LSTA Application Instructions and Application

for 2025-2026 EZ Grants

# Section 1, APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Be familiar with and understand the [Guidelines](https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/services-libraries/grants-libraries/lsta-grant-information/apply-lsta-grant) available online; contact the State Library with any questions.
2. Use the Application Form in Section 2 to provide responses to the numbered items below.
   * **12 page maximum**
3. Provide additional questions, as needed (additional questions are not included in the 12 page maximum).
4. Complete a [budget table](https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lsta-budget-form/open) using the [form instructions](https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lsta-budget-form-instructions/open)
5. Complete a [timeline form](https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lsta-timeline-form/open)
   * The timeline will show project actions/activities, expected completion dates, and who is responsible for that part. Include details such as planning meetings, training, testing, significant project targets and milestones, outreach to the potential audience(s), and evaluation activities. Be sure to allow for the local institutional approval process and grant program deadlines.
   * The timeline should have at least one entry for each month of the funding period and should be prepared in consultation with any partner(s).
6. Email the following by **11:59 PM** on **March 1, 2025** to [lsta@dncr.nc.gov](mailto:lsta@dncr.nc.gov):
   * Application form as a word document
   * Timeline table as a pdf document
   * Budget table as a pdf document
7. Complete an online [certification form](https://us.services.docusign.net/webforms-ux/v1.0/forms/046a3d6fdf31bc87d0c1553c1579af3b) for the submitted application by **11:59 PM** on **March 1, 2025**
8. **PROJECT TITLE** (20 character maximum)

Provide a title that briefly describes your project. This will distinguish between multiple applications from the same library and it will help others who may be interested in the project’s topic to quickly know what it’s about.

1. **ABSTRACT**

Clearly and conciselysummarize the project in 90-160 words; use this same text for the LSTA Online Signature Page. Abstracts for all grant awards will be available online so write for a public audience and avoid acronyms, abbreviations, individual’s names, dollar amounts, etc.

1. **LIBRARY USERS AND NEED** (use a - b to identify each response separately)
   1. Who are the current or potential library users this project will benefit? Describe the specific community group to be served using demographic statistics, library records, surveys, or other relevant data to support your statement.
   2. State the community need and describe how the need was determined using data like community statistics, surveys, focus groups, anecdotes.
2. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** (use a - e to identify each response separately)

Provide responses to each of the following that will cover the entire scope of the project.

1. What do you want to do to solve or address the need state in the Users and Needs section? Include target numbers for what will be better of different for library users. For example: How many classes do you plan to offer? How many participants are expected to attend? How many additional computer hours will available to library users??
2. Why was this solution selected? Why not something else? Include research you may have done to strengthen the rationale of this solution.
3. Provide a narrative that describes the costs for the project and how these costs will support the project's goal. Show how costs are reasonable and necessary for the success of the project. Use quantity and cost per item to demonstrate how costs are reasonable and necessary. You should explain how the costs associated with each line item or category of the budget relate to the implementation of the project
4. A successful project may set an expectation that the library will continue to offer the program/service after the funding period has ended. How will the library sustain the programs/services offered through this grant for library users? How will the library replace/update hardware or equipment purchased for this project when it ages out?
5. Provide the name any project partner(s), describe their contribution to the project, explain their roles and responsibilities in the project, and describe the benefit and potential impacts of the project to the partner.
6. **EVALUATION** (use a - b to identify each response separately)

How will you measure and document the success of this project? Describe the methods that will be used to gather information and determine whether the library has achieved the project goals.

1. **What outcomes do you plan to see as result of this project?** Describe the outcomes you plan to see as a result of this project that correlate to the stated need. What changes do you anticipate seeing in your intended audience based on this project?   
     
   Remember: Outputs are the **countable products** (the number of workshops taught, the number of objects scanned, or the number of website views). Outcomes are the changes brought about, in part, because of the project in the user’s **behavior, attitudes, skills, knowledge, status, or life condition (learn more about outcomes:** <http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/overview/a2.htm> ).
2. How will you evaluate your outcomes? Describe how you will evaluate each of the above-listed outcomes to determine your success. Include the evaluation method, when you will evaluate, and the metrics you will observe to determine a change. Use of outcome-based evaluation is recommended.

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS: DIGITIZATION GRANTS ONLY**

**DIGITAL PROJECT GRANTS-**Digital project applications must focus on topics important to the cultural heritage of North Carolina and improving access to the state’s special collections.  The majority of materials that will form the basis of the proposed project must be owned by the applicant library and projects with content of broad significance / interest are strongly preferred. Prior to applying for this grant, prospective applicants should have:

* Reviewed information about [planning a Digital Project](http://www.digitalnc.org/blog/digital-project-planning/);
* Identified the materials that will form the basis of the digital project;
* Surveyed other existing digital collections to determine whether the materials to be digitized are already freely available online;
* Reviewed the physical condition of materials to be digitized to be sure that they can be handled and digitized without causing significant harm to the originals;
* Ensured that materials are arranged and described with adequate access points (finding aids, indices, catalog records, and/or inventories);
* Reviewed all documents related to the donation of the materials to ensure that the library has clear and undisputed ownership of the materials to be made available online;
* Reviewed the rights status of all materials, to determine whether or not they are in copyright and, if in copyright, whether or not the library has permission to or is justified in sharing the items online\*\*; and
* Surveyed existing technological capacity and identified areas of need for project completion and sustainability.

\*\*North Carolina Digital Heritage Center staff can assist in making this assessment if needed.

**D1.** SCOPE, CONTENT, AND NEED

1. Succinctly describe the materials, including quantity, that you propose to digitize and make available.
2. How are materials to be included in the digital project currently arranged and described (finding aids, indices, catalog records, and/or inventories)? **Attach a two-page sample.**
3. How are these materials important to the cultural heritage of North Carolina? If the materials have statewide significance, please describe.

**D2.** RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS: Describe the process the library, and/or any partners, have taken to determine the rights status of the materials to be included in the digital project, and the determinations made regarding the ability to share those items online. Be sure to mention any documentation obtained from rights holders, if applicable.

**D3.** DIGITIZATION

Describe the standards and best practices to be used for digitization. Digital Projects that include digitization of materials must, at a minimum, follow the standards and practices outlined in [North Carolina’s Digitization Guidelines](https://www.digitalnc.org/resources/digital-collections/guidelines/).

**D4.** ACCESS

What methods of digital access (cataloging, indexing, online mark-up, etc.) are you planning to use for your proposed project? Describe what kinds of metadata you will use and why. (At a *minimum*, this grant program requires 1) Dublin Core metadata at the collection level on the presentation web site and/or 2) MARC cataloging of library materials in a library online system with the appropriate linkage between the online version and the online catalog record via the MARC 856 field.)

**D5.** CAPACITY AND SUSTAINABILITY (use a - b to identify each response separately)

1. List the staff who will participate in the project and describe their expertise in the following areas: cultural heritage collections, including general management as well as traditional methods of preservation and access; digitization; web presentation; information technology support; and grant management.
2. Describe the information technology infrastructure and institutional support available to host, deliver, and maintain the digital product.

**D6.** OUTSOURCING (use a - c to identify each response separately)

If you are planning to outsource any portion of your project, include the following:

1. State exactly what services the vendor will be providing and your rationale for selecting these services (including justification of cost effectiveness).
2. Describe your selection criteria and how you chose your selected vendor.
3. Note any prior experience you have had with this vendor and describe any trial or demonstration you undertook during your planning process.

# Section 2, APPLICATION FORM

1. Using the format below, start the application by copying/pasting the numbered items below into a new document and typing responses under each number and heading.
2. Use a size 12 font and single spacing.
3. Insert the institution/library name, Project Title, AND page numbers in the document footer.
4. **PROJECT TITLE**
5. **ABSTRACT**
6. **LIBRARY USERS AND NEED**
7. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**
8. **EVALUATION**

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS for Digitization Grants, if applicable** (delete if not needed)

**GRANT PROVISIONS**

The following state and federal provisions apply to the LSTA grant program. Libraries awarded grants must agree to comply with these provisions.

1. Grant Agreement and Timing of Expenditures

Official notification of the grant award must be received from the State Library and a grant agreement (formal agreement between the grantee and the State Library) signed by both the representatives of the library and the State Librarian *before* any funds may be encumbered or expended for the project.

2. Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Grantees must carry out the grant project according to the approved grant proposal, and all federal funds must be expended solely for the purpose for which a grant was awarded.

The following costs are unallowable and may not be proposed as grant project costs: bad debts, contingencies, contributions and donations, entertainment, fines and penalties, under recovery of costs under grant agreements (excess costs from one grant agreement are not chargeable to another grant agreement).

3. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Grantees must expend grant funds in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

4. Budget Revisions and Programmatic Changes

Grantees must not deviate from the approved budget and plan for carrying out the grant project as contained in the approved grant application unless prior approval is obtained from the State Library.

5. Records Retention

Grantees must maintain adequate records to ensure complete reporting, and retain programmatic and financial records relating to the grant for a minimum of three years from the due date of the final grant report at the end of the Five Year Plan, or until all audit exceptions have been resolved, whichever is longer.

6. Free and Open Competition

Purchases made from grant funds must be carried out to ensure free and open competition to the extent possible. Libraries eligible to purchase under state contract may use this option for grant purchases.

7. Debarment & Suspension

Transactions for the purposes of this grant will not knowingly be made with parties who have been debarred or suspended from receiving Federal financial assistance under Federal programs and activities (Debarment and Suspension Certification). See Excluded Parties List System at <https://www.sam.gov> .

8. Equipment Purchases and Inventory

Equipment with a per unit price above $5,000 requires prior written approval from the State Library and will be inventoried annually for the remainder of its useful life. If fair market value at the time of surplus or disposal exceeds $5,000, disposal must be cleared with the State Library.

9. Publicizing & Acknowledging Funds

Grantees are required to credit IMLS/LSTA in all related publications and activities in conjunction with use of the grant funds. Grantees should publicize grant-supported activities in available and appropriate media. The following acknowledgement statement must be used when meeting these requirements:

“This publication/activity/ program was supported by grant funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the federal Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.”

Copies of any publications or materials produced under the grant must be submitted to the State Library. IMLS logos are available at <http://www.imls.gov/recipients/imls_acknowledgement.aspx>

10. Lobbying

Grantees are prohibited by federal law from using grant funds to pay costs associated with lobbying Congress or the public for purposes of influencing elections, legislation, or the award of any federal funds. Grantees receiving an award of over $100,000 must file a certification regarding lobbying.

11. Non-discrimination

All library services provided as a result of federal grant funds must be available without discrimination to all members of the community served. Participation may not be denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap, age, or sex. Relevant legislation includes but is not limited to the following: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d through 2000d-4); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794); The Age Discrimination Act (42 U.S.C. 6101 *et. seq)*; 45 CFR 1110 - Nondiscrimination in federally assisted programs; 45 CFR 1170 - Nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap in federally assisted programs and activities; 45 CFR 1181 - Enforcement of nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap in programs or activities conducted by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

12. Trafficking in Persons

Grantees must comply with 22 U.S.C. § 7104(g) which prohibits engaging in trafficking in persons, procuring a commercial sex act, or using forced labor.

13. Audit and Financial Reporting Requirements

LSTA grants must be audited in compliance with federal and state audit requirements for local governments and public authorities, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations. The following source documents outline the standards and requirements:

* United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR 200, Subpart F - Audit Requirements
* North Carolina General Statute 143C-6-23 “State grant funds: administration; oversight and reporting requirements,” and the corresponding rules of North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 09, Chapter 03M, “Uniform Administration of State Grants.”

LEGAL REFERENCES:

* 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards [address grants and cooperative agreements pertaining to institutions of higher education, states, local governments, Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations]
* 2 CFR Part 3185 - Nonprocurement debarment and suspension
* 2 CFR 3186 - Requirements for drug-free workplace.