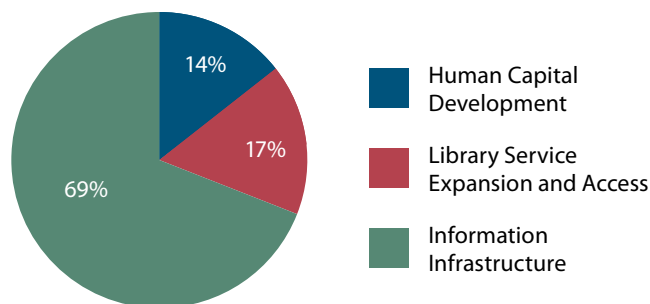


LSTA GRANTS TO STATES PROFILE: NEBRASKA



Nebraska

Projects by Strategy, FY 2003–2006



This fact sheet provides information about the State Library Administrative Agency, LSTA Grants to States programs by category, expenditures by fiscal year (2003–2006), interview highlights with the chief officer, and the program goals for 2008–2012.

State Library Administrative Agency Information

Agency name	Nebraska Library Commission
Agency governance	An independent agency that reports to a board appointed by the Governor
Population served in 2006	1,759,779
FY 2006 total expenditures	\$5,045,000
Grants to States allotment total for FY 2003–2006	\$5,073,216
Chief Officer	Rod Wagner, Library Commission Director
Web site	www.nlc.state.ne.us

Interview Highlights with the Chief Officer, Rod Wagner

Greatest Program Impact in the Last Five Years:

“The most significant impact in Nebraska has come from the emphasis on technology and the use of LSTA to support technology projects. LSTA helped libraries buy computers, set up labs, and automate systems. We’ve also used some LSTA funds for digitization projects. That area has gone beyond what we anticipated. The program is Nebraska Memories; there have been some interesting projects; we got calls from communities with unusual photos, etc. So, we’ve offered things to make it easy to do; we send staff out to help. We thought interest would be limited in digitization, but it has been a pleasant surprise. The training programs we’ve offered on digitization have filled up.”

Delivery of Library Services:

“Public libraries in Nebraska are primarily independent; most are municipal libraries; there are about 270 in total. One of the differences is the high percentage of public

Program Data by Fiscal Year, FY 2003–2006

Nebraska	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	All Years
Total allotment	\$1,122,069	\$1,260,396	\$1,317,786	\$1,372,965	\$5,073,216
Number of projects reported	21	14	24	27	86
Largest project amount	\$588,362	\$656,373	\$ 565,081	\$593,954	
Median project amount	\$6,110	\$12,079	\$8,031	\$7,766	

libraries serving populations in small and rural communities; that's important in the dynamic here. There are two urban public libraries; 12 serve populations in the 15,000 to 50,000 range; and the rest serve populations of under 15,000, with most serving communities of under 1,000 population. There are very few county-supported libraries, although some counties do give some money to libraries to serve the populations outside the cities. So, the Nebraska Library Commission gives state and federal dollars to libraries. About two-thirds of the public libraries are accredited so they can apply for grants. There are also six regional library systems that get state and federal funds to do training, consulting, etc. They can also apply for grants for special projects. Our goal is to make 25 percent of the LSTA funds available for subgrants."

Challenges in the Coming Five Years:

"The challenges are customer service, marketing, keeping current, and continuing education. We need to find good basic training for newcomers to libraries who don't have library training, especially in small-town libraries. It's a dilemma that IMLS takes a restricted view of continuing education.

"Our state funds complement our use of LSTA. LSTA gives us a bit of latitude. We are trying to find ways to support new things, downloadable resources, for example. We are adding to the databases we provide (have six to eight now). We are deficient in databases for elementary and middle school age students now. There's a new interest in audiobooks and we're using LSTA to support that. We're also interested in supporting libraries that need to change their automation systems. We're developing a plan to help them."

Program Goals for 2008–2012

- All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.
- Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to access and deliver online library and information services.

Exemplary Project: Lincoln City Libraries

Project title	Remembering the Nebraska Federal Writers' Project
Library	Lincoln City Libraries
LSTA Funds Expended FY06	\$3,436
Total Cost FY06	\$4,792
Program Category	Human Capital Development

The Lincoln City Libraries project targeted those interested in Nebraska's literary heritage and traditions, local history, and folklore. This project was based on the archival material donated by the family of Rudolph Umland, who served as the WPA Nebraska Federal Writers Project (FWP) Assistant State Director from 1936 to 1940, and on publications of the Nebraska Writers' Project. Federal administrators of the FWP considered the Nebraska Project such a success that they sought to use it as a model for other states. The Nebraska Project produced and published more material per dollar spent than any other state project. This digitization project was designed to make these valuable one-of-a-kind materials available on the World Wide Web.