



Library Services and
Technology Act

Five-Year Plan 2023-2027

Table of Contents

03 — Introduction

04 — Mission and Needs Assessment

12 — Goals

16 — Coordination Efforts

**17 — Evaluation Plan and Vested
Partner Involvement**

**19 — Communication & Public
Availability and Monitoring**

20 — Appendix

Introduction

The Grants to States Program is the largest grant program administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS); it provides funds to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs) each year using a population-based formula.

As North Carolina's SLAA, the State Library of North Carolina must use federal funds to support the LSTA purposes and priorities outlined in the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

LSTA Priorities (20 U.S.C. § 9141)

- 1.expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, and digital literacy skills;
- 2.establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services;
- 3.(a) provide training and professional development, including continuing education, to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership, and advance the delivery of library and information services, and (b) enhance efforts to recruit future professionals to the field of library and information services;
- 4.develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
- 5.target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills;
- 6.target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 9902(2)) applicable to a family of the size involved;
- 7.develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks; and
- 8.carry out other activities consistent with the purposes set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 9121, as described in the SLAA's plan.

Mission

It is the mission of the State Library of North Carolina to provide exceptional library service and exceptional service to libraries. The State Library of North Carolina enriches the lives of North Carolinians through **access** to information resources, strengthens **communities** through exceptional library services, and inspires and supports **literacy** and **lifelong learning** for all North Carolinians.

Needs Assessment

North Carolina's LSTA Five-Year Plan Evaluation 2018-2022

The State Library of North Carolina (SLNC) contracted with the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) to conduct an independent evaluation of North Carolina's 2018-2022 Five-Year Plan.

The EPIC evaluation team used a concurrent mixed-methods evaluation design, drawing on surveys to identify generalizable perceptions around the impact of LSTA investments and complemented by qualitative data to contextualize and give meaning to the quantitative results. Using a mixed-methods approach was also beneficial in triangulating the data to increase the validity and credibility of the research findings. The evaluation included a review of the State Program Report (SPR), documents and statistics, focus groups, personal interviews and a web-based survey. Reports for FY 2018, 2019, and 2020 LSTA awards were reviewed along with other relevant documents. State Library leaders and other individuals were interviewed, focus groups took place, and an online survey was completed with 121 responses from library staff across the state along with a patron focused survey that received 85 responses.

Findings in the Five Year Plan Evaluation suggest that North Carolina's LSTA program should continue to provide opportunities for libraries to experiment and try new approaches while encouraging access in services for all. Partnerships, collaboration, and supporting local community needs will remain an effective strategy to leverage resources and strengthen community relationships.

Data Sources

This needs assessment was informed by surveys, interviews, focus groups, and a strategic planning meeting. Details of data collection across vested partner groups is presented below.

Vested Partner Group	Needs Assessment Data Source
SLNC Leadership	Survey, Interviews
LSTA Project Managers	Survey, Interviews
Library Directors	Survey
Patrons	Survey
LSTA Advisory Committee	Focus Groups & Strategic Planning Meeting

Surveys: Three surveys were administered between October and December of 2021, for library directors (n=124), patrons (n=83), and SLNC leadership and project managers (n=15).

Interviews & Focus Groups: Interviews were conducted between September and October of 2021 with SLNC leadership and project managers (n=18). During this time, two focus groups were also conducted with LSTA Advisory Committee members.

Strategic Planning Meeting: In March of 2022, EPIC convened a group of SLNC leadership, staff, and LSTA Advisory Committee members (n=11) to identify needs for the 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan and map them to the IMLS LSTA priority areas.

Demographic Scan

Increased population growth

In 2021 North Carolina was the 9th most populous state in the nation with just over ten million residents. North Carolina has experienced rapid and dramatic demographic changes since 2010, including population growth as well as movement of population from rural toward urban areas. Since 2010, the population of North Carolina has grown 9.5% from 9,535,692 residents to 10,439,388 residents according to the US Census Bureau estimates. Looking ahead, population growth across the state is expected to increase by another 1,070,557 people between 2020-2030.

North Carolina population growth 1990-2035



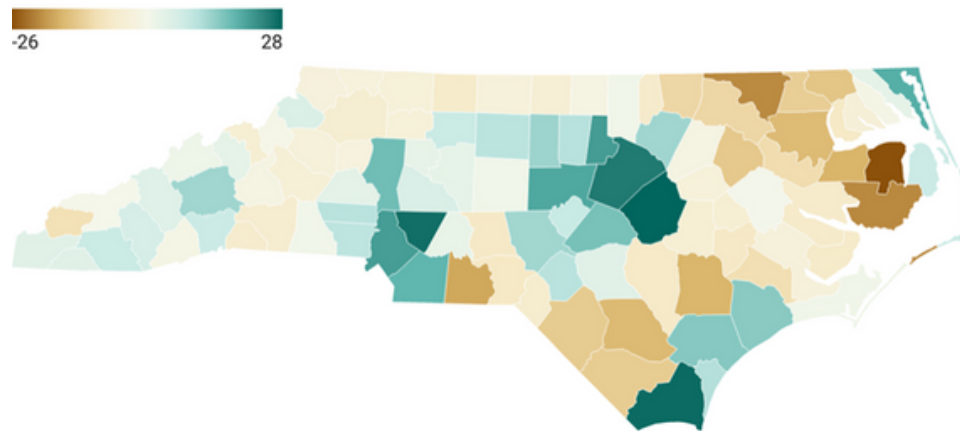
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, NC OSBM

Increased migration

Migration is the most significant factor affecting population growth, with 82% of the state's growth between 2020 – 2030 projected to be derived from net migration. North Carolina is a geographically diverse state with a mix of urban, suburban, and rural environments, with a population density of 196.1 per square mile, well above the national average of 93.8. As of 2010, North Carolina had the second largest population of rural residents in the nation at 33% (3.2 million) compared with 19% rural at the national level. Over the past decade, growth was notably concentrated in urban versus rural areas, with Wake County, Mecklenburg, Durham, and Guilford alone accounting for 59% of the net population growth in the state. Of the 51 counties that lost population, 44 of them were rural, with significant population losses in the Sandhills and Northeast regions. Continued growth is expected to be uneven, and focused mainly in two metro areas: the Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill) and Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Fastest growth in Triangle, Charlotte, Wilmington

Population growth rate (%) for NC counties, 2010-2020



Map: Carolina Demography • Source: U.S. Census Bureau • Created with Datawrapper

Increasing population age

North Carolina's age distribution is similar to the US as a whole, with 15.1% of residents aged 65 and older (vs 14.9% nationally); and 21.9% of children under 18 (compared with 22.3% nationally); including 6.8% of children under 5 (vs 6.0% nationally).

Children under 18	21.9%
(including) Children under 5	6.8%
Residents aged 65 and older	15.1%
Residents aged 18-64	56.2%

North Carolina's age distribution is becoming substantially older. North Carolina currently ranks 28th nationally for its residents age 65+, at 15.1% of its population, with particularly notable increases projected:

- By 2030, it is projected that one in five North Carolinians will be at least 65 years old.
- By 2035, there will be more older adults ages 65+ than children.
- Between 2020 and 2030, the older adult population (65+) will increase 32.1% to 2.4 million, and the adults ages 85+ will see a 4% increase.

Disability

The proportion of individuals less than 65 years old with disabilities in North Carolina is 9.3%, slightly above the 8.7% national average.

Economic and social indicators

North Carolina continues to lag behind the nation in many economic and social indicators.

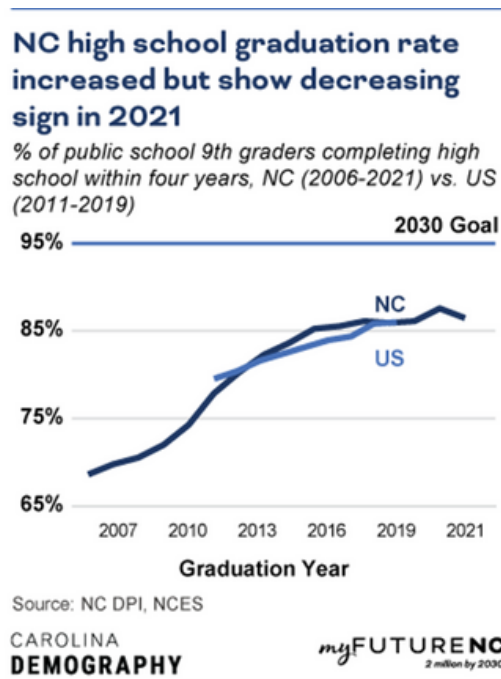
- **Unemployment:** NC unemployment rate of 3.5% is only slightly below the rest of the United States at 3.6%.
- **Median household income:** NC median household income of \$56,642 is 17.5% lower than the national average of \$67,521. In 2019, the county with the highest median household income in North Carolina was Union County with a value of \$85,985, followed by Wake County and Orange County, with respective values of \$84,215 and \$74,299.
- **Poverty rate:** NC poverty rate remains above the national average (12.9% vs 11.4%) with nearly 20% of children living in poverty.
- **Home ownership:** A higher proportion of North Carolina residents owned their homes (65.7%) compared with 64.4% of American homeowners.
- **Home value:** North Carolina homes have a median value of \$182,100 compared with a national median value of \$229,800.

Education

Reading proficiency: As of the end of NC's 2020 school year, a majority of the state's first, second, and third grade students do not meet the standards for reading proficiency. While the proportion not meeting proficiency decreases somewhat in 4th and 8th grade, there are still over half of students in each age group are not considered proficient in reading.

1st grade	62.5%
2nd grade	59.7%
3rd grade	57.3%
4th grade	54.9%
8th grade	51.8%

High school graduation: North Carolina had a 4-year cohort high school graduation rate of 87.6% in 2021, up 18% percentage points since 2006. However the current rate represents a decrease of one percentage point compared with 2020.



Racial Diversity

North Carolina's Diversity Index increased by 5.8% over the past decade, from 52.1% to 57.9% in 2020, with growth across all racial subgroups. North Carolina has a greater population of residents identifying as African American (20.5%) compared with the

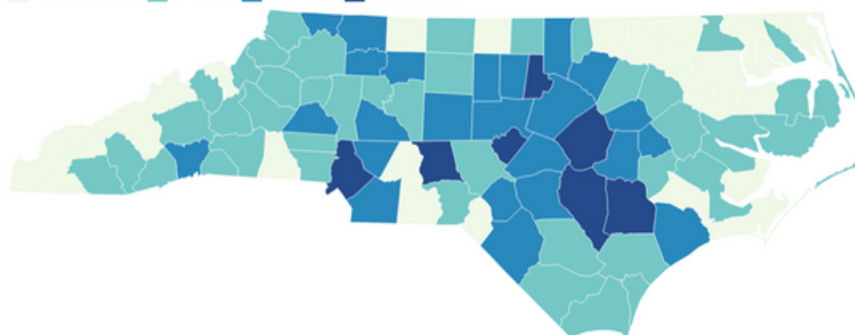
national average of 12.4%. North Carolina has lower proportions of Asian residents compared with the national average (3.3% compared with 6%), as well as a lower percent of Hispanic or Latino (10.7% compared with 18.7%). Individuals 5 years old and above who speak a language other than English at home accounted for 11.8% of households between 2015-2019.

Residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino represented the subgroup with the largest contribution to the population overall, adding 318,476 residents. This also represents a 39.4% increase in the size of the Hispanic/Latino population. Many smaller rural counties have seen faster growth in Hispanic and Latino residents, resulting in this group comprising a greater share of the population in many less populated, rural counties. For example, Duplin County has 22% of residents that identify as Hispanic; Sampson (21%) and Lee (21%) have similarly high proportions.

Rural and urban counties have large Hispanic pop shares

Individuals of Hispanic or Latino origin as a percentage of total population, by county, 2020

Less than 5% 5 - 10% 10 - 15% 15% or more



Map: Carolina Demography • Source: 2020 Census • Created with Datawrapper

Connectivity

From the Census Bureau's 2015-2019 five-year estimate, 89.1% of households in North Carolina had a computer, while 80.7% of households had a broadband internet subscription. For residents aged 65 years or older, 20.7% did not have a computer in the household. According to the 2019 NC Broadband Adoption Index from NCDIT, of households who do have computers, 5.72% of those households do not have equitable broadband access.

As the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for equitable broadband and technology access in North Carolina, it is important to note the role of public libraries in response to this demand. The NC Broadband Infrastructure Office released a list of locations where residents could access free Wi-Fi, the majority of which were Public Libraries (NC Division, 2020). North Carolina's libraries are increasingly placed at the forefront of technological accessibility and equity, and efforts should be focused on proactively meeting the needs of diverse populations.

Summary of Identified Needs

Based on the data collected and the demographic scan, 4 focal areas were identified.

1. Expanding human capital in libraries
 - a. Recruitment
 - b. Trainings and Support
 - c. Community of Practice
2. Providing tailored support to meet library needs
 - a. Grant Facilitation
 - b. Recognize unique needs of different libraries
3. Connecting with communities
 - a. Relationship Building
 - b. Partnership
 - c. Social Media
4. Prioritizing community access and engagement in all goal areas
 - a. Make community access and engagement actionable
 - b. Address the Digital Divide

In developing the LSTA 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan, the four key themes derived from this needs assessment were taken into consideration: 1) developing human capital; 2) tailoring library supports; 3) pursuing community partnerships, and 4) prioritizing activities to improve access and engagement among library staff, materials, and programming.

The 2023-2037 Plan also considers North Carolina's demographic landscape, which includes an expanding population that is growing older, more diverse, increasingly multi-lingual, and more dependent on technology. Perhaps most salient, the low levels of reading proficiency in children, along with high poverty rates and related digital inequities, are important considerations when making state level decisions about program design and resource allocations.

Goals

The State Library of North Carolina's Five-Year Plan for 2023-2027 consists of three goals. These goals address one or more the LSTA purposes and priorities and is based on identified needs.

The State Library will meet these goals through a combination of statewide programs, subawards to local libraries, and special projects managed by libraries or library organizations. LSTA funds are intended to address new or expanded library programs and services, and limited ongoing projects, that advance the field and leverage other resources to build sustainability. Some grant programs that address the following goals already exist and may continue based on evidence of success or impact; others will be added to meet new needs as they become evident.

The goals included in the plan carry equal weight and, taken together, they address needs congruent with the purposes and priorities of the Library Services and Technology Act as stated in the 20 U.S.C. §9121 and §9141, respectively. All projects are planned to take place over the entire five-year period.



01. Community Engagement

North Carolina libraries will provide expansive, user-focused services that enable community-wide growth.



02. Expanding Access

North Carolinians will have expanded access to information and technology needed to learn, live, govern, and work.



03. Responsive Organizations

North Carolina libraries will be places that that all people find welcoming and accessible through sustainable organizational practices focused on community needs, development, and responsiveness.

North Carolina libraries will provide expansive, user-focused services that enable community-wide growth.

Projects

The State Library will offer subgrants to eligible libraries to support projects that support user-focused services enabling community growth. Subgrants could include, but are not limited to, projects that create community literacy/learning spaces, embed social, family, and/or health services, provide employment assistance and economic development services, and create new services particularly through utilizing and establishing relationships in the community.

Outcomes

- Patrons will gain new knowledge, feel more confident in what they learned, and apply skills learned
- Patrons will have increased opportunities to learn and engage in their community
- Libraries are involved in an increased number of collaborative initiatives with schools, other libraries, businesses, governmental agencies, and other community organizations

Community Engagement addresses LSTA priorities 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Expanding Access

North Carolinians will have expanded access to information and technology needed to learn, live, govern, and work.

Projects

The State Library will use LSTA funds to make resources and materials discoverable and available to North Carolinians, including state employees, K-12 educators, students, family historians, researchers, policymakers, and the general public through statewide projects. Projects such as NC Cardinal, a consortium of public libraries in North Carolina and #EverythingNC, a project that makes materials freely accessible will provide expanded access to information and technology.

The State Library will offer subgrants to eligible libraries to support expanded access to information and technology. Subgrants could include projects like bookmobiles, remote access, digitization of collections, digital literacy initiatives, and creative library spaces and resources.

Outcomes

- Patrons will have increased access to library materials and resources
- Users will have increased access to North Carolina's digitized collections
- Libraries will have increased ability to digitize and preserve collections
- Residents will have improved information and digital literacy skills
- The digital divide will be reduced

Expanding Access addresses LSTA priorities 1, 2, 5, and 6.

Responsive Organizations

North Carolina libraries will be places that all people find welcoming and accessible through sustainable organizational practices focused on community needs, development, and responsiveness.

Projects

The State Library will use LSTA funds to support the professional development of librarians and library staff at the State Library and at North Carolina's libraries through statewide projects. Projects like Continuing Education, New Director Orientation, and SLNC Professional Development provide in-person and virtual staff development for staff of all levels. Projects like 21st Century Libraries provide access to web and calendaring software for library websites and programming needs.

The State Library will offer subgrants through the Scholarship program to support continual staff development based on community needs. Subgrants will also be offered to eligible libraries that support sustainable organizational practices. Subgrants projects could include but are not limited to strategic planning, needs assessments, and RFID or ILS implementation.

Outcomes

- Library staff will increase their knowledge in relevant areas of librarianship and learn of new innovations
- Library Managers will grow their leadership and management skills
- Patrons will have libraries that have improved technological infrastructures

Responsive Organizations addresses LSTA priorities 2 and 3.

Coordination Efforts

Goal	Focal Area	Project	Intent
Community Engagement	Lifelong Learning	Libraries provide instruction/services	Improve users' general knowledge and skills
	Economic & Employment Development	Employment support	Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support
	Human Services	Embedded services	Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness
	Civic Engagement	Community spaces	Improve users' ability to participate in their community
Expanding Access	Information Access	Access to digitized materials; #EverythingNC	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
		Libraries provide training	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
		Statewide tools and resources; NC Cardinal	Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
		Digital literacy initiatives	Improve users' ability to discover information resources
	Institutional Capacity	Creative spaces	Improve the library's physical and technology infrastructure
Responsive Organizations	Institutional Capacity	Planning and assessment	Improve library operations
		Training for library staff	Improve the library workforce
		Statewide tools; 21st Century Libraries	Improve the library's physical and technology infrastructure
		Operational technologies; RFID/ILS	Improve library operations

The State Library has a successful history of collaborating with other state agencies, departments, and organizations to coordinate resources, programs, and activities and leverage, but not replace, the Federal and State investment in elementary and secondary education; early childhood education; workforce development; and other federal programs and activities that relate to library services and align with the LSTA priorities. Agency staff has worked with the NCWorks Commission, Department of Public Instruction, Broadband Infrastructure Office, North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, North Carolina Library Association, NC LIVE, NC Community Colleges, UNC System Libraries, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, and others on projects and initiatives. As projects unfold for the goals in this new plan, we will continue to work actively with these and other partners.

Evaluation Plan

The State Library of North Carolina will use a variety of methodologies in evaluating the success of the goals, projects, and activities in meeting our goals.

For Statewide Leadership Programs and Special Projects, we will determine if the outcomes have been met through standard measures such as record keeping, tracking data, surveys, focus groups, qualitative feedback, and other methods as appropriate.

For sub-awards to libraries, applicants will describe what success looks like and how it will be measured. They will provide the output, outcomes, expenditure, and narrative information in a Final Report.

Vested Partner Involvement

The State Library of North Carolina has a well-established program of vested partner involvement in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the LSTA Five-Year Plan.

LSTA Advisory Committee

In the late 1990's the State Library established an LSTA Advisory Committee to provide leadership for the federal library program in North Carolina. The nine-member committee is representative of our state, and is composed of members from various types of libraries from all geographic areas in the state. The committee advises the State

Librarian on plans and policies for the state's LSTA program, annual grant programs, funding priorities, and the Five Year Plan Evaluation. The LSTA Advisory Committee is instrumental in the formation of each year's Annual Program Plan and the Five-Year Plan.

The State Librarian appoints new members to three-year terms in July of each year. Nominations are received from the various North Carolina library communities of interest (public, community college, UNC system, and independent colleges and universities), and are reviewed then appointed by the State Librarian. The committee elects its own chair from the membership each year for a term of July 1 - June 30.

State Library Commission

This Commission is established by North Carolina General Statute to advise the Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources on the operations of the State Library and library services, including the LSTA program, in North Carolina. Some members are appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, while others represent the North Carolina Library Association and the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association.

Grant Reviews

Review of competitive grant applications is performed by State Library staff: Library Development Consultants, other State Library staff, and Senior Management. Grant reviews may also include the LSTA Advisory Committee and peer reviewers who are knowledgeable about the subject matter or type of grant under consideration. Peer reviewers may come from a wide variety of libraries from across the state.

Statewide Meetings

In addition to these established bodies, there are multiple opportunities for vested partner involvement throughout each year when State Library staff engage with librarians across the state. This provides a continuous flow of relevant, timely communication that keeps a pulse on needs and trends, which may further inform the LSTA program.

Communication and Public Availability

Following approval by IMLS, this plan will be posted on the State Library of North Carolina's website. An email announcement of the plan with the web address will be distributed to the North Carolina Library Association membership, the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association, and to other primary vested partner groups. In addition, the State Library staff and others from the State Library will distribute and discuss this plan during library conferences and other gatherings, public forums, library visits, and at other appropriate opportunities.

Monitoring

The State Library of North Carolina monitors Statewide Leadership Programs, Special Projects, and sub-awards to libraries through both formal and informal methods and in accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-333. Once grants have been awarded by the State Librarian, State Library staff and the LSTA Advisory Committee provide monitoring and oversight through a combination of emails, phone calls, status reports and site visits. Library Development Consultants may monitor grant projects located within their areas of geographic responsibility and the federal program team pays particular attention to any projects that appear to be having difficulty.

Project status reports are required for awards and frequency depends on the length, category, and risk of the award. The federal program team monitors all financial documents submitted for reimbursement and they review/approve the final report submitted at the end of the grant period.

Multiyear sub-awards require quarterly reports and receive a monitoring visit at mid-year by a team comprised of State Library staff and representatives of the LSTA Advisory Committee, as well as representatives of other relevant advisory groups.

Appendix

Criteria for Eligibility

This section outlines the definitions of those organizations and institutions that may be eligible to participate in the Library Services and Technology Act implementation in North Carolina.

LSTA Definitions of Eligible Libraries

The Library Services and Technology Act gives the State Library Administrative Agency (i.e., the State Library of North Carolina) the authority to expend funds allotted to the state either directly or through sub-awards or cooperative agreements to achieve the purposes of the Act. The LSTA includes most libraries of all types in its definition of eligibility for funding.

The Act defines the term "library" with a list that includes five types of libraries: a public library; a public elementary or secondary school library; an academic library; a research library; a private library or other special library (Sec. 213(2)(A-E)).

Additional State Definitions of Eligible Organizations

The State Library of North Carolina and the LSTA Advisory Committee have developed these additional guidelines and definitions to assist in the implementation of the LSTA program in North Carolina. They outline the libraries and organizations that may be eligible to apply for and receive LSTA funds; however, specific eligibility will be determined by the priorities in the overall LSTA plan and in the Annual Program Plan. The following are the broad policy guidelines for determining eligibility:

- Every library or organization defined as eligible to apply for LSTA funds must be either publicly funded (receive at least 51% of its operating funds from tax dollars) or not-for-profit (recognized as tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service).
- Every eligible library must have a cataloged collection of information resources, a designated space, a materials budget, and be open to the public a minimum of 40 hours per week.
- Eligible libraries must be headed by a trained library professional with a master's degree in library and information science from a graduate library education program accredited by the American Library Association or by a regional accrediting organization.
- For collaborative projects, one eligible library partner must be designated as the "lead" library to accept and administer the grant. The lead library in a collaborative project must meet all eligibility requirements.

The following are specific definitions for types of libraries that may be eligible under North Carolina's LSTA program:

- **Public Libraries:** Libraries that qualify for grants from the North Carolina Aid to Public Libraries Fund.
- **Academic Libraries:** Libraries in public or private institutions of higher education – universities, colleges, community colleges, and junior colleges (2-year, 4-year and graduate degree-granting institutions) – accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. These are libraries in institutions that are part of the University of North Carolina system; libraries in institutions that are part of the North Carolina Community College System, and libraries in private North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities institutions defined as qualifying for North Carolina students to receive legislative tuition grants under G.S. 116-22(1).
- **State Library of North Carolina:** The State Library is eligible to receive funds to support the administration of the program, to carry out statewide programs, and/or to improve its services in a manner consistent with the LSTA purposes and priorities.
- **State Agency Libraries:** Libraries that are part of a state government agency, including libraries that serve staff and residents of rehabilitative and correctional institutions.
- **Special Libraries:** Libraries operated by professional, scientific, or trade associations, governments, hospitals, or other organizations, agencies or institutions primarily to serve their own specialized clientele. To qualify, a special library must be willing to share resources either through public access on site or through interlibrary loan within the state.
- **Library Cooperative Organizations:** A formally organized cooperative association of libraries that provides for the systematic and effective coordination of the resources of school, public, academic, and/or special libraries and information centers, for improved services for the clientele of such libraries. At least half of the members of the organization must be eligible libraries.
- **State and local professional library associations** providing or encouraging professional involvement and continuing education (e.g., the North Carolina Library Association).
- **Graduate library education programs** accredited by the American Library Association or by a regional accrediting organization.
- **National or Regional Library Organizations:** Other state library agencies and national or regional not-for-profit library associations and organizations may be eligible to receive LSTA funds for collaborative projects and grants that will benefit North Carolina libraries and the people they serve.

Non-Eligible Organizations

There are several types of libraries and library-related organizations that are specifically not eligible to receive LSTA grants under North Carolina's plan:

- Libraries in public schools are not eligible to apply directly for funds but may partner with other eligible libraries.
- Based on the language of the original act passed by Congress, libraries in private elementary and secondary schools are not eligible for funding under the Library Services and Technology Act.
- Libraries serving for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply directly for funds, but may be beneficiaries of collaborative projects that are LSTA-funded. Opportunities for use of LSTA would require partnering with eligible libraries or library-related organizations.

Other Eligibility Determinants

Specific eligibility requirements will be driven by the priorities that are set in the strategic plan and the annual programs for targeting the funds to achieve the five-year goals, intents, and outcomes.

Annual Grant Timeline

The State Library uses a consistent process to manage the program and award funds each year.

Summer

- The Annual Program Plan of competitive grant opportunities is developed in consultation with State Library staff and the LSTA Advisory Committee.

Fall

- First announcement of Annual Program Plan for the next fiscal year; guidelines and application information is released.
- Libraries interested in applying for a Project Grant are invited to submit a Letter of Intent.

Winter

- State Library provides technical assistance and informal review of drafts for potential applicants.
- State Library staff and the LSTA Advisory Committee review and evaluate the Letters of Intent and provide feedback that advises applicants about submitting a full Project Grant application.
- Grant applications are due March 1.

Spring

- State Library staff and LSTA Advisory Committee review and evaluate applications based on program criteria.
- Recommendations on funding are submitted to the State Librarian in May.
- EZ Grant applicants not selected for funding receive notification of the decision and information about their right to appeal and appeals are reviewed by LSTA Advisory Committee.
- Final funding decisions are announced in June and funding period begins July 1.