



LIBRARY SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY ACT FIVE-YEAR PLAN

2023 - 2027



*North Dakota
State Library*



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LIBRARY SERVICES &
TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)
FIVE-YEAR PLAN, 2023-2027

Submitted: June 2022

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INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s libraries and museums. IMLS administers the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), which provides financial assistance to develop library services throughout the United States.

The North Dakota State Library Five-Year Plan establishes goals and priorities for libraries in North Dakota that are consistent with the LSTA’s purposes and priorities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The North Dakota State Library is a division of the Department of Public Instruction. It is designated as the State Library Administrative Agency of North Dakota for the receipt of federal LSTA funds.

The North Dakota State Library has been serving the people of North Dakota and their state government since 1907. While the State Library today serves many constituencies, its primary constituents are libraries and educators, state government agencies, and the general public.



Libraries across North Dakota greatly depend on the North Dakota State Library for assistance in processing interlibrary loans, cataloging, reference services, on-site training, grants, and promotional support. The State Library has developed a close partnership with North Dakota’s libraries and educators by connecting them to information and providing them with the critical tools they need to serve their patrons.

State government agencies rely on the North Dakota State Library for a range of vital services, chief among them: providing research assistance, training, cataloging services of which the State Library currently catalogs for 11 state agencies, and administering the State Document Depository Program, which preserves and distributes North Dakota state agency publications.

The North Dakota State Library offers a unique benefit to the residents of our state by providing professional research services, access to online library resources, interlibrary loan, talking books for the visually impaired, and checking out materials to the general public.

The North Dakota State Library’s primary constituents are

- all public, school, academic, and special libraries;
- all state agencies; and
- the residents of the state of North Dakota.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE LIBRARY'S MISSION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The mission and guiding principles of the North Dakota State Library, as identified in the agency's 2021-2024 Strategic Plan are as follows...

- **Mission:** Providing pathways to information and innovation for North Dakota's libraries, state government, and residents.
- **Guiding Principles:** As North Dakota's State Library, we strive to:
 - Provide leadership to the library community
 - Enhance the value to and assistance with credible information sources
 - Deliver access to and assistance with credible information sources
 - Enrich the lives of the people we serve
 - Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for all

This mission and these guiding principles drive the North Dakota State Library's work and shape the goals and priorities outlined in this Five-Year Plan.

FEDERAL LSTA PURPOSES

- 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 for the purposes of improving the quality of 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 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 by the federal government) 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.
- 8) Carry out other activities consistent with the purposes set forth in federal law.

EVALUATION OF CURRENT LSTA PLAN & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Process

The North Dakota State Library commissioned and conducted an evaluation of the current LSTA plan and a needs assessment. The agency hired Jason Matthews of JM Strategies LLC to facilitate the process. JM Strategies provided the same services back in the 2017 process. The North Dakota State Library and JM Strategies developed a research approach, which was implemented between September and December 2021. The research approach involved collecting data from librarians through an online benchmark survey and four focus group sessions.

The online benchmark survey was distributed to all librarians in September, of which 126 librarians submitted responses to the survey's ten questions. The collected information was analyzed for themes and used to provide a foundation for four focus group sessions. The first focus group was held at the annual conference of the North Dakota Library Association (NDLA) on October 7, 2021, which was open to all NDLA attendees. The other three focus group sessions were held via Zoom with sessions designated for public librarians, school librarians, and librarians working in academic, special, and tribal libraries.

Evaluation Findings

Upon completion of the research phase, the collected information was organized, interpreted, and analyzed by the State Librarian and JM Strategies. The process found the North Dakota State Library to have met 18 of its 24 goals and objectives – a 75 percent success rate.

The six other goals, objectives, and activities were only partially met due, in large part, to one or more of the following factors as identified in the evaluation process: (1) the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, (2) state library staffing challenges, (3) failure to implement recommendations, and (4) no response to outreach and discussions conducted by the North Dakota State Library.

Looking to ongoing and future needs, pluralities and sometimes majorities of librarians surveyed stated that most of the current LSTA-funded programs needed little to no changes to meet their needs. However, in the case of continuing education, 66 percent stated a desire to see some degree of change.

Feedback from the focus groups further identified areas of desired change including:

- More information on statewide cataloging for interlibrary loans,
- Guidance on library staffing and personnel assistance issues,
- Working around school librarian hours,
- Providing stronger integration and access of information resources, and
- Providing marketing resources and assistance.

2023-2027 Goals

Based on the evaluation and feedback collected from the research process, the North Dakota State Library has set the following three goals for this LSTA plan:

- 1) Information Access
- 2) Institutional Capacity and Support
- 3) Lifelong Learning

These goals will provide the services and programs most needed and requested by the agency's primary constituents.

GOALS

Goal 1: Information Access

Need: North Dakota librarians would like to see stronger integration and access of resources.

The North Dakota State Library enhances access to information by providing libraries, residents, government agencies, and other key partners with access to materials, electronic resources, and professional staff to meet the informational needs of all North Dakotans.

LSTA Priorities:

- **LSTA Priority 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.
- **LSTA Priority 2:** Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities for the purposes of improving the quality of an access to library and information services.
- **LSTA Priority 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.
- **LSTA Priority 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 by the federal government) applicable to a family of the size involved.
- **LSTA Priority 7:** Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international collaborations, and networks.

Timeline: Unless otherwise stated, the following programs will take place over the course of this plan.

IMLS Focal Area: Information Access

The intention of improving the users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources will be covered by the following projects:

- 1.1 **Digital Information Services:** Maintain and expand statewide online library resources and promote their availability to libraries and residents across the state.
- 1.2 **Talking Book Services:** Provide and expand access to talking books for residents who are blind, visually impaired, or print disabled.
- 1.3 **Digitization Initiatives:** Facilitate discussion on digitization and provide guidance on standards, technologies, and best practices.
- 1.4 **Resource Sharing Services:** Provide and further facilitate statewide interlibrary loan of materials.

- 1.5 **Increasing Access Initiatives:** Provide greater access to a diverse collection that meets the needs of the unserved and underserved communities across the state.
- 1.6 **Cooperation Initiatives:** Continue existing partnerships and develop new partnerships that increase access to the broadest array of information resources.

The intention of improving the users' ability to discover information resources will be covered by the following projects:

- 1.7 **Reference Services:** Offer professional reference services to library staff, state government agencies, local governments, and North Dakotans.

Goal 2: Institutional Capacity and Support

Need: Two-thirds of North Dakota librarians surveyed would like to see some changes made in continuing education.

The North Dakota State Library provides services and resources towards advancing and improving the institutional capacity of the state's library community to meet the demands of the public and support the continued professional development and training of the state's library workforce.

- **LSTA Priority 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 information services, and (B) enhance efforts to recruit future professionals to the field of library and information services.

Timeline: Unless otherwise stated, the following programs will take place over the course of this plan.

IMLS Focal Area: Institutional Capacity

The intention of improving the library workforce will be covered by the following projects:

- 2.1 **Library Development Services:** Provide continued library development programming and resources to assist libraries in meeting the needs of their community.
- 2.2 **Professional Development Services:** Provide and enhance ongoing continuing education and professional development opportunities to librarians and library staff across North Dakota.
- 2.3 **Professional Development Funding:** Provide MLIS grants and professional development grants to librarians and library science students.

The intention of improving the library's physical and technology infrastructure will be covered by the following projects:

- 2.4 **Technology Infrastructure Initiatives:** Offer IT support to libraries to ensure North Dakota libraries are equipped to meet the informational, educational, and service needs of their users.
- 2.5 **Statewide Cataloging Services:** Provide cataloging services to libraries that lack the resources to perform onsite cataloging.
- 2.6 **Outreach Initiatives:** Develop relationships with North Dakota's tribal communities and libraries.

The intention of improving the library operations will be covered by the following projects:

- 2.7 **Outreach Support:** Deliver support around LSTA-funded programs to libraries through specialized materials, trainings, and related resources that assist them in outreach to their communities.
- 2.8 **Summer Reading Support Services:** Provide resources to support the promotion and management of the annual summer reading program and raise library awareness.

Goal 3: Lifelong Learning

Need: Provide information resources and assistance.

The North Dakota State Library strives to enrich the lives of North Dakotans by offering services and programs that support and promote continued lifelong learning.

- **LSTA Priority 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.
- **LSTA Priority 2:** Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities for the purposes of improving the quality of an access to library and information services.
- **LSTA Priority 4:** Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.
- **LSTA Priority 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.
- **LSTA Priority 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 by the federal government) applicable to a family of the size involved.
- **LSTA Priority 7:** Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international collaborations, and networks.

Timeline: Unless otherwise stated, the following programs will take place over the course of this plan.

IMLS Focal Area: Lifelong Learning

The intention of improving users' formal education will be covered by the following projects:

- 3.1 **Digital Information Services:** Provide current and relevant online library resources and promote their availability via the North Dakota State Library newsletter, website, and social media.
- 3.2 **Literacy Initiatives:** Explore and facilitate statewide literacy programs.
- 3.3 **Cooperation Initiatives:** Explore and enhance partnerships with state and local governments and other groups that advance libraries' ability to aid in statewide and community-specific workforce development.

The intention of improving users' general knowledge and skills will be covered by the following projects:

- 3.4 **Outreach Initiatives:** Support outreach activities to the public through collaboration with all types of libraries, workshops, events, programs, and marketing of available services and resources.
- 3.5 **Resource Support:** Actively promote and provide library and information materials to North Dakota libraries, state agencies, and North Dakotans.
- 3.6 **Resource Sharing Services:** Develop, promote, and facilitate resource sharing for North Dakota libraries.
- 3.7 **Cooperation Initiatives:** Develop collaborative and strategic partnerships with relevant organizations to maximize service potential and extend outreach to North Dakotans.

COORDINATION EFFORTS

The North Dakota State Library will work with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council, the North Dakota University System, the North Dakota Legislative Council, other state agencies, and the North Dakota Library Association on programs and initiatives. In accordance with this Plan and our agency's Strategic Plan, innovative programs and new partnerships may be developed to effectively achieve all goals.

EVALUATION PLAN

The North Dakota State Library will track implementation of this Plan on an annual basis. The LSTA Coordinator will have primary responsibility for managing, monitoring, and tracking the implementation of this Plan.

Statewide resource sharing, reference services, and services provided to persons with disabilities will be evaluated using data gathered in annual statistical reports, user surveys measuring customer satisfaction, focus groups, site visits, and informal feedback from library patrons. Customer surveys, evaluations, focus group sessions, and interviews will be used to evaluate programs.

The results of all evaluations will be filed for future use in the final assessment of this Plan and for consultation in the development of the next Five-Year Plan.

CONSTITUENT INPUT

Ongoing input will be sought through evaluations to determine the library, informational, and educational needs of North Dakota's libraries, librarians, state officials, students, and residents.

The North Dakota Library Coordinating Council will serve as the advisory council to the LSTA program and will continue to update Library Vision, the long-range plan for North Dakota's libraries. The North Dakota State Library, the North Dakota Library Association, and the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council will work cooperatively to provide training programs, support the development of libraries, proactively address issues facing the library community, plan for the future of North Dakota's libraries, and advocate on behalf of libraries, librarians, and patrons.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

Upon approval, the 2023-2027 LSTA Five-Year Plan for North Dakota will be made available on the State Library's website, where it will be posted for the entire five-year period. The public may provide comments at any time by contacting the State Librarian. Individuals and institutions may request a printed copy of the plan. At least once a year, the North Dakota State Library will include announcements in its newsletter to report on this plan's goals, programs, outcomes, and successes. Marketing materials, electronic communications, social media, related documents and information, and formal and informal presentations will be used to communicate general and specialized LSTA information to both the library community and the general public.

MONITORING

Internal quarterly reviews of the Five-Year Plan will be conducted with an annual report filed with IMLS as required. Statewide services will be evaluated using processes and tools to measure customer satisfaction on a yearly basis. The North Dakota State Library and the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council will be responsible for the monitoring and oversight of this plan.

ASSURANCES

Please see attached documents, pages 16-19.