

LSTA GRANTS TO STATES PROFILE: PENNSYLVANIA

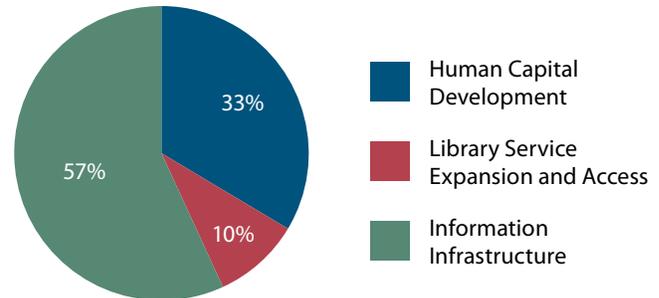
Pennsylvania

This fact sheet provides information about the State Library Administrative Agency, LSTA Grants to States programs by category, expenditures by fiscal year (2003–2006), interview highlights with the chief officer, and the program goals for 2008–2012.

State Library Administrative Agency Information

Agency name	Office of Commonwealth Libraries
Agency governance	Under the Department of Education
Population served in 2006	12,388,055
FY 2006 total expenditures	\$88,545,000
Grants to States allotment total for FY 2003–2006	\$24,135,256
Chief Officer	Mary Clare Zales, Deputy Secretary of Education & Commissioner for Libraries
Web site	www.statelibrary.state.pa.us

Projects by Strategy, FY 2003–2006



Interview Highlights with the Chief Officer, Mary Clare Zales

Greatest Program Impact in the Last Five Years:

“LSTA is absolutely indispensable! It’s our only source for technological innovation and creativity. We used LSTA as seed funding to pilot our reciprocal borrowing and our statewide databases (POWER Library). The Department of Education, our parent agency, recognized the worth and contribution of these programs and both are now funded by line items in the state budget. The legislature also supports these programs.

“Pennsylvania conducted a return on investment study using LSTA funds showing a \$5 return for every \$1 invested in libraries. We are also investing in our school libraries. Most recently we initiated a One Book, Every Young Child program that won the John Cotton Dana Award in 2007. The One Book, Every Young Child program provides a preliteracy experience to 500,000+ children. LSTA also makes possible an annual program to identify best practices in children’s services.”

Program Data by Fiscal Year, FY 2003–2006

Pennsylvania	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	All Years
Total allotment	\$5,917,510	\$6,057,207	\$6,085,045	\$6,075,494	\$24,135,256
Number of projects reported	89	96	103	111	399
Largest project amount	\$883,261	\$905,006	\$855,379	\$1,050,338	
Median project amount	\$44,057	\$45,084	\$35,000	\$30,000	

Delivery of Library Services:

“Pennsylvania’s public library structure supports both district library centers *and* county library systems. The structure has a positive impact in the flow of information and resources. However, with the more recent development of county-level systems, the advances in technology and changes in how the public uses libraries, where both district library centers and counties serve the same populations the delivery of service can create challenges. In response, we are working with a pilot district library center/county system to identify optional structures. Pennsylvania’s structure is established in our Library Code and reinforced in the state aid distribution formula. Because changing statutes can take several years, we are trying to work regionally voluntarily to make more immediate improvements.”

Challenges in the Coming Five Years:

“Funding is probably the common denominator of challenges most states face. In Pennsylvania there is no state or local mandate to fund libraries as there are in other states, so funding issues receive the greatest amount of our attention. Beyond funding I would identify our challenges as:

1. Attracting strong trustees and providing continuing education specifically for them.
2. Professional librarian certification prepares good librarians but does not do an adequate job of preparing good librarians to become good library directors and leaders. In response, Pennsylvania is developing a post-MLS certification with a focus on administration, management, and leadership.
3. Critical need for infrastructure improvements. Like many states, the majority of our libraries are located in buildings ill suited to maximize technology and allow easy, safe access to the building and the materials and programs inside. Our libraries need to look welcoming and vibrant.
4. Preservation: Pennsylvania is an historic state with publications and newspapers that trace the beginning of printing in the colonies and collections that influ-

enced the formation of our nation. The State Library of Pennsylvania built a state-of-the-art preservation environment to safeguard these and other rare materials. We recognize there are valuable materials in local libraries, historic societies and municipal buildings, and even residences that can benefit from the preservation standards now in place at the State Library of Pennsylvania. We as a Commonwealth must make the care of and preservation of these materials a priority in the near future before these precious materials are lost.”

Program Goals for 2008–2012

- Expand access to information resources for all Pennsylvania residents through infrastructure support and support for activities that enhance resource sharing.
- Pennsylvania libraries will expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources through improved resources and innovative programming.

Exemplary Project: South Park Township Library

Project title	Consumer Education Initiative
Library	South Park Township Library
LSTA Funds Expended FY06	\$20,500
Total Cost FY06	\$20,500
Program Category	Library Service Expansion and Access, Information Infrastructure

The South Park Township Public Library developed a consumer education initiative consisting of a nonfiction section, improved access to electronic and print consumer education material, and programming that introduced the public to different aspects of consumer awareness. The library purchased current peer-reviewed books, audiovisual materials, exercise kits, and CD-ROMS in following subject categories: consumer health; small business; consumer finance; consumer law; consumer awareness; and real estate.