

## Benefits of Accreditation

Libraries that are accredited are eligible for certain services from the Texas State Library.

Accredited libraries can participate in the **TexShare databases** consortium. The TexShare databases are electronic database resources that are available to over 700 public, academic, and libraries of clinical medicine throughout the state at a significant cost savings. There are 68 databases currently available. Accredited libraries pay a formula-based participation fee to gain access for their patrons. The databases are available 24 hours a day in the homes or offices of registered patrons of participating Texas libraries. They provide full-text articles from journals, newspapers, magazines, and many other sources. Entire books can be read online. Database topics include language learning for 80 languages, homework help for students, health information, business information, biography and genealogy, as well as literature and archival information. Examples are the Job & Career Accelerator, Learning Express, Heritage Quest, Hobbies & Crafts, Home Improvement, Small Engine Repair, the American West, American Indian Histories and Culture, and Consumer Health Source. The cost savings is very large for a community having these resources through TexShare as opposed to paying for them as an individual library. See your TexShare participation report for more details.

The **TexShare card** program is a reciprocal borrowing program. It is designed to allow the registered users of participating institutions, which could be public or academic, directly borrow materials from other participating institutions.

Accredited libraries are also eligible to participate in the statewide **Inter-Library Loan program (ILL)**. It allows other libraries' patrons to request materials from your collection and allows your library patrons to request materials from participating libraries. The Navigator ILL program also provides a reimbursement to libraries for each loan through Navigator.

In both the ILL and card program, libraries set policies and procedures regarding lending and borrowing.

Accredited libraries are eligible to apply for **E-rate**. To be eligible for E-rate discounts, a library applicant must meet the statutory definition of library or library consortium found in the 1996 Library Services and Technology Act (Pub. L. 104-208) (LSTA) and must be eligible for assistance from a state library administrative agency under that Act. For purposes of LSTA, the State Library has discretion with regard to the eligibility of applicants. In Texas, a library must be accredited.

Accredited libraries can apply for any of the State Library's **competitive grants**. These are generally programmatic in nature and can vary from year-to-year.

Finally, the State Library occasionally offers additional programs or project opportunities for accredited public libraries. Currently, the State Library is offering libraries an opportunity to participate in the Family Place Project. The Project helps public libraries address early learning with an aim of ensuring that all children enter school ready and able to learn.

There are also benefits outside of what the State Library offers. For some libraries, it's a quality of life marker. It is also a way to be connected to other libraries in the state. We do hear from libraries that their communities consider an accredited library to be a way to market their community.

