



TEXAS STATE LIBRARY  
AND  
ARCHIVES COMMISSION

# Notice of Funding Opportunity

## State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025



## Special Projects Grant Program Guidelines

**Application Due Date:**  
Wednesday, February 7, 2024

## **Table of Contents**

A.	Program Description .....	3
B.	Award Information.....	3
C.	Eligibility Information .....	4
D.	Application and Submission Information .....	5
E.	Application Review Information .....	7
F.	Award Administration Information .....	15
G.	Contacts.....	17

**Comments regarding the programs and services of the  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission can be addressed to:  
Director and Librarian  
P. O. Box 12927 ♦ Austin, Texas 78711-2927  
512-463-5460 ♦ 512-463-5436 fax**

*Cover image:* Courtesy of Bigstock Photo.

## A. Program Description

### Goals and Purposes

This grant program provides funds for programs that expand library services to include all members of the library's community. It enables libraries to develop programs for populations with special needs or those having difficulty using the library. Programs focusing on community engagement or involving collaboration with other community organizations are strongly encouraged. Programs must emphasize improved services by the library to its customers.

These programs must meet the following LSTA goals as identified in the 2023-2027 LSTA 5-Year Plan (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/ld/pubs/lstaplan/IMLS%20LSTA%20Five-Year%20Plan%202023-2027%20-%20Texas%20-%20FINAL.pdf>):

#### Goals

- Through Texas libraries, Texans will have access to digital resources and services needed to help them navigate the digital information landscape successfully.
- Texans will have access to library materials and services that support literacy and educational attainment, especially early childhood and family literacy, workforce readiness, and lifelong learning.
- Texans will receive library services from trained library staff that effectively respond to community needs.

The purpose of this grant program is not for collection development or other activities primarily focused on the acquisition of library materials or resources, or digitization projects.

Applications for FY 2025 may be submitted in one of two Special Projects programs — **Special Projects 25** or **Special Projects 75**. Applicants may not apply for both programs in the same program year.

**Special Projects 25** will support eligible projects for a single year with grant funding up to \$25,000. Projects will not be eligible for additional TSLAC grant funding beyond the initial grant period.

**Special Projects 75** will support larger projects implemented over multiple years within the TSLAC guidelines. Single year funding may not exceed \$75,000. Successful applicants will be eligible to apply for additional grant funds to support work on the project for up to two consecutive years following the initial year of funding.

## B. Award Information

Approximately \$750,000 is expected to be available for Special Projects Grants, subject to approval by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the availability of funds. Funding is provided by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as a subaward of IMLS' Grants to States Program under the Library Services and Technology Act.

Assistance Listing Number/Title: 45.310 Grants to States

### Maximum Award

Applications of all sizes are encouraged. While the request may be part of a larger program, awards will not exceed \$25,000 for Special Projects 25 or \$75,000 for Special Projects 75.

## Length of Funding

Funding will be for one year (July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025). Successful applicants under the Special Projects 75 grant are eligible to apply for grant funds to support work on the same project for up to two consecutive years following the initial grant period for a total of three consecutive years of funding.

## C. Eligibility Information

Through their governing authority, accredited public libraries, local public library systems, libraries that are members of the TexShare Library Consortium, or nonprofit organizations that are applying on behalf of accredited libraries and/or TexShare members, are eligible to apply for funds.

An applicant that is a nonprofit organization is eligible only if the organization’s organizational charter, operating guidelines, or mission statement includes providing direct support for affiliated library activities and goals as a defined objective. Public library applicants must be accredited by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission for the fiscal year in which the grant contracts are issued.

There is no requirement for cost sharing, matching funds, or cost participation with this grant program.

Applicants may only submit one application for consideration under the Special Projects grant program per funding cycle.

As noted above, successful applicants under the Special Projects 75 grant are eligible to apply for grant funds under the same program for the two consecutive years following the initial grant year. Funding in the initial or a subsequent grant period does not guarantee funding in future grant periods. The second- and third-year applications will be evaluated on the same criteria as new applications. No applicant will be eligible for a fourth year of funding for the same project.

## Eligible Expenses

This grant program may fund costs for staff, equipment\*\*, capital expenditures, supplies, professional services, indirect costs, and other typical expenses, as permitted by the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS). The purpose of this grant is **not** for collection development or other activities primarily focused on the acquisition of library materials or resources outside of the proposed program, or digitization projects, except as noted in the grant guidelines.

*\*\* Equipment costing \$5,000 or more per unit will require approval from IMLS before purchase.*

## Ineligible Expenses

Except as provided in grant guidelines, competitive grants may NOT fund the following expenses:

- a. Capital expenditures related to the purchase of real property or buildings
- b. Capital expenditures related to the construction or expansion of facilities, including fixtures and services
- c. Capital expenditures related to renovation costs, including fixtures and services
- d. Food, beverages, or food delivery equipment or services
- e. Awards, honoraria, prizes, gifts, or incentives
- f. Equipment or technology not specifically Needed to carry out the goals of the grant;
- g. Transportation/travel for project participants or non-grant funded personnel

- h. Databases currently offered or similar to ones offered by the agency (i.e., a magazine index database may not be purchased if a comparable one is provided by the agency)
- i. Collection development purchases not targeted directly to the grant goals nor integral to the service program Advertising or public relations costs not directly related to promoting awareness of grant-funded activities Performers or presenters whose purpose is to entertain rather than to educate
- j. Other expenses as excluded in the grant guidelines

## D. Application and Submission Information

TSLAC strongly encourages potential applicants to review the TSLAC grants webpage (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ldn/grants>) to learn more about the competitive grant programs and process.

### Project Development and Draft Review

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) recommends that applicants discuss their projects with TSLAC staff before developing a proposal. TSLAC consultants are available to help throughout application development and in determining the best grant program for your project. For more information, contact the TSLAC Grants Team via e-mail at [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov).

TSLAC also strongly encourages applicants to submit a draft of the proposal to TSLAC for review. TSLAC has created a Microsoft® Word® grant application template, available on the TSLAC website at <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ldn/grants/programs>. Applicants may use this template when preparing a draft, which can then be used to populate the online application. Please note that the online application will not accept tables, charts, or images.

To allow adequate time to review the draft proposal, submit the draft via e-mail to [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov), with the subject line “2025 Draft Proposal,” **by Friday, January 5, 2024.**

### Grant Management System (GMS) Access

TSLAC uses a grant management system or GMS that enables applicants to apply for grants electronically through a web portal at <https://grants.tsl.texas.gov>. Applications and required documents must be submitted in GMS by the due date to be eligible for consideration. To submit your application online, you must have an active GMS account. To create or activate an account, please have your library director submit a completed GMS Import Template (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ldn/grants/forms-tools>) to [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov). The e-mail should reference “GMS Access” in the subject line. TSLAC staff will review the request and grant appropriate access.

If needed because of difficulty using the Internet or for other accessibility reasons, potential applicants may request paper copies of materials from the TSLAC Grants Team via e-mail at [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov).

### Application Components

The grant application consists of the following MANDATORY components to be submitted in GMS by the deadline:

1. Application certification form (print, sign, and upload)
2. Program narrative and budget
3. Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) certification form (print, sign, and upload)
4. Letters of cooperation (if applicable) — If the project is collaborative in nature, letters of cooperation indicating commitment of time, funds, volunteers, or other resources must be submitted from all

participating organizations. Letters should be addressed to TSLAC Grants Team, TSLAC, P. O. Box 12927, Austin, Texas 78711-2927. Applicants are encouraged to upload letters in GMS.

**Letters of support are optional.** A maximum of three (3) letters of general support may also be submitted. Letters should be addressed to TSLAC Grants Team, TSLAC, P. O. Box 12927, Austin, Texas 78711-2927. Applicants are encouraged to upload letters in GMS.

## Other requirements

Before submitting an application, applicant organizations must have a current and active federal Unique Entity ID (UEI). The federal government uses a unique identifier for each entity (company, nonprofit, organization, etc.) that does business with the federal government.

If you are currently registered in SAM.gov, you've been assigned a SAM Unique Entity ID. It's viewable on your entity registration record in SAM.gov. If you have never registered at SAM.gov or have never applied for a grant with TSLAC or other state or federal agency, you will need to initiate the process of obtaining a SAM UEI at SAM.gov.

To get started registering your entity, to renew your registration, or for more information, visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) or to refer to the [Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID](#), published by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).

## Who can submit the online application?

Any individual authorized to use GMS and having the correct security role will be able to submit the application in GMS. Applicants will still be required to submit the signed application certification form in GMS. The application certification form must be signed by an individual authorized to enter into contracts with the State of Texas (e.g., county judge, city manager, etc.).

## Deadline and Submission

Completed applications and ***all*** required documents must be submitted in GMS **by 11:59 p.m. Central Time, Wednesday, February 7, 2024.** *Please note that technical support will not be available after 5 p.m.*

If you are unable to submit your application and/or required documentation via GMS, you may submit documents via mail, e-mail, or fax. Please send to the attention of: **2025 Grants, Library Development & Networking Division**, via e-mail to [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov), fax at 512-936-2306, or mail to Library Development & Networking Division, TSLAC, P. O. Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711, (TSLAC street address: 1201 Brazos, Austin, TX 78701). *Required items must be postmarked no later than February 7, 2024.*

**Late submissions may be considered for review on a case-by-case basis following the TSLAC protest procedures as outlined in Section F (13 TAC §2.55) and decision by the Director and Librarian.**

## Program Timeline

<b>October 2023</b>	Guidelines released and application opens
<b>January 5, 2023</b>	Draft proposals due to TSLAC for review (recommended, but not required)
<b>February 7, 2024</b>	Applications and required forms due in GMS
<b>Feb-April 2024</b>	Application packets evaluated by Grant Review Panel
<b>April 2024</b>	Applicants notified of Grant Review Panel recommendations

<b>June 2024</b>	Commission meets and approves projects
<b>July 1, 2024</b>	Projects begin
<b>May 31, 2025</b>	Final day to encumber grant funds
<b>June 30, 2025</b>	Projects end
<b>July 31, 2025</b>	Last day to submit final request for funds and documentation

## E. Application Review Information

### Criteria for Award

This grant program is competitive. The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant Review Panel will score proposals on the eight criteria listed below (13 TAC §2.412). The maximum number of points for each category is shown.

Additional points will be awarded to applicants who meet the following criteria:

- Applicant library will receive 5 points if they have not received a TSLAC grant in the past 5 years.
- Applicant library will receive 5 points if they serve a community with a population of 30,000 or less.

These points are cumulative. Libraries will be awarded points for each criterion they meet.

**The detailed scoring rubric that will be used by the LSTA Grant Review Panel is provided on the following pages.**

#### 1. Needs Assessment (15 points)

- Describe why the program is needed, the program goals, and the targeted audience.
- Describe the greater community to be served using demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements.
- Attach letters of cooperation demonstrating commitment to the project from all agencies involved.

#### 2. Program Design (20 points)

- Thoroughly describe the services, programs, and activities; describe the location where they will be offered.
- Explain how these services will attract shared library users.
- Collaborative projects have priority and inclusion of relevant community organizations is encouraged.

#### 3. Project Impact (15 points)

- Describe the impact your project will have on library services and users regionally or statewide. This may include how the proposed project is a model program that would benefit other communities.

#### 4. Personnel (5 points)

- Identify who will administer the funds and which positions will provide the services.
- List how much time will be spent in each position on assigned duties.
- List how the qualifications of each person relate to their job duties. Full job descriptions are required for new hires.

## 5. Timetable (5 points)

- Present a timetable for project activities within the project year (state fiscal year) (i.e., a list of actions with a date by which they will be accomplished).
- Provide verification that facilities will be available, equipment and materials delivered.
- Explain how staff will be hired and trained in time to carry out the services as planned.

## 6. Evaluation (10 points)

- Set achievable, measurable outcomes and present a reasonable method to collect data.
- Present a method to count users of the services, as well as measure the effectiveness of the service.
- Funded programs will also be required to evaluate their programs in accordance with Legislative Budget Board (LBB) measures and IMLS tools.

## 7. Budget (20 points)

- Provide a complete budget for the proposed project and fully justify the budget by describing how budgeted items will contribute to the project.
- Identify a source for the stated costs (e.g., city pay classification for staff, catalog, city/county bid list for equipment, or vendor quote).
- Explain how costs are reasonable to achieve project objectives. If new staff members are to be hired, grant applicants should consider the time for a realistic hiring process to occur. There is no requirement for cost sharing, matching funds, or cost participation with this grant program.

## 8. Sustainability (10 points)

- Describe the resources that will be used to support the services developed through the grant in the future. A written commitment of future support from governing bodies is desirable, but not required.

## Peer Review (13 TAC §2.113)

- (a) The commission may use peer review panels to evaluate applications in competitive grant programs.
- (b) The director and librarian may select professionals, citizens, community leaders, and agency and library staff to evaluate grant applications. Peer reviewers must have appropriate training or service on citizen boards in an oversight capacity and may not evaluate grant applications in which there is, or is a possible appearance of, a conflict of interest.
- (c) The agency staff will distribute selected applications to reviewers and will provide written instructions or training for peer reviewers. Reviewers must complete any training prior to reviewing applications.
- (d) The reviewers score each application according to the review criteria and requirements stated in the grant guidelines.
- (e) Each peer review evaluation of an application for competitive grants shall be appropriately documented by the peer reviewer conducting the evaluation. The documentation shall include the scores assigned by the peer reviewer. The peer reviewer may also include comments that may be shared with the applicant.
- (f) To be eligible for review, each application must be submitted by the specified deadline with all required components and all necessary authorization signatures.



## **Funding Decisions (13 TAC §2.114)**

- (a) The agency staff will submit a recommended priority-ranked list of applicants for possible funding. Final approval of a grant award is solely at the determination of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- (b) Applications for grant funding will be evaluated only upon the information provided in the written application.
- (c) The agency staff may negotiate with selected applicants to determine the terms of the award. To receive an award, the applicant must accept any additional or special terms and conditions listed in the grant contract and any changes in the grant application.
- (d) The agency staff will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing.

## **Awarding of Grants (13 TAC §2.115)**

The commission has the right to reject applications or cancel or modify a grant solicitation at any point before a contract is signed. The award of any grant is subject to the availability of funds.

## **TSLAC Staff Responsibility (13 TAC §2.117)**

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) staff will review each application packet for the following:

- Legal eligibility of the institution to participate in this grant program and appropriate authorizing signature
- Conformance to the federal and state regulations pertaining to grants
- Inclusion of unallowable costs
- Errors in arithmetic or cost calculations
- Submission of all required forms
- Compliance with submission procedures and deadlines
- Relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the purpose of the grant program

Agency staff will raise issues and questions regarding the needs, methods, staffing, and costs of the applications. Staff will also raise concerns regarding the relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the purpose of the grant program. Staff comments will be sent to the grant review panel with the applications for consideration by the panel.

Applicants will be sent a copy of the staff comments to give applicants an opportunity to respond in writing. Applicants may not modify the grant proposal in any way; however, applicants' responses to staff will be distributed to the panel.

Applications with significant errors, omissions, or eligibility issues will not be rated. Applications in which the project design and activities are not relevant and appropriate to the purpose of the grant program will be ineligible.

Agency staff will be available to offer technical assistance to reviewers.

## **Grant Review Panel Responsibility (13 TAC §2.117)**

Applications will be scored using the following process:

- (1) The peer reviewers will review all complete and eligible grant applications forwarded to them by agency staff and complete a rating form for each. Each reviewer will evaluate the proposal in relation

to the specific requirements of the criteria and will assign a value, depending on the points assigned to each criterion.

- (2) No reviewer who is associated with an applicant or with an application, or who stands to benefit directly from an application, will evaluate that application. Any reviewer who feels unable to evaluate a particular application fairly may choose not to review that application.
- (3) Reviewers will consider and assess the strengths and weaknesses of any proposed project only on the basis of the documents submitted. Considerations of geographical distribution, demographics, type of library, or personality will not influence the assessment of a proposal by the review panel. The panel members must make their own, individual, decisions regarding the applications. The panel may discuss applications. The panel's recommendations will be compiled from the individual assessments, not as the result of a collective decision or vote.
- (4) Reviewers may not discuss proposals with any applicant before the proposals are reviewed. Agency staff is available to provide technical assistance to reviewers. Agency staff will conduct all negotiations and communications with the applicants.
- (5) Reviewers may recommend setting conditions for funding a given application or group of applications (e.g., adjusting the project budget, revising project objectives, modifying the timetable, amending the evaluation methodology, etc.). The recommendation must include a statement of the reasons for setting such conditions. Reviewers who are ineligible to evaluate a given proposal will not participate in the discussion of funding conditions.
- (6) Reviewers will submit their evaluation forms to the agency. In order to be counted, the forms must arrive before the specified due date.

### **Decision Making Process (13 TAC §2.118)**

To be considered eligible for funding by the commission, any application must receive a minimum adjusted mean score of more than 60 percent of the maximum points available. To reduce the impact of scores that are exceedingly high or low, or otherwise outside the range of scores from other reviewers, agency staff will tabulate the panel's work using calculations such as an adjusted mean score.

- (1) Applications will be ranked in priority order by score for consideration by the commission.
- (2) If insufficient funds remain to fully fund the next application, the staff will negotiate a reduced grant with the next ranked applicant.
- (3) If the panel recommends funding an application that, for legal, fiscal, or other reasons, is unacceptable to the staff, a contrary recommendation will be made. The applicant will be informed of this situation prior to presentation to the commission and may negotiate a revision to the application. A positive recommendation to the commission will be contingent upon successfully completing these negotiations prior to the commission meeting.
- (4) If the panel is unable to produce a set of recommendations for funding, the agency staff will use the same evaluation procedures to develop recommendations to the commission.

### **Multiple Applications (13 TAC §2.119)**

Applicants for competitive grants may submit more than one grant application in the same grant cycle only if:

- (1) the applications are for different projects in different grant programs and the applications are not the same, or nearly the same; or
- (2) the grant program has specified separate categories for application and the proposals submitted are not the same, or nearly the same, project.

## Scoring Rubric

Project Scoring Total in Eight Areas: 100 points		
<p>Relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the goals and purpose of the Special Projects grant program will be considered in the scoring of all criteria. Members of the LSTA Grant Review Panel may score each criterion as follows:</p> <p><b>0-1 points:</b> Project does not meet the goals and purposes of the Special Projects grant program.  <b>2-3 points:</b> Project partially meets the goals and purposes of the Special Projects grant program.  <b>4-5 points:</b> Project is a clear fit for the goals and purposes of the Special Projects grant program.</p>		
Abstract		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview and summary of project</li> <li>• Concise (1,000 characters)</li> <li>• Includes: who, what, where, when, why, for whom</li> </ul>		
1. Needs Assessment (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 3; Final score = 15 max)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant should describe why the program is needed, the program goals and audience.</li> <li>• They should describe the greater community to be served and include demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements.</li> <li>• They attach letters of cooperation showing commitment to the project from agencies to be involved.</li> </ul>		
0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides no evidence of need for program.</li> <li>• Program goals and audience are not defined.</li> <li>• Does not describe needs assessment process and/or how need was determined (i.e., no description of community served, demographic statistics, library records or evidence or surveys).</li> <li>• If partners are part of the Project, no letters of support are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides partial/some evidence of need for program.</li> <li>• Program goals and audience are defined but show little to no connection to description of need.</li> <li>• Needs assessment process seems vague and incompletely describes how stated need was determined.</li> <li>• If partners are part of the Project, letters of support are provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides clear and convincing evidence of need for program and why they are best suited to meet this need.</li> <li>• Program goals and audience are clearly connected to description of need.</li> <li>• Clearly describes needs assessment process including how stated need was determined (e.g., statistics, records, surveys).</li> <li>• If partners are part of the Project, letters of support are provided that clearly define roles and responsibilities of partnering agencies.</li> </ul>

**2. Program Design (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 4; Final score = 20 max)**

- Applicant thoroughly describes the services, programs, and activities; describe the location where they will be offered.
- Explain how these services will attract shared library users.
- Collaborative projects have priority and inclusion of relevant community organizations is encouraged.

0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services, programs and activities lack definition and are unclear. Project appears to lack direction and planning and does not relate to described needs.</li> <li>• Does not describe location(s) where project will be offered or is vague.</li> <li>• Does not describe how project services will attract library users.</li> <li>• Issue of collaboration not addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services, programs and activities are defined. Project has direction and some relationship to described needs.</li> <li>• Location where services will be offered is described but does not clearly relate to project activities and described needs.</li> <li>• Describes how project services will attract library users.</li> <li>• Issue of collaboration addressed, even if not a collaborative project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services, programs and activities are clearly defined, including timelines and resources required. Project shows evidence of clear direction and planning and strong relationship to described needs.</li> <li>• Location where services will be offered is described and clearly relates to project activities and described needs.</li> <li>• Clearly describes how project services will attract library users and ties to project activities and described needs.</li> <li>• Collaborative project; collaboration clearly addressed and described in full.</li> </ul>

**3. Project Impact (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 3; Final score = 15 max)**

- Applicant describes the impact their project will have on library services and users locally as well as regionally or statewide.
- This may include how the proposed project is a model project that would benefit other regions of the state.

0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not address any of the impacts the project may have on library services and library users.</li> </ul> <p>Does not address larger issues that the project may address.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes impact of the project but doesn't show an association with the library services and library users.</li> <li>• Addresses larger issues but does not tie these issues to local project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes both impact and measurable benefits the project will have on library services and library users.</li> <li>• Addresses larger issues clearly and ties them to local project.</li> </ul>

<b>4. Personnel (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 1; Final score = 5 max)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant identifies who will administer the funds and which positions will provide the services.</li> <li>• Applicant lists how much time will be spent in each position on assigned duties.</li> <li>• Applicant lists how the qualifications of each person relate to their job duties. Full job descriptions are required for new hires. Provide verification that facilities will be available, equipment and materials delivered.</li> </ul>		
0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not identify fiscal agent and which positions will provide services.</li> <li>• No description of time spent in each position. on assigned duties</li> <li>• No description of qualifications of key personnel.</li> <li>• No job descriptions for new hires.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal agent identified without explanation and positions briefly described.</li> <li>• Time spent on project by each staff member briefly identified.</li> <li>• Some description of qualifications of key personnel.</li> <li>• Partial or seemingly incomplete job descriptions available for new hires.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal agent identified with full explanation and positions that will provide the services fully described.</li> <li>• Time spent on project by each staff member identified and justified.</li> <li>• Describes qualifications of key personnel in detail, including experience with similar projects, and how each will contribute to the project's success.</li> <li>• Full job descriptions provided for new hires.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Timetable (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 1; Final score = 5 max)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants presents a timetable for project activities within the fiscal year (i.e., a list of actions with a date by which they will be accomplished).</li> <li>• Applicant provides verification that facilities will be available, equipment and materials delivered.</li> <li>• Applicants explain how staff will be hired and trained in time to carry out the services as planned.</li> </ul>		
0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timetable is missing or incomplete (i.e., does not include a list of actions with specific target dates for completion).</li> <li>• No verification regarding facilities, equipment and/or materials.</li> <li>• No explanation of hiring or training of staff to carry out project in project period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timetable exists but is not clearly relevant to achieving the project goals.</li> <li>• Timetable seems unachievable within the project period.</li> <li>• Some verification regarding facilities, equipment and/or materials, but not clearly related to project.</li> <li>• Brief or incomplete explanation of hiring or training of staff to carry out project in project period.</li> <li>• No time given for staff to be hired, if applicable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timetable includes a list of actions with specific target dates and is clearly relevant to achieving the established objectives.</li> <li>• Timetable seems achievable within the project period.</li> <li>• Use of facilities, equipment and/or materials fully explained and relevant to project and project goals.</li> <li>• Full explanation of hiring or training of staff that will allow project to be carried out during the project period.</li> <li>• Realistic timeline given for hiring of new staff, if applicable.</li> </ul>

**6. Evaluation (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 2; Final score = 10 max)**

- Applicants set achievable, measurable outcomes, and present a reasonable method to collect data.
- Applicants present a method to count users of the services as well as measure the effectiveness of the services using IMLS tools and LBB measures.

**Note:** Some projects will not lend themselves to outcomes-based evaluation (OBE). TSLAC strongly encourages the use of OBE, we do not require it for proposals, and points should not be deducted from strong evaluation plans that use outputs instead of outcomes when it is reasonable not to employ OBE.

0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not include either project outputs or outcomes.</li> <li>• No method to collect data provided.</li> <li>• No method to count users of services or measure effectiveness of services.</li> <li>• Will not determine success of the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides project outputs and/or outcomes but do not clearly relate to project.</li> <li>• Method to collect data provided.</li> <li>• Method to count users of services provided, but not to measure effectiveness of services.</li> <li>• Provides some indication of the success of the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly describes appropriate project outputs and/or outcomes.</li> <li>• Method to collect data is provided that clearly relates to project services and documented need.</li> <li>• Method to count users of services and measure effectiveness of services provided.</li> <li>• Will effectively determine success of the project and its impact.</li> <li>• Project evaluation can be used as model for other similar projects.</li> <li>• Project evaluation incorporates “best practices” from other similar projects.</li> </ul>

**7. Budget (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 4; Final score = 20 max)**

- Applicants provide a complete budget for the proposed project.
- Applicant fully justifies the budget by describing how budgeted items will contribute to the project and identifies a source for the stated costs (e.g., city pay classification for staff, catalog or city/county bid list for equipment).
- The costs are reasonable to achieve project objectives.
- If new staff members are to be hired, applicants consider the time for a realistic hiring process to occur.

0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget table is incomplete.</li> <li>• Provides no narrative description (justification), beyond the budget column, of how funds will be spent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget table is complete.</li> <li>• Budget narrative description exists but does not clearly relate to the project and sources for costs are not stated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget table is complete and clearly describes how the dollars will be used for the project.</li> <li>• Clearly identifies source of stated costs and justification</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items listed in the budget description do not match those in the budget form.</li> <li>• Costs do not seem reasonable and description is unclear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items listed in the budget description match those in the budget form.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Sustainability (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 2; Final score = 10 max)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants describe the resources that will be used to support and sustain the services developed through the grant in the future.</li> <li>• A written commitment of future support from governing bodies is desirable, but not required.</li> </ul>		
0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of resources used to support and sustain the project after grant completion is vague and unspecific.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some evidence of future support and sustainability described.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear evidence of sustainability described.</li> <li>• A written commitment of future support from governing bodies is provided, if applicable.</li> </ul>
<b>9. Extra Points – Up to 10 Extra Points</b>		
5 points: Awarded if applicant library serves a community with a population of 30,000 or less.		
5 points: Awarded if applicant library has not received a TSLAC grant in the past 5 years.		

## F. Award Administration Information

### Notice of Award

Applicants will be notified of the grant review panel’s recommendations via e-mail. The notification will include the applicant rankings, panel recommendation, panel comments and scores relevant to respective applications, and protest procedures, which are also included in this notice.

The panel recommendations will be submitted to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission at its August meeting for consideration and approval. Once the awards have been approved, successful applicants will receive instructions on how to proceed and mandatory training required for all TSLAC competitive grant recipients.

### Protest Procedure — Texas State Library and Archives Commission, 13 TAC §2.55

- (a) An aggrieved person who is not satisfied with a decision, procedure, or service received from the staff of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission or who is an actual or prospective bidder, grantee, or contractor aggrieved in connection with a solicitation, evaluation, or award may file a protest with the Director and Librarian in accordance with this rule.
- (b) A protest must be submitted to the Director and Librarian within 21 days after the person knows or should have known of the matter which is protested. The Director and Librarian has the discretion to allow a protest filed after 21 days if the protestant shows good cause for the late filing or if the protest raises an issue significant to the general policies and procedures of the commission.

- (c) The protestant shall mail or deliver a copy of the protest to all interested persons. The Director and Librarian will furnish a list of interested persons to a protestant. For protests of a competitive selection (bid, contract, or grant), interested persons shall include all persons who have submitted a bid, proposal, or application.
- (d) A protest must be in writing and identified as a protest under this section, and contain the following:
  - (1) A description of the protestant's interest in the matter
  - (2) The issue(s) to be resolved and remedy(s) requested
  - (3) The protestant's argument supporting the protest, including a statement of relevant facts and applicable law, specifying the statutes, rules, or other legal authority alleged to have been violated
  - (4) The protestant's affirmation that facts set forth in the protest are true
  - (5) A certification that a copy of the protest has been mailed or delivered to all interested persons
- (e) Upon receipt of a protest conforming to the requirements of this section, the commission shall not proceed with the solicitation, award, or contract until the protest is resolved, unless the Director and Librarian makes a written determination that delay would harm the substantial interests of the state.
- (f) The Director and Librarian has the authority to decide, settle, or resolve the protest and will make a written determination. The Director and Librarian may solicit written responses to the protest from other parties. The Director and Librarian shall inform the protesting party and other interested parties by letter of his determination, and how to appeal the determination to the commission.
- (g) An interested party may appeal the determination of the Director and Librarian. An appeal must be in writing and conform to paragraphs (1) - (3) of this subsection:
  - (1) The appeal must be received in the office of the Director and Librarian no later than 15 days after the date the determination is mailed to interested parties;
  - (2) A copy of the appeal must be mailed or delivered by the appealing party to all interested parties and contain a certification of mailing or delivery;
  - (3) The appealing party must state whether or not an opportunity is requested to make an oral presentation to the commission in open meeting.
- (h) The Director and Librarian shall refer the matter to the commission for their consideration at an open meeting.
- (i) The chair of the commission has the discretion to allow an appeal filed more than 15 days after the Director and Librarian's determination if the appealing party shows good cause for the late filing or if the appeal raises an issue significant to the general policies or procedures of the commission.
- (j) An interested party may file a response to an appeal of the determination of the Director and Librarian no later than seven days after the appeal is mailed or delivered.
- (k) Copies of the appeal and responses of interested parties, if any, shall be mailed to the commission by the Director and Librarian.
- (l) The chair of the commission has the discretion to decide whether or not a request for oral presentations will be granted and will set the order and amount of time for oral presentations that are allowed. The chair also has the discretion to decide whether presentations and written documents presented by Commission staff and interested parties will be allowed.
- (m) The commission will determine properly filed appeals and make its decision in open meeting. The commission shall vote to uphold or reverse the decision of the Director and Librarian. Failing a majority vote of a quorum of the commission, the Director and Librarian's decision is upheld. The



commission's decision is final and not subject to judicial review under the statutes governing the commission.

- (n) A decision issued either by the commission in open meeting or in writing by the Director and Librarian shall be the final administrative action of the commission.
- (o) Documentation concerning a protest of a competitive selection is part of the commission's records series for that selection and is retained in accordance with the commission's approved records retention schedule.

## Policy Requirements

TSLAC competitive grant recipients are subject to the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS) (<https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/docs/grant-management-reader.pdf>) and federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (also known as the Uniform Guidance) (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200>).

## Reporting

Grantees must submit financial and performance reports at scheduled intervals throughout the reporting period as will be outlined in the grant contract. Reports will be submitted electronically through TSLAC's Grant Management System (GMS).

## G. Contacts

TSLAC staff members are available during regular business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m., Central) to assist with competitive grants.

Bethany Wilson, Grants Administrator  
Phone: 512-463-5527  
Fax: 512-936-2306  
E-mail: [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov)

Dominic Gonzales, Grants Coordinator  
Phone: 512-463-5581  
Fax: 512-936-2306  
E-mail: [grants@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tsl.texas.gov)