



Texas Public Libraries: Serving Communities to Enhance Digital Literacy Survey Question and Responses

Recommendations to TSLAC Regarding Digital Literacy Assistance

Do you have any recommendations for TSLAC that would assist you and other libraries with their digital literacy offerings? If so, please describe briefly. Otherwise please skip to the next question.

(All items are verbatim.)

Responses from Library Directors

Years back, there was a grant that I applied for that provided a mobile trainer. We had a rotation of 3 trainers that cover resume writing, basic word and basic excel. These classes were extremely successful and easy to manage.

A way to provide funding for additional staff to conduct training.

Initiating partnerships with certification granting organizations and well-known technology companies would be really beneficial. If we had access to discounted licenses for microsoft classes or could bring in Apple instructors, the name recognition would help to bring people into the library.

We are always stronger when we pool resources and skills. Creating a library of tools in variety of languages presentations, workshops etc... allows for anyone to pick up the training and deliver it.

More grant opportunities

Training for staff is always beneficial.

Facilitate greater broadband access

It would be great to have a TexShare-wide use of something along the lines of the Niche Academy. This gives stock videos on using various computers resources as well as the ability to do your own videos teaching more localized skills. Would be great if something like this would either be totally sponsored by TexShare, or where we could, as accredited libraries, have it underwritten enough for a great discount. It's not horribly expensive, but when you just don't have the extra money...

Short videos on how to use specific software and devices for advance users. Online curriculum to help staff cut on class preparation.

Partnering has worked for us. Training staff and providing a curriculum will enhance instruction.

Programs and staff training

Training trainers would be helpful and best practices and suggestions on curriculum that is not expensive and easy to apply

Digital Literacy materials in other languages such as through TexShare (databases or other forms of materials)

Having a curriculum on hand would help. We are short staffed as it is and do not have the time to research the best one, create our own, etc.

<https://laketravislibrary.org/tech-coach/>

The TexShare databases are such a wonderful resource, but it is difficult to sift through. I would like to see some marketing of the individual databases that would be print and social media ready so we could promote Learning Express, Chilton's, Legal Forms, and provide more specific information about how TexShare can help you access Consumer's Reports and research materials.

Allow your staff who are passionate about social media and emerging technologies to offer instruction in these areas - they will love doing something new and being able to share their passion with others

Again, our community in particular would find it beneficial if the training/materials were available in languages other than just English and Spanish.

Update the online training - especially the spreadsheet training. There are a few lessons where the instructor gives not clear directions. The other lessons are great. Could TSLAC take over the NVRA training the Secretary of State has a PowerPoint presentation, good, but it would be better to have a live person who could answer question during a webinar.

I think that LinkedIn Learning Statewide would be a wonderful, consistent place for people to gain digital literacy skills.

Basic skills for support staff when dealing with all types of patrons and their devices. Having patience is the biggest thing. Knowing and anticipating their questions is invaluable - these are skills you can't always teach when staff members are well versed in all types of technology. Being patient, thorough on your instructions, and providing relatable advice so they understand the methods of instruction is so important.

We need formal Technology and Service support! It is usually a monthly service and contractual. Staff training and staff/volunteer compensation would also help.

Perhaps a webinar on how to be more effective in teaching digital literacy skills. Help with designing and conducting assessments to determine need.

We need certified trainers willing to work evenings.

Funds providing both physical costs (electricity, heat) and cost of library staff teaching classes.

I love the idea of a TSLAC digital literacy online curriculum that libraries could offer - something that is self-paced and could be accessed in different languages. Set us up as the go-to resource in our communities for digital literacy and learning. Right now we are piecemealing it.

Constantly have to update any content (curriculum, videos, etc) because things change so quickly.

Training for needs from the communities, not from library staff

Offer grants that are more flexible to allow for innovative and customized strategies to be explored and designed to meet unique community needs. Similar to Special Projects Grants.

Many of us don't have the space or staff. Maybe coming to see the site personally will help you understand the dilemma

Space and trainers.

Webinars for staff work great for us, having them recorded and being able to view after the fact is an huge bonus!!

More self-paced programs, such as are in the Learning Express program with TexShare, especially dealing with various products such as Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.

Grants for this purpose would be nice.

Getting equipment, etc. seems to be fairly easy but, in our case, we need space. The community built a

new state of the art library in 1997 which we thought would last forever. In less than 10 years we had to take over the meeting room for shelving, move computer stations, etc. Our city is currently experiencing unprecedented growth and looking for funding for expansion.

Person to person training. Zoom meetings are not too useful because everyone is at different levels. Lower-level individuals might be timid about asking questions.

Maybe a learning manual for individuals to self-help or to assist staff to assist patrons.

We will likely as a profession need to tackle how we will marry offering technical assistance and instruction with privacy issues. It is a regular occurrence in our libraries that someone will come in with a letter from social security office, housing authority, or other social service entity stating that they need to go online to access services. Often these folks are the least digitally literate, and require extensive staff help. This often puts staff in an uncomfortable situation where they feel very conflicted about a patron's willingness to share private information with them (e.g. social security number, etc). Staff either break what they see as library privacy rules to help or they end up with an extremely frustrated patron who wants them to help more than they feel like they can.

Librarians need to be sure they educate their governing boards/advisory boards about how many people still don't have access to the internet, that not everyone has a cell phone, that not everyone has an email and not everyone can type. We take it for granted, but it's a reality that many still struggle and that's hard for people in charge of funding your requests for things like this to understand. I always show my cell phone at budget and make sure the commissioners know that we all don't have one of these. and those that do don't always know how to use them. We help with that and it blows their minds that we're teaching people how to operate something that they utilize with their eyes closed...

Responses from Branch Managers

Work to get technology into the hands of older adults and seniors. Technology that they can take home to use so that the use of those skills and experiences are not limited to just the library.

A standard curriculum available to all library branches.

More funding for equipment and a better space for a computer lab

My customers might be interested in intermediate digital instruction/classes

Don't overthink it. What most patrons need is to play with the software/computer and learn it's functions through use. Be flexible and try and make the classes fun, maybe especially for adults. Be patient. It is very easy to get frustrated with adults whom you feel should know how to do this, but they may not have had the exposure to computers that you think they did.

It's hard to please everyone. Some people can attend morning or day classes. Others want evenings/weekends. Since classes are FREE patrons do not take it serious. Lack commitment of returning week after week. When it costs them something, Money, then they do not want to lose what they paid and attend class.

There is a shortage of books etc for the Google Suite. We'd love to see a shift towards Google and away from Microsoft, especially as it is being used in schools way more.

A trainer who travels around to branches would be helpful. Does TSLAC have a grant to purchase laptops?

Funding for regular staff trainings would be great.

At our branch we could definitely use laptops/chromebooks or something similar. Keep classes basic for the most part.

Providing instructors

I think with computer instruction, one-on-one works the best because in a group you end up doing one-on-one instruction anyway. In the interest of staffing, group classes are the best option.

A quarterly forum on how other library professional deliver classroom instruction on digital literacy. Examples we can follow on the TLA or ALA website where library staff can click on to learn.

More funding would be necessary to purchase equipment needed to provide classes to our community.

I think identifying a specific group of people who are interested in investing time in their learning, and going to where it is helpful for them.

Create a Children's Library Literacy Center grant funded to teach young children how to find story websites, abc or 123 learning sites or to teach them simple computer literacy for classroom readiness. This would assist those who have no access to the internet at home.

Recommendations for TSLAC from Interviews

Continue to fund the digital navigator's program. Keep funding grants, keep funding training.

We lack time to apply to most TSLAC grants since staff are stretched thin; Waste of time because bigger libraries have historically won grants, "why should we bother"

Curriculum to help with starting up services again. How to do better outreach.

Maintain a list of consultants by region and trainers that libraries could call when they have funds. Provide grants and funds to pay for trainers and consultants.

Offering training to librarians; outreach help

Money! Offering curriculum/training sessions/tech instruction for DL so more staff members could be exposed to that; Staying relevant (e.g. moving to Cloud as opposed to thumb drive)

More funding and training would help

I think it's very important to be able to not have to reinvent the wheel to be able to see what other people are doing and try and connect with those. TSLAC can do more to learn about what other libraries are doing and share them with us.

Provide funding for those libraries who are lacking in digital literacy services. Make sure to have printing services

Grants

If TSLAC could help with understanding the needs of my community that'd be helpful, not just the people who come into the library

TSLAC networking with librarians; helping apply for grants Help libraries stay current with technology and software.

TSLAC does a great job overall :); TSLAC has classes to teach staff digital literacy topics but staff is too stretched thin to take those classes and then pass on that knowledge to patrons; TSLAC could help cities/counties that are more anti-library: [name of city redacted] city heavily funds the library (very pro-library) while counties with commissioners (e.g. [name of county redacted]) are usually more anti-library/believe library funding needs to be cut;

Troubleshooting class or practice class to help people who are stubborn

It'd be helpful to have digital literacy training videos, tutorials, and resources that this library can link to on their website for their patrons to access, because the librarians don't have the time to create or find the necessary resources. Also would appreciate train-the-trainer webinars for staff and more grants to help them purchase software.

A portable system to do classes in different areas, could help with surveying what the needs of the community are, something that libraries aren't great at making happen or finding out;

The Tocker Foundation grant that gave us free hotspots for a year was so helpful, but keeping the hotspots beyond the first year is cost prohibitive for many small libraries. TSLAC might like help with that.

More training for staff to learn how to provide 1:1 informal assistance effectively; TSLAC can provide grants but can't really get involved due to toxic political environment and breakdown of relationships between TSLAC and city.

Grants for Wi-Fi/hotspots are great but only if service can be offered in the area. Hotspots would be helpful if the location wasn't so secluded and could access internet service. Grants for new equipment like up-to-date computers, laptops and/or software.

Small libraries staff is spread so thinly, so maybe having a teacher that can come in to teach the courses instead of being entirely dependent on library staff. Especially since there is already a staff shortage.

Train instructors that can teach these classes and offer DL services in other languages and send them out to libraries. More staffing options.

Grants are time consuming, usually large grants are offered but not a lot of small grants for smaller projects. Would like to be able to apply for the smaller grants in shorter intervals, annually.

If TSLAC could make some podcasts or videos, teaching people in Spanish that would be great.

She really enjoys the workshops, wishes there were more in person options and more workshops in general.

Grants for technology. Also if TSLAC had a visiting instructor on staff that could come teach classes.

Send facilitators and equipment for classes: for libraries serving <10,000; we would be much more open to having classes where the facilitator and equipment segment are provided because those are the two things most lacking—we don't have time or money to pay a facilitator.

More funding and an improved TSLAC website. As a branch manager, he does not view TSLAC as much of a resource for his needs as it is for special libraries, academic libraries, or archives/history centers. It said the website comes off as a little dated and has the feel of government. He is unaware of TSLAC digital literacy offerings.

Funding; Pre-packed lesson plans like, "Facebook in 30 minutes". Once a week having a small blurb from TSLAC that is a digital literacy tip they could send out and share.

It'd be helpful for TSLAC to communicate their offerings. TSLAC might put out a monthly newsletter where they could spotlight certain offerings and resources. That way, libraries could designate a staff member to sign up for the service and communicate with their library. TSLAC could help promote digital literacy resources and offerings through TexShare.

Would be nice to have services offered in different languages (e.g. Spanish, Hindi) due to growing populations.

Training IN PERSON! Not online, in small groups. Standardized trainings.

Support the library systems in their efforts.

Not aware of any community needs that TSLAC may be able to help with, waiting for community initiative on personal needs.

WI-FI boosting and training services.

She would appreciate turnkey solutions from TSLAC--a basic "This is what we're finding, and this is what you need." She's "all about the free and the turnkey."

TSLAC should have programming or education to make all Texans aware from a young age that digital literacy is a tool to help the community achieve a navigation system: need to understand the importance and that they should learn it for their own benefit (e.g. just as necessary as driving a car).