



Improving Literacy Through School Libraries

2009 Program Competition

Applications available at www.grants.gov

**Applications due: Friday, March 6, 2009 at
4:30 P.M. Washington, D.C. time.**



A “Discretionary Grant” is a grant in which the Department has discretion, or choice, in whether the grant is funded.

In order to apply to a Discretionary grant program, you must send in an application or a proposal that includes a Narrative and compete with other schools, districts, or communities, for the funding.

Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (LSL) Program

Funds are to be used to:

- Increase up-to-date school library holdings.**
- Acquire advanced technology to develop and enhance students' information literacy, information retrieval, and critical thinking skills.**
- Facilitate Internet links and other resource-sharing networks among schools and school library media centers, and public and academic libraries.**
- Provide certain professional development and collaboration opportunities (at the PreK – grade 3 level).**
- Expand hours of access to school library services.**
- In order to receive a grant, applicants must sufficiently demonstrate both their eligibility and their commitment to fulfilling one or more of the activities of the program.**

The first eligibility criterion for the LSL program is that the applicant must be an LEA.

- **School districts are the most familiar form of LEAs.**
- **Some charter schools in some states are also considered LEAs. Charter Schools should check with their chartering agency to see if they are considered an LEA. Charter Schools applying for this grant must include information on their LEA designation in the abstract of their application.**
- **Regional Service Agencies in many states are considered LEAs by the State educational agency (SEA). These entities may apply as part of a consortium with eligible LEAs in their service areas. They may also apply directly for the districts they administer if the districts meet the family poverty eligibility requirement discussed below.**
- **State Administered Schools, such as Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, State Arts Schools, etc., may also be eligible to apply if they are considered LEAs by the SEA.**

The second eligibility criterion is that the LEA must have a family poverty rate of at least 20 percent. For the 2009 competition this family poverty rate is based on Census Bureau data for (Note: this is not the same as the free and reduced priced lunch statistic and is usually a much lower percentage.)

- **School district family poverty rates are posted on the Web at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/lsl/eligibility.html> for each competition. If a school district's family poverty rate is 20% or above it is eligible to apply.**
- **Charter Schools that are considered LEAs must have their family poverty rate computed by the SEA Title I coordinator. You must contact that office in your State to have them compute the family poverty rate for your organization. (Note: a charter school must meet the eligibility requirement of at least 20 percent of the students served from families with incomes below the poverty line.) The correspondence with the Title I coordinator, including the computed family poverty rate, must be included in the application.**
- **Regional Service Units that are LEAs applying for schools they administer must have the family poverty rate computed for those schools. They need to contact the SEA Title I coordinator. If the computed family poverty rate is 20% or above, the regional service unit is eligible to apply.**
- **State Administered Schools that are LEAs must have the family poverty rate computed. The school needs to contact the SEA Title I coordinator.**

Approximately \$19 million total available for funding.

Amounts requested usually \$30,000 to \$500,000.

One-year grants.

The program expects to make about 80 awards.



Register for Grants.gov

- Go to www.grants.gov and follow instructions for registration.
- If you are registered make sure all contact information is up-to-date on a regular basis.
- Please Note: If your school or district is not registered, register as soon as possible.
- You do not have to wait for a competition to be announced in order to register.
- Have a district individual as the contact for the application and as the authorized representative.



Download the Application package.

You can do this while you register for Grants.gov.

You may save the Application package to your computer and work offline while you register for Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov contact center is open Monday - Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Eastern Time. E-mail: support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.



Visit the program Web site

- All program Web sites can be accessed
- through the U.S. Department of Education Web site, www.ed.gov.
- Just go to **www.ed.gov/programs/lsl**



On the LSL Web site

www.ed.gov/programs/lsl

- www.ed.gov/programs/lsl has all the information needed to apply for a LSL grant including:
 - Information for **www.grants.gov** is also available
 - A Guide for Applicants
 - Frequently asked questions
 - Contact information
 - Application available for downloading



The Federal Register Notice can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2009-1/010609d.html>

This Notice contains information on exceptions to electronic submittal of applications.



PLEASE NOTE:

If your school or district receives funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), you are not eligible to apply, as the BIA receives set-aside funding for this program.

The contact information for the State Title I Coordinators can be found on the Program Web site www.ed.gov/programs/lsl under “FAQs”.

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a group of people, possibly in a meeting or classroom setting. The text is overlaid on this background.

Carefully read the application.

If you have applied for this program before,
do not assume the application is the same as the year before.

Pay attention to the forms needed for the application.

Read through the selection criteria,
make sure you clearly understand what the program is looking for.

There are seven selection criteria for 2009 that total 110 points:

(a) Meeting the purpose of the statute (10 points).

How well the proposed project addresses the intended outcome of the statute to improve student reading skills and academic achievement by providing students with increased access to up-to-date school library materials; a well-equipped, technologically advanced school library media center; and well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists.

In addressing this criterion, applicants may want to consider including information about proposed activities directly linked to improving student reading achievement. Applicants may also want to consider including a coherent plan to address the following areas outlined by the statute:

- Increasing access to up-to-date school library materials, which means both improved collections of print and non-print materials as well as extended hours.
- A technologically advanced school library media center, which means the most recent hardware available, as well as software linked to the curriculum of the school and Internet links; and
- Well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists, which means providing evidence that proposed personnel are qualified to carry out the proposed project through providing a detailed description of their training and certification.

(b) Need for school library resources (10 points).

How well the applicant demonstrates the need for school library media improvement, based on the age and condition of school library media resources, including: book collections; access of school library media centers to advanced technology; and the availability of well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists in schools served by the applicant.

Please note that the statute authorizing the LSL program requires a needs assessment relating to the need for school library media improvement, based on the age and condition of school library media resources, including book collections, access of school library media centers to advanced technology, and the availability of well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists, in schools served by the eligible LEA.

- (c) Use of funds (50 points). How well the applicant will use the funds made available through the grant to carry out one or more of the following activities that meet its demonstrated needs:**
- 1. Acquiring up-to-date school library media resources, including books.**
 - 2. Acquiring and using advanced technology, incorporated into the curricula of the school, to develop and enhance students' skills in retrieving and making use of information and in critical thinking.**
 - 3. Facilitating Internet links and other resource-sharing networks among schools and school library media centers, and public and academic libraries.**
 - 4. Providing professional development (as described in the notice of final clarification of eligible local activities published April 5, 2004, in the Federal Register (69 FR 17894)), for school library media specialists that is designed to improve literacy in grades K-3, and for school library media specialists as described in section 1222(d)(2) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6383), and providing activities that foster increased collaboration between school library media specialists, teachers, and administrators.**
 - 5. Providing students with access to school libraries during non-school hours, including the hours before and after school, during weekends, and during summer vacation periods.**

In addressing this criterion, applicants may want to consider including a detailed, comprehensive plan on the manner in which the eligible LEA will use the funds made available through the grant to carry out the activities described in the statute.

(d) Use of scientifically based research (10 points).

How well the applicant will use programs and materials that are grounded in scientifically based research, as defined in section 9101(37) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7801(37)), in carrying out one or more of the activities described under criterion (c).

In addressing this criterion, applicants may want to consider providing specific examples of the research base for proposed activities.

(e) Broad-based involvement and coordination (10 points).

How well the applicant will extensively involve school library media specialists, teachers, administrators, and parents in the proposed project activities and effectively coordinate the funds and activities provided under this program with other literacy, library, technology, and professional development funds and activities.

Please note that the statute requires that the application include information on how the eligible LEA will assure that school library media specialists, teachers, administrators, and parents are included in proposed project activities. The statute also requires that the application discuss the manner in which the eligible LEA will work with other literacy, library, technology, and professional development programs already in the district funded by Federal, State, and local funds.

(f) Evaluation of quality and impact (10 points).

How well the applicant will collect and analyze data on the quality and impact of the proposed project activities, including data on the extent to which the availability of, the access to, and the use of up-to-date school library media resources in the elementary schools and secondary schools served by the applicant increase and on the impact of the project on improving the reading skills of students.

Please note that the statute requires that the applicant discuss in the proposal the manner in which the eligible LEA will collect and analyze data on the quality and impact of activities carried out in schools served by this funding.

(g) Quality of project personnel (10 points).

The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project, including the following factors:

- 1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**
- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.**

In addressing this criterion, applicants may want to consider including resumes of the proposed project director and other key personnel.



Organize the proposal in the same order as the selection criteria.

Make sure that you address all of the selection criteria.

Follow any instructions in the application as to the following:

Font size – 12 pt.

Number of pages – 15

Spacing - double

**No attachments or appendices
except endnotes and resumes**

**Write in complete sentences, do not use jargon and spell out all acronyms clearly.
Do not assume the readers know your school or district and your issues. Clearly explain
why you are the best choice to receive the funding.**



Fill Out the Forms

SF 424:

- **Use legal name of applicant.**
- **Authorizing Official usually means the Superintendent.**
- **Total amount requested only means first year funds.**
- **Best to use a district individual, such as the proposed project director.**

Abstract:

- **Limit to one page**
- **Always include project title, number of schools, teachers, students, etc. to be served.**
- **Description of goals, objectives, expected outcomes.**



Budget:

- **ED Form 524**
- **Write a Budget Narrative that provides the basis for costs.**
- **Be sure to include:**
 - **Approved Indirect cost rate**
 - **Cost of evaluation**
 - **Relation of costs to activities**
 - **Project Directors' meeting**



Double check to answer the following questions:

- **Are you eligible?**
- **Are you using this year's application package?**
- **Did you follow the appropriate guidelines for the Narrative?**
- **Did you respond to all of the selection criteria?**
- **Did you fill out all of the forms?**
- **Have someone new to the application look at it for typos, spelling errors, general readability.**
- **Check page numbers.**



Check the Deadline

If your application is not in on time
It will not be reviewed

**Upload the application into Grants.gov
as soon as possible.**

**If you have any problems, call the Grants.gov help line and
be sure to get a tracking number.**

**Allow yourself at least two to three days
before the deadline.**

**If you must wait until the closing date, or due date, carefully check the time. You must have
your application in by Friday, March 6, 2009 4:30 P.M. Washington, D.C. time.**



Grants.gov does not allow you to "unsubmit" or take back your application if you have made a mistake.

You must submit an additional application if you want to correct a mistake, and that application will be reviewed as a whole.

Usually programs review the last application that is uploaded into the system, in the case of duplicates.

Therefore, if you send in multiple copies of the same application, make sure the last one is complete and your best effort.



Additional Resources:

Improving Literacy Through School Libraries Program Web site:

www.ed.gov/programs/lsl

Contact: Irene Harwarth: irene.harwarth@ed.gov

The Web site for Grants.gov:

www.grants.gov

The Web site for the U.S. Department of Education

www.ed.gov

The page on the U.S. Department of Education Web site devoted to Grants and Contracts:

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml?src=rt>