children about literacy and learning, this will not work, I'm sorry to say. Regarding question five, I plan to attend the session today. I am new to N.C.

Receiving the LSTA grant has allowed us to see changes in our collections that never would have happened otherwise. We are hopeful that our schools will again be eligible to apply for the grants to work towards our 5 year collection development goals and will not be discluded because we were recipients in the first cycle.

Regarding Question 1, brand new school in 2006.

Regarding question 15, I have experience in Public and school libraries and have received LSTA funds in both settings. I would be happy to share my observations about the relative value of the projects in both settings.

Regarding question 3, don't know if my library applied for LSTA funds from the SLNC in 2003-07 award period because I am new this year.

Regarding question 3, schools within distric apply. Regarding question 4, schools within district have received grants (elementary/midle/high). Regarding question 5, plans to apply on district and school levels.

Regarding question 5, hope to apply for LSTA funds in 2007-08 school year.

Regarding question 5, I understand once we won a grant, we were no longer eligible for further LSTA grants.

Regarding question 5, plans to apply for future LSTA funds if [Library] is elegible; received funds for 2nd year of LSTA (long before me!). I would love to apply for a LSTA grant for [School] but I am under the impression a school cannot apply after previously receiving the grant in the early years of LSTA. As a new media specialist in my school I see numerous needs in our collection. With a small enrollment and no additional funds (such as Title I), grants such as LSTA are often our school's saving grace. I would apply for [School] (again) and make a real difference if we are eligible.

Regarding question 5, we plan to apply for future LSTA funds if it is possible.

Regarding question 5, wrote in 'possibly.' Regarding question 15, I am a new librarian and just learning about this grant process.

Regarding questions 3 and 4, did apply for LSTA funds from SLNC but can't remember the date; did receive grant.

Send info. to schools about LSTA services, goals, and activities. I am not familiar with this. Thank you. Regarding question 5, maybe my library will apply for future LSTA funds.

Simplify process, be able to apply for more things like RFID.

Sliding scale offering more money for need based public school libraries.

Support school libraries with professional development opportunities and outreach programs.

Thanks for the grant funds. The books make a big difference for my students.

The LSTA grant was invaluable to us in updating our collection. Current budgets do not provide for keeping up in all areas. Additional funding such as the LSTA grants are essential to meeting the needs of public school students throughout North Carolina. Keep it up!

The time frame for being able to access funds needs to be more clearly explained to recipients. I wrongly assumed that I would have access to funds by the start of school. With the 1st deadline 10 days away, all paperwork has not been cleared. This would have been less stressful if I had been more aware of the process.

There are whole subcategories of special populations in NC whose need for library services are not being met at all or at a very low priority level. Libraries are for everyone. Fund some projects that address the needs of literacy students, the aging, the institutionalized, the physically and mentally handicapped, tribal groups, minorities, the

disadvantaged. Do not treat these nontraditional project ideas as too specialized, but integral to what we do. Hire a consultant for the LD staff who can specialize in services to special populations, instead of relying on existing staff to provide such coverage in name only. LBPH is a valuable program for a few special populations, but it alone does not adequately address this need. This will sound like sour grapes, but it is not, as my library has benefitted from LSTA funding in many ways over the years, and I am grateful. But, from some of the review comments that have come back on unfunded projects, and because I have sat on review teams through seven years as a State Library consultant, I feel strongly that the review process is unfair because of biases of some of the reviewers. RFID is for the benefit of staff, and therefore not fundable: not true! We'll fund this library system for your library, because you're small and rural and therefore this system is 'good enough' for you. Excuse me? I do not think the peer reviewers are given equal influence with State Library staff, and that often the opinions of staff are broadcast to the peer reviewers in advance of reading the proposals. I think a system of blind reviews of proposals, in which the reviewers do not know whose application they are reviewing (including staff reviewers) would help eliminate some of the bias. It takes just as much if not more skill and competence to manage a grant project in a small library as it does in a large library with adequate staff and funding. Just because someone is lodged in a library position in a larger library does not make them a better manager, of a library or of a grant project! Some reviewer actually said 'What were they thinking?' to one of our recent proposal. Very inappropriate comment, but I'll answer it: we were thinking out of the box, which may be a concept that makes the reviewer uncomfortable.

We'd like to offer customers more opportunities to use playaways, downloadable books and music, RSS feeds and other technology alternatives that mesh with the provision of library services. SLNC did a great job of getting all of us in the computer and Internet business years ago. There are a lot more opportunities out there now to ensure that libraries remain in the cultural mainstream for younger generations who acquire culture and information in a totally different way. We need help with this at our library and I imagine other libraries do, too. Having a professional and useful web presence is increasingly important and something that every library in the state should be using to extend their provision of library services. It's an inexpensive 'location' that we can use to reach a lot more people.

With school-related LSTA grants, the hold up for (in my case) not submitting more is the matching grant restriction. If that could be revised or modified it would release us to apply for more grants. Disregard. Was revised this year.

Would like to see more contact throughout the state if at all possible as well as more innovative projects.

NC ECHO survey

To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Achieving Equity in Library Service?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 4; for example, a brief example.

As with many institutions, it is not possible to commit a staff member to full-time work on digitization projects. The State Library and NC ECHO provided funding, guidelines, and advice that made projects feasible. The development of web exhibits has allowed us to engage in greater interaction with the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT), which has sponsored programs for the state's teachers. In one program, I was able to show the teachers a list assembled by NC ECHO of web projects across the state, and received instant positive feedback as teachers quickly checked the list for sites highlighting their locales. Other NCCAT programs let us demonstrate our web sites to teachers and then bring them to the unit to examine the original documents. Also, a LEARN NC lesson guide was developed based upon our collaborative effort with the university's [Name] center.

[Community College Library] has received several LSTA grants making it possible for us to enhance our services. The Strengthening Collections grant was especially beneficial considering the decline in the community college book budget.

By creating digital, web-based representations of our collections, researchers will be able to utilize much of our information without having to travel to us.

The development of our online resource has provided primary source materials for school students to utilize and access that otherwise would probably not been available to them because of the rarity of the items.

The term 'equity' is far from clear. If the goal of NC ECHO was to reach out to smaller institutions -- by far the most numerous category, it has fallen short of the mark. If the goal was to make that out-reach easier, or more diverse in in user, it is not clear that the results were strongly positive. In my view, the evolution has been steadily toward support of the larger institution. The emphasis has not been on change, but on sustaining patterns of operation that have been in practice and have been maintained by the larger and medium-sized institutions (including our own). Change is slow, but could be accelerated by stronger administrative support and more institutional engagement. Stake-holders appear to be too narrow.

We would not have been able to acquire a scanner within our department without the NC ECHO grant. It has enabled us to offer digital reproduction services and improved the quality of our onsite exhibits as well as starting us on our first digital project described in the grant proposal.

To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Creating a Climate for Innovation & Change?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 6; for example, a brief example.

Change: moving from limited-access, paper-based archives to digital surrogates for access Innovation: prodding librarians to consider various ways which information may be effectively provided via the world wide web

Funding was, of course, essential in obtaining equipment and part-time staff for projects. However, the extensive guidelines that were provided were essential in formulating projects, creating metadata, and suggestions on how to reach a wider audience. I noticed that Google searches now find individual pages from our projects during a search. We were able to scan and make accessible on the web hundreds of images and then to adapt selections from those images to digital 'exhibitions' or explanatory pages. While we have always worked closely with the university museum, the project permitted us to 'blend' our respectively holdings in a way we had not been able to previously and to provide joint context. Also, we were able to create a digital resource that has proven itself adaptable to other projects. For example, in the form of community outreach we have been able to print and assemble images into portable 'displays' for locations that did not have Internet access.

I agree, but there continues to be a poor record of marketing the NC ECHO program to smaller institutions and to schools, statewide. Within our own institution, the NC ECHO grants have been moderately effective in creating a climate for innovation and change. Funding allowed experimentation within our unit, but was less than effective in shaping larger library goals and objective in the initial stages. This is changing as the climate for digitization in libraries grows, generally. 'Buy in' to innovation and change continues to compete with traditional practice and the inability to 'see the whole' continues to impede progress. Limited staff, poor technology training opportunities, and increasing work-load, limit the ability to explore creatively.

This grant has allowed us the opportunity to gather information and suggestions from outside communities and groups that provided us with feedback to incorporate in the development of the resource to make it an innovative and exciting for the users.

To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Libraries and Librarians Lead in Support of Learning and Discovery for Children and Teens?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 8; for example, a brief example.

As a college library, our target population isn't children.

As mentioned above, the projects have permitted us to interact more closely with NCCAT sponsored programs for teachers. We were encouraged to highlight regional themes and topics without becoming provincial in our focus and to consider the need to address a state-wide audience. Also, there has been the realization that -- while the digital image resources may be the same -- the needs of elementary and secondary teachers differ from academic scholars, and we tried to assemble 'explanatory pages' and other added value components that provided insight into the digital holdings.

Outreach is one of the strengths of the grants. The work we have been able to engage in in the community has brougt the university into new areas of recognition and support of community programs that reach children and teens. Networks have developed that continue to grow and strengthen in this area. Together We Read connections grew from work enabled by the grants. Inter-departmental work on campus continues. On-campus programs that engage schools rarely use our facility, but when they do the re-engagement is strong and sustainable. Work with educational programs at the [City] Art Museum continues despite a difficult partnership. We will begin an Art21 project in the spring with [City] Art Museum, four campus departments, and will broadly reach students in the community.

Students could use, for example, our [College] to collection to learn about women's education in general, but specifically about how people lived differently a century ago. For example, there was great consternation about an erroneous report published in a newspaper that 'Carolina Girls' were allowed to go to dances. How scandalous!

The grant that we were awarded has allowed us to not only provide information for general users, but it has allowed us to develop a portal just for the classroom. It has been well received by the educators since it is a product based on their input.

To what degree do you perceive that receiving an NC ECHO grant has enabled your institution to contribute to the SLNC's goal of Enabling the State Library to Serve as a Leader in Library and Information Services?

Please provide additional comments in relation to question 10; for example, a brief example.

Agree, but with some ambivalence. The broad reach of NC ECHO seems limited by its own vision and reality testing. The program, as a whole seems too focused on self-congratulation and not on reality-based assessment. I am always startled by how few schools, and people in the state know about NC ECHO. To lead is to be visible. More work needs to be done in this area and in locating non-traditional partners in the process --- especially chambers of commerce, private cultural organizations, and government organizations. State-wide conferences that suppport training from nationally recognized

leaders in the field would assist in de-stabelizing our zenophobic processes. I keep looking behind us and do not see that many people following ... not a particularly strong endorsement for our leadership.

Funding support and encouragement for quality digital projects helps bring the state's unique resources to greater attention of the public while also providing a contextual framework for understanding. As mentioned, the guidelines on how to conduct digital programs and on creating metadata were invaluable.

The digitization grant we received has made it possible for us to provide access to numerous records, photographs, monographs, etc. from [Library], [Town] and [Community College].

The State Library provided the funds for the project, but it is also providing support (at no cost to the institution) via NC ECHO personnel.

Please provide any suggestions you have for the SLNC's next 5-year LSTA plan. If you do not have any comments to share, then simply click 'next.'

Expand the outreach of NC ECHO. Market, market, market. Engage new partners both within the state and without. Develop new training for programs with new trainers. Introduce more 'outsiders' into advisory boards, and expand the boards to include chanbers of commerce. Use the power of economics to leverage the legislature for more support of cultural institutions within the state. Reduce the complexity of grants, but increase the assessment and do so more periodically and more visibly.

I do not have any suggestions, but I would like to say that the State Library and NC ECHO Board have been very helpful and supportive in our efforts.

Maintain accessibility to NC ECHO's staff expertise and willingness to provide input and suggestions on improvements. One individual volunteered and then provided a detailed critique of a digitization work in progress, both complementary and also advisory on likely changes, that helped enhance the overall project and avert the need to later correct errors.

Evaluations from Town Hall meetings

If you still have questions about the LSTA program in North Carolina, please note them here:

As a school library, when can I apply for another LSTA grant?

How much money will be available in each category? What categories are going to be changed?

I am still interested in library partnerships with other institutions.

Is it possible to write more than one type of LSTA grant for my school?

Will construction/renovation funds ever be available (seed money, not total cost)?

Please note here any other comments you have on today's meeting:

Being fairly new (3 years) as a media coordinator, it's very important for me to know what is available to me and my school library. Thanks!

Different needs for different groups: public, academic, k-12, etc.

Don't use that caterer again.

Enjoyed hearing how other NC librarians have used LSTA dollars; also enjoyed hearing about the impact of these services. This has given me new ideas and a fresh outlook.

Facilitator was a tad too chatty.

Good humor and discussion.

Good meeting. Chance to clarify role of SLNC/LSTA in sorting out the spaghetti.

Have separate sessions, one for school libraries and one for public and academic libraries.

I have some good resource links to use now. Well-run, efficient movement through the agenda. Raised my awareness of activity/needs in all types of libraries. I appreciate the opportunity to share.

I learned a bunch of stuff, so thank you very much. Also, Mr. McClure is a fantastic moderator.

I like the fact that they will be looking into a no category grant.

Interesting session. The scope of needs is great!

It was a great information session. I learned more than I expected.

It would be nice for us to be able to apply for collection development grants more often.

Keep up the good work!

Nice shoes!

Sometimes its hard to get matching funds required by LSTA grant programs.

Terrific!

Thank you for your work.

The information on the grant opportunity was very useful. Great job!

There needs to be a separate meeting for school libraries. Most of this meeting addressed public libraries.

This has been very educational.

This has really helped me realize (solidify) [Town]'s place and the impact we have had from several LSTA experiences over 20 years (30 years total).

This was a great meeting. I appreciated getting perspectives from librarians from all types of libraries.

Very good - thanks!

Very informative about programs and projects that are ongoing. I was not aware of many of them.

Very insightful comments from all attendees. Variety of schools/libraries represented opened my eyes to the tremendous need in ALL LIBRARIES across this state.

Very priceless experience! Thanks.

Very thought provoking. Great ideas shared.

Very well run and informative.

Very worthwhile. Thank you.

Well done.

Well facilitated.