

South Carolina State Library

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)

Five Year Plan Evaluation FY 2008-2012

Prepared by

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The Strom Thurmond Institute of Government and Public Affairs (STI) at Clemson University was selected by the South Carolina State Library (SCSL) to serve as the outside evaluator for its Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Five Year Plan for FY 2008-2012. For more information about the Institute or the authors, see STI's website at <http://sti.clemson.edu/>. To contact the authors directly, email addresses are ldickes@clemson.edu and ellen@sti.clemson.edu.

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EVALUATION SUMMARY

The Strom Thurmond Institute (STI) at Clemson University is pleased to present the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with an evaluation of the South Carolina State Library's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan for FY 2008-2012. The South Carolina State Library (State Library) is the IMLS State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) for LSTA funds. Using IMLS evaluation guidelines, STI developed an evaluation plan to provide IMLS with:

- A *retrospective assessment* of projects and activities implemented by the State Library and county public libraries over the FY 2008-2012 LSTA funding period.
- A *process assessment* of State Library processes and procedures in the use and implementation of LSTA funds.
- A *prospective assessment* highlighting lessons learned over the past LSTA funding cycle and informing LSTA planning and programming decisions for South Carolina libraries over the next five years.

EVALUATION APPROACH

One of the primary objectives of this evaluation was to document the State Library's progress in achieving IMLS's Congressional priorities (Federal Purposes) for LSTA funding (below). This evaluation provides evidence of substantial progress and identifies issues and ideas for the State Library to consider in future LSTA planning efforts. To document this information, STI's evaluation process:

- Collected original data from the State Library and public libraries concerning the state's priorities in its implementation of LSTA funds during the FY 2008-2012 LSTA funding period, including detail on project activities and grant processes;
- Identified the relevant characteristics of programs, projects, and services implemented by the State Library and public libraries;
- Specified an evaluation methodology;
- Selected specific LSTA programs and projects to highlight in the evaluation framework; and
- Identified key indicators and measures of progress towards state and federal priorities.

After review of State Library LSTA project reports, the evaluation team concluded that a mixed methods analysis would provide the most effective approach for this evaluation. STI selected two main evaluation tools: a series of state-wide, project oriented focus groups and a statewide survey of all library staff.

Institute of Museum and Library Services Congressional Priorities

IMLS Federal Purpose #1: Expanding 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;

IMLS Federal Purpose #2: Developing library services that provide all users with access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;

IMLS Federal Purpose #3: Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;

IMLS Federal Purpose #4: Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;

IMLS Federal Purpose #5: Targeting 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; and

IMLS Federal Purpose #6: Targeting 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 in accordance with section 9902(2) of Title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Overall, how well did the State Library meet IMLS Federal Purposes for use of LSTA Funds?

A statewide survey of library staff revealed that most respondents believe all IMLS Congressional priorities have either been met or partially met by State Library use of LSTA funds. Over 50 percent of respondents believed that Federal Purposes #4, #5, and #6 were met, and over 65 percent of respondents believed that Federal Purposes #1, #2, and #3 were met. Only a very small percentage of respondents believed that the federal purposes were unmet. On the other hand, between 14 percent and 28 percent of survey respondents were uncertain as to whether federal purposes were met, depending on the purpose. These gaps can be explained in part by the survey methodology, which surveyed a wide spectrum of library staff, some of whom may not be familiar with the State Library's range of LSTA projects and how these projects align with federal funding priorities. These results indicate room for improvement in when, how, and what the State Library informs public libraries about LSTA-funded programming.

Several areas of statewide programming work to jointly meet all of the IMLS Federal Purposes. Statewide LSTA-funded tuition and conference grants and library networking and exchanges encourage library education and statewide library collaboration in specific programming areas. Almost 50 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with conference attendance grants and over 60 percent of respondents with networking and exchanges operated by the State Library. Fifty-six percent of survey respondents had no opinion about tuition reimbursement and 35 percent had no opinion about conference reimbursement.

How well did the State Library meet IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #2, and #3?

IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #2, and #3 support the expansion of library services to all patrons in a variety of formats, including electronic networks. These purposes were largely met through statewide initiatives implemented by the State Library. One of the key objectives of the State Library over this five year period included implementing an LSTA-funded digitization project making unique and largely unavailable materials in SC library collections available online. This was achieved through the South Carolina Digital Library project and implemented via partnerships with other collaborating agencies. The State Library also implemented the SC LENDS open source shared Integrated Library System. Fifteen counties belong to SC LENDS. Additionally, the State Library continued to maintain the DISCUS portal, which provides access to online resources/databases for academic and public libraries and the general public. Finally, the State Library and public libraries throughout the state used LSTA funds to build electronic collections of downloadable materials.

Responses from the statewide survey of library staff reveal a high satisfaction rate with these statewide projects. Over 80 percent of respondents were either very or extremely satisfied with DISCUS online resources, over 65 percent felt the same about workforce development services, and over 55 percent with collection development. Focus group evidence supports survey results. Focus groups revealed a high level of public library staff and patron interest in and support for technology projects that support these federal purposes. LSTA-funded projects popular with public library staff and patrons include e-readers (Kindles and Nooks), AWE Early Learning Stations, technology devices targeted at teens (Playaways and games), and dedicated computers for job searches and online learning.

How well did the State Library meet IMLS Federal Purpose #4?

IMLS Federal Purpose #4 supports expansion of library partnerships with other organizations. The State Library hired a Workforce Development Coordinator, in part to facilitate partnerships with local employment and workforce development agencies. The statewide survey of library staff revealed that over 65 percent of respondents are very or extremely satisfied with the use of LSTA funds for this position. The South Carolina Digital Library project would not have happened without LSTA-supported partnerships with collaborating agencies. Another important statewide partnership has been the development of a staff position for the South Carolina Literary Arts Partnership. Discussions in all four focus groups underscored the importance of LSTA funding in building partnerships to better serve the needs of library stakeholders.

How well did the State Library meet IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6?

IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6 support the extension of library programs and services to clientele with special needs, which range from disability status, to poverty, low literacy, non-English speaking, and location in a rural part of the state. A number of statewide LSTA programming efforts have been used to support these two federal priorities, including:

- Collection Development Conference (materials for special populations),

- Day by Day family literacy initiative,
- Expansion of AWE Early Literacy Stations
- Focused training for public library staff who assist Spanish-speaking and disabled patrons, including support for staff via networking meetings, trainings and newsletters.
- On-site training (customer service, technology, petting zoos, etc.)
- Summer reading programs
- Talking Books
- Workforce Development Coordinator position and related projects

Survey respondents rated the State Library’s LSTA programs in these areas very successful. Statewide workforce development initiatives were rated very highly by the majority of participants. About 60 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with conferences highlighting collection development and with on-site training for local libraries. Over 70 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with summer reading programs.

Some statewide LSTA projects supporting IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6 were rated with lower satisfaction by survey respondents. For example, only 23 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with services to Spanish speakers, 44 percent with AWE Early Literacy Stations, and 38 percent with grandfamily resource centers. But approximately 50 percent of respondents had no opinion about services to Spanish speakers and grandfamily resource centers. Notably, focus group participants who spoke about AWE Literacy Stations were positive about them—and they also wanted more of them.

Talking Books is the second most popular statewide LSTA programming effort after DISCUS. The State Library spends a substantial portion of its LSTA funding on this program and its management. A recent survey of Talking Books patrons administered by the State Library found that nearly 100 percent of survey respondents had strongly positive things to say about this program. In the future this program could benefit from expanded advertisement and information in places and organizations that serve potential clients of Talking Books.

The focus group results highlighted a number of LSTA subgrants to public libraries that worked to support IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6, among others. Focus groups revealed that many local libraries use LSTA funds to serve specific needs in their counties. For example, a project for Spanish speaking-children and families was developed because library staff knew that this group was both underserved and a growing part of the community. Several early literacy projects were developed to serve the needs of preschool children in areas where a relatively high percentage of children are tested as not ready to start Kindergarten.

How well did the State Library administer its LSTA funds?

Most focus group participants were positive about their experience with the State Library’s LSTA subgrant process and said they would apply for funding again. All participants that commented were very positive about State Library staff support during the LSTA subgrant

process. Only a few respondents voiced substantive criticism about the process, such as grant timing, funding limits, matching requirements and the time needed to develop the application and prepare progress reports. Focus group respondents were nearly universally positive about the State Library's statewide LSTA initiatives. Over 95 percent of survey respondents indicated they would apply for LSTA subgrants again in the future. For those that may not apply, the reasons indicated were related to staffing and matching requirements.

Recommendations for the Future

This evaluation revealed some areas for improvement during the next LSTA funding cycle.

- Public libraries would benefit from the State Library providing model project descriptions for LSTA subgrant applicants, including “best practice” examples from previously funded projects and additional clarification on desired outputs and outcomes. This additional information would particularly benefit libraries with few resources for grant writing.
- The State Library should consider the time involved in county budgeting and funding approval requirements when setting its schedule for grant applications.
- The State Library should identify ways to provide additional support or mentorship to subgrantees implementing new concepts in South Carolina and addressing special needs and diverse audiences.
- The State Library should strongly consider continuing to support diverse technology and the programming needs of children and teens, as well as the growing issues of workforce development and basic computer literacy. As the State Library considers the next five year plan it should consider the diversity of issues facing communities and the libraries that serve them.
- Finally, the survey revealed that many library staff did not understand the scope and breadth of LSTA funding in the state and how those program choices relate to federal priorities. During the next LSTA planning effort, the State Library may want to revisit and revise how it educates its public libraries, library partners and other library stakeholders on the importance of this funding source and its objectives for South Carolina.

This evaluation supports the conclusion that the South Carolina State Library is meeting all or at least partially meeting all six of the IMLS Federal Purposes. The State Library has provided statewide LSTA programming and subgrant awards for programs at public libraries across all six federal priorities. This conclusion is supported by evidence revealed in focus groups, surveys, interviews and written material reviewed during this evaluation. Overall there is little doubt that there are positive outcomes from LSTA-funded programs in South Carolina, but in many areas knowledge of these outcomes is purely anecdotal.

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INTRODUCTION

The Strom Thurmond Institute (STI) at Clemson University is pleased to present the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with an evaluation of the South Carolina State Library's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan for FY 2008-2012. The South Carolina State Library (SCSL) is the IMLS State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) for LSTA funds. Over this five year period, the State Library used LSTA funds to support both statewide programs and a variety of individual projects through LSTA subgrants made to county public libraries around the state. These projects addressed both IMLS Congressional priorities (or "IMLS Federal Purposes") and the state goals adopted by the State Library in support of those priorities. See Appendix 6.

Using the IMLS evaluation guidelines for SLAAs, STI developed an evaluation plan for State Library's LSTA program that would highlight effective past practices, identify work processes and performance measurement important for past and future LSTA decision-making, and develop recommendations for the next five-year LSTA planning cycle. During the evaluation, STI collected original data concerning LSTA statewide and public library projects and State Library administrative processes for LSTA funds. These data identified clear measures of State Library progress towards meeting identified IMLS Federal Purposes and State Library state goals for LSTA funding.

The evaluation team determined that a mixed methods analysis would provide the most effective approach for LSTA project data analysis and evaluation after careful review of State Library LSTA project reports. This approach incorporates a range of methodological tools; including surveys, interviews and focus groups. Combining qualitative research methods with quantitative data analysis provides a richer and more complete picture of the subject. For South Carolina's LSTA evaluation, the team chose two main evaluation instruments—a series of focus groups on LSTA subgrants to county public libraries and a statewide survey of State Library and public library staff.

One of the primary objectives of the evaluation was to measure the State Library's progress in meeting IMLS Federal Purposes for LSTA funding to states. To do this, the evaluation team used the state goals in the LSTA Plan for FY 2008-2012 as a methodological guide for the evaluation (See Appendix 6). South Carolina's goals were written broadly, and one state goal may address more than one IMLS Federal Purpose. It is with these goals in mind that the evaluation team developed questions focused on the types of outputs and outcomes that may be generated in response to the IMLS Federal Purposes for the expenditure of LSTA funds.

FOCUS GROUPS

Four focus groups were held over two days—February 7 and 8, 2012—at State Library offices in Columbia, South Carolina. These focus groups were convened to provide the evaluation team with richer qualitative data and deeper insight into LSTA-funded projects in South Carolina, both county library LSTA subgrants and statewide LSTA projects implemented by the State Library. Focus groups provide an opportunity for researchers to identify program elements that worked, those that did not, and why. Focus groups also yield qualitative stories about program successes and failures. Outcomes are sometimes difficult to capture in program evaluation, but such stories can provide insight.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team selected four focus group priorities after reviewing descriptions of county library LSTA subgrants funded between 2008 and 2012: 1) Library Technology and Connectivity, 2) Children's and Teen's Services, 3) Special Needs and Diverse Audiences, and 4) Workforce Development. These project areas were selected to cover a broad range of IMLS Federal Purposes and state goals. Some projects discussed in each focus group addressed more than one IMLS Federal Purpose and more than one state goal.

Potential focus group participants were identified after consultation with State Library staff for their ability to discuss LSTA-funded projects and services in these areas. In addition, every effort was made to recruit participants with diverse interests and backgrounds to ensure a sample with maximum variation (Creswell, 2007). In small sample sizes such as focus groups, the aggregate results of diverse participation can serve as a proxy for a population sample.

The focus groups were moderated by a facilitator and had between seven and nine participants in each group. To facilitate effective communication, it was important to limit each focus group session to approximately 10 participants (Krueger and Casey, 2000). By drawing on participants from county libraries around the state the evaluation team ensured a diverse regional perspective (Grudens-Schuck, et al., 2004). Each focus group lasted about two hours. Two observers took notes and recorded each session.

Each focus group started with a brief overview by the moderator and introduction of the evaluation team. All focus group participants were asked the same set of questions by the moderator, which they received by email a week earlier. The moderator used an interview guide and asked a series of questions related to LSTA funds and programming, ability to meet programming goals, strengths and weaknesses of specific types of programming, and general processes and procedures related to the application for and use of LSTA funds (Morgan and Krueger, 1998). Participants were also provided with a handout describing differences between project outputs and outcomes. The handout and interview guide are located in Appendices 2 and 3.

Focus group results are summarized below by general area of questioning. This summary is not a verbatim account of the discussions between the moderator and the focus group participants. Instead, it focuses on key elements of the responses as they relate to the participants' experience with LSTA funds and programming. Focus group participants also discussed their experiences with statewide LSTA programming in their libraries.

Discussion Summary: Library Technology and Connectivity Focus Group

The Library Technology and Connectivity focus group had seven participants, all representing libraries that received LSTA-funded subgrants during the five year period. These projects served a broad range of ages, with most focused on rural populations. All projects had a technology component but went far beyond the technology by expanding library patron access to digital products and the internet and/or training patrons to use new technologies for personal and work purposes. Discussion in the focus group also covered statewide funding utilized by the State Library in the period to achieve IMLS Federal Purposes and related state goals. *The use of technology—both in county libraries and statewide—incorporates key elements of IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #2 and #3 regarding the expansion of services via electronic networks and formats.*

Projects Represented

LSTA subgrants in Dorchester and Cherokee County libraries purchased laptops and other equipment to expand and improve computer training classes for adults, especially for unemployed workers searching for new jobs. Projects in the ABBE (Aiken Bamberg Barnwell Edgefield) Regional Library System and the Georgetown County Library introduced patrons to digital media and devices. ABBE subscribed to Overdrive and held classes for patrons on downloading electronic materials and subscribing to electronic newsletters. Georgetown purchased Kindles and held workshops for teens and adults to teach them how to use Kindles and other electronic devices for downloading material from Overdrive and other sources. The Berkeley County Library System used its LSTA subgrant to expand bookmobile services—including internet access—to children and adults in rural and low income areas of the county, where access to electronic resources is poor. This program is reaching out to grandparents raising grandchildren who traditionally have been difficult to attract to the library. The Florence County Library partnered with the Florence County Museum to catalog the entire museum collection and add it to the library's online digital catalog.

IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #2, and #3 were answered primarily through State Library initiatives rather than local library subgrants. The State Library's plan for this five year period included the key output target of supporting an LSTA-funded digitization project making unique and largely unavailable materials in South Carolina library collections available online; this was achieved through the South Carolina Digital Library implemented through partnerships with other agencies. The State Library also implemented the SC LENDS open source shared ILS to which fifteen counties belonged by the end of the five year period. The State Library continued to maintain the DISCUS portal providing access to online resources/databases for academic and public libraries and the general public. Finally, the State Library and public libraries throughout the state utilized LSTA funds to build electronic collections of downloadable materials. The

LSTA subgrants discussed by focus group participants improved access to these digital and online resources.

Technology Choices

Technology choices made for LSTA projects discussed by the Library Technology and Connectivity focus group were driven by one, or a combination of three objectives: 1) upgrade and increase the amount of technology available to library patrons, 2) adopt new technology to expand patron services, and 3) develop partnerships with other organizations to promote the library collection and services.

Programming Choices

Several LSTA projects discussed in the focus group were designed to enhance access to library services for difficult-to-serve populations, which include Hispanics, low-income children and adults, seniors, and persons in rural locations. Technology enhancements made—especially additional computer workstations—also improved library services to unemployed persons seeking jobs during the recent recession. Computer classes provided by LSTA-funded libraries were at times the only free training available to jobseekers with poor computer skills. These patrons need extended time online to search for jobs, fill out applications, and post resumes. Focus group participants indicated satisfaction that their programs addressed identified needs in these populations.

The two programs that funded Kindle purchases, also trained staff and library patrons alike in use of this popular new technology. One program representative stated that expanding library services to include e-readers was a “great project” and that they could circulate “a hundred more Kindles if they had them.” Patron response to library technology and connectivity enhancements was positive overall.

Implementation Challenges

Implementation challenges reported by focus group participants involved technology, staff, and patrons. At the technology level, the only programs that reported a “steep learning curve” were those that included e-readers, such as Kindles and Nooks. These programs introduced both a new device and method of loaning reading material to library staff as well as patrons. One participant reported that library staff has ended up doing a lot of one-on-one patron training with the e-readers, which was not part of the original intent of the grant. Computer replacement and system expansion did not pose any implementation challenge for libraries at the technology level.

Patron-level challenges to program implementation included higher than expected demand for classes and a high level of “no-shows” at classes requiring a reservation. Programs using e-readers and serving job seekers both reported a higher level of demand by patrons for advanced, individualized computer training.

How were program outputs and outcomes measured?

Focus group participants reported that program outputs were generally easy to measure. All of the technology projects purchased computer hardware and/or software, such as laptop computers, wireless routers, e-readers, and subscriptions to Overdrive and resume software. Likewise, the

number of classes offered and patrons attending could easily be counted. Two participants reported that limitations in their subscriptions prevented them from tracking the actual titles accessed by patrons through Overdrive or on circulating e-readers.

Program outcomes were more difficult to quantify, even in the technology area. However, one focus group participant reported seeing library patrons come out of computer training and head straight for the library's public computers, and others returning to use the library at a later time. Another reported that one man said to her "now I can email my children" because of these classes. One participant who used patron surveys administered at the end of training classes felt that the surveys were largely unhelpful because patrons only fill out the bare minimum.

Expected and Unexpected Outcomes

All participants indicated that their programs served the population(s) for which they were originally targeted. Nearly all participants also noted areas in which they had adjusted some program goals mid-program to address additional populations or to address the targeted population in a different way. For example, programs with technology training classes at the main library and at branch libraries had to tailor the material to address the lower-than-average patron computer skill levels observed at branch libraries, particularly those in rural areas. For example, at a rural branch library, a participant reported that one woman who signed up for computer training complained that she "couldn't get the "rat" (*aka* mouse) to work." Focus group participants from programs that used LSTA grants to add e-readers and/or laptops stated that the number of devices acquired could not meet patron demand from the start. Likewise, sufficient staff was not available to meet patron demand for training in some programs.

Future use of LSTA Grant Funds

Participants in the Library Technology and Connectivity focus group were universally positive about their experience with the LSTA grant process, including the application process and support from State Library staff. Several participants stressed the importance of LSTA grants to their libraries, especially for equipment, which other sources of library funding do not pay for. One participant commented that when libraries need a major technology upgrade or have a special need, "LSTA fills the gap." Another participant stated that her library will apply for anything with "technology and gadgets," because "patrons demand this." One participant suggested that State Library staff could provide examples of smaller LSTA projects to help guide the development of new projects in small counties with limited staff resources.

Discussion Summary: Special Needs and Diverse Audiences Focus Group

LSTA subgrants were represented by four participants in the Special Needs and Diverse Audiences focus group. Three additional participants had no LSTA grants in this area but shared insights on similar projects. Participants also shared insights on LSTA-funded statewide projects implemented by the State Library. *This service area addressed IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6.*

Projects Represented

The LSTA subgrants discussed in this focus group served clearly identified needs of specific populations: children, teens, adults, seniors, and non-English speakers. For example, the Laurens County Library addressed the needs of adult patrons who used the library computers to take online courses. Quiet workspaces with computers were designated as online learning centers at the main library and branch library. Priority was given to patrons taking library-proctored online tests or performing specific coursework. The Berkeley County Library partnered with the Berkeley County Historical Society on an LSTA-funded oral history project. The two organizations worked together to interview older community members and to scan and inventory memorabilia and documents of historical significance. The library will provide access to this material for future scholars. One project at the Beaufort County Library expanded access to electronic material for teens (Playaway titles) and seniors (large print and electronic materials) and another is reaching out to teens through seniors to encourage reading and discussion of current issues at the library. Finally, the Oconee County Library is reaching out to Hispanic children and adults through the purchase of Spanish language materials, targeted library programs, and bilingual library staff services.

Special needs of particular populations in South Carolina were addressed within statewide LSTA projects implemented by the State Library, including: targeted services for Spanish speakers in the Workforce Development project; through focused customer service training for library staff highlighting Spanish speakers and disabled patrons; outreach to and support for library staff engaged in services to Hispanic residents via networking meetings, trainings and newsletters; provision of Spanish language versions of the Day by Day Literacy Calendar; and particular portions of efforts such as the Collection Development Conference highlighting selection of materials for special populations. IMLS Federal Purpose #6 was addressed also with statewide LSTA support for family literacy trainings implemented by the State Library endorsing concepts and practices applicable to Spanish-speaking families. The participant from Oconee County discussed the importance of state LSTA support for bilingual and Spanish speakers in the successful implementation of that program. Other participants discussed using LSTA minigrants for conference attendance and for summer reading in conjunction with their LSTA subgrants.

Technology and Material Choices

Technology choices made for LSTA projects discussed by the Special Needs and Diverse Audiences focus group were driven by one, or a combination of three objectives: 1) increase the amount of technology available to library patrons, 2) adopt new technology to expand patron services, and 3) develop partnerships with other organizations to promote the library collection and services. Participants also noted that the purchase of other materials for library collections was also used to address the needs of specific audiences, including Playaway titles for teens, large print books for seniors, and Spanish language reference materials, periodicals, and novellas.

Programming Choices

Programming choices discussed by Special Needs and Diverse Audiences focus group participants were driven by library staff's measured or observed needs in a specific population. For example, one library system went through a strategic planning process and, using surveys

and focus groups, found out that two distinct populations—teens and seniors—had specific unmet library needs. One library system observed that changing county demographics were not represented by library patrons; two others observed that current library technology, programs, and/or materials were not servicing existing patrons.

Implementation Challenges

There were three levels of implementation challenges reported by focus group participants: technology, staff, and patron. Technology challenges were noted by only one participant, who had to learn how to operate several new pieces of equipment during the project.

Challenges posed by selected target audiences and library staff were mentioned by most focus group participants. For example, one participant reported that conducting video interviews for oral histories was more difficult than expected because the subjects were “terrified” to have their stories recorded. Also, sorting through old photographs and documents to identify archival material was more time-consuming than expected, and volunteers were difficult to keep because it was a “mind-numbing task.” Another participant involved in outreach to the Hispanic community noted several challenges to project implementation, including fear of government programs and unfamiliarity with public library services in the target population, and a tendency of these patrons to want to use bilingual staff as translators.

Most participants stated that at times there were insufficient personnel available to meet actual LSTA program staffing demands, including staff resistance to working nights and weekends, which some projects required. Other staff-related implementation challenges included internal resistance to outreach to diverse audiences. One participant noted that a staff member stated “anyone can get a library card now.” Other examples include not replacing stolen urban fiction that is targeted to African-American patrons and limiting bilingual collections to children’s books because Spanish-language novellas and magazines are judged “too racy.”

How were program outputs and outcomes measured?

Participants reported using attendance at program activities, new library card registration, internet access of project materials, and circulation of trackable materials (bilingual and electronic) as quantitative measures of program outputs. Qualitative outcomes were more difficult to assess. Participants reported that they observed increased library usage by the target population, for example, or received positive comments about special programs and/or enhanced collections. One participant observed that outcomes-based evaluation is difficult because “true outcomes can only be measured over time.”

Expected and Unexpected Outcomes

All participants indicated that their programs served the population(s) to which they were targeted. Outreach to and education of target audiences in select library resources and services is a primary benefit of LSTA and related projects discussed by participants in this focus group. Thus qualitative output measures of program attendance, and increased library usage and special collection circulation also serve as good outcome measures for these projects. For example, increased use of digital format collections by teens and seniors and distance learning computer workstations by adult students demonstrated that these libraries successfully achieved their LSTA goals. In one project targeted to teens and young adults, one participant noted that there is

anecdotal evidence from a project that materials increased understanding of other cultures and patrons learned that “one person can make a difference.”

Future use of LSTA Grant Funds

Participants in the Special Needs and Diverse Audiences focus group shared both compliments and criticisms about the LSTA grant process. Two participants observed that they would benefit from more help and/or samples of desired outputs and outcomes for LSTA projects. One participant stated that State Library staff assisting with LSTA grants was “helpful and flexible,” but two other participants wanted more help from the State Library with grant ideas and best practices, including lists of state grant recipients. The State Library’s workshop on LSTA funding was judged by one participant to be held too close to the application due date to be helpful, particularly because the county council had to approve the grant before it could be submitted. One participant stated that she doesn’t want to apply for LSTA funds unless she really has to, because she has to include grant elements she doesn’t need or want just to get the funds.

Discussion Summary: Children’s and Teen’s Services Focus Group

Seven LSTA subgrants were represented by six participants in the Children’s and Teen’s Services focus group. Two additional participants had no LSTA grants in this area but shared their insights on similar LSTA-funded projects implemented by the State Library. *LSTA expenditures in this service area addressed IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #4, #5 and #6.*

Projects Represented

Four LSTA subgrants focused on early literacy development. Delivery methods included outreach to and literacy training for parents with children at risk for testing “not ready” to begin school. To reach the target population, these programs partnered with daycare centers (Kershaw County First Steps) and the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) (Florence County), and the school district (Dillon County). The Kershaw County Library enhanced its Children’s Room by installing a Reading Readiness Center for preschoolers, literacy material for parents and caregivers, and comfortable seating. The Richland County Library made “Baby Spaces” in the main library and most branches using soft mats and toys suitable for babies age 0-2 years. Three LSTA subgrants—one in Anderson County and two in Marlboro County—served “tweens” and teens. These projects expanded library programming and resources—including establishing dedicated teen areas—to serve this group.

At the state level, IMLS Federal Purposes #5 and #6 were addressed by the State Library’s multi-year Day by Day Family Literacy initiative, which provided trainings for library staff, print and online calendars in English and Spanish for families, and materials for libraries. In addition, statewide projects like the Grandfamily Resource Centers and the AWE Early Literacy Stations brought resources and computers directly to children in local libraries along with staff training. Participants in this focus group discussed how they used statewide LSTA funds in these areas to support library services. They also mentioned how statewide LSTA grants for conference attendance and graduate education supported their work.

Technology and Material Choices

Technology choices made for LSTA projects discussed by the Children’s and Teen’s Services focus group were driven by the following objectives: 1) increase the amount of technology available to serve the target audience, 2) to access specific software, and 3) develop partnerships with other organizations. Materials purchased using LSTA grants improved physical spaces in the library, enhanced library collections, and/or were used in educational programs (e.g., rhythm sticks with children’s story time).

Programming Choices

Programming choices discussed by Children’s and Teen’s Services focus group participants were driven by library staff’s observed needs in specific populations. All four early literacy projects targeted preschoolers most at risk for being unready to start Kindergarten. These children and their parents/caregivers were targeted with the assistance of other organizations, such as daycare centers serving low-income families. LSTA funds for these programs were used to improve library early childhood literacy services and extend those services to the populations most in need of them. The Baby Spaces project made space for parents with very young children to play safely while older children used the library. The three teen projects expanded teen collections, technology, and teen-dedicated programming and spaces.

Implementation Challenges

There were three kinds of implementation challenges reported by focus group participants: facilities and materials, partners, and patrons. No technology challenges were noted by participants. Challenges related to project facilities and materials were mentioned by several focus group participants. For example, lack of sufficient (or dedicated) library space for early childhood literacy parent training was a problem in two library systems. Identifying appropriate materials to purchase—both within budget and within the current budget year—was a challenge in another project. The staff time required to keep facilities both clean and limited to infants and toddlers was a challenge in the “Baby Spaces” project.

Focus group participants spoke positively of partnerships with other organizations, but two participants voiced disappointment in the ability of their project partners to get families to attend library literacy programs. The only patron-related challenge was in a teen program, where parents wanted to drop off their children and library staff wanted the parents to stay with their children.

How were program outputs and outcomes measured?

Participants reported using attendance at program activities, computer work sessions, new library card registration, and circulation of trackable materials as quantitative measures of program outputs. For one teen-oriented project, a participant stated that “getting teens to the library” was the goal and that the project succeeded in meeting this goal. Qualitative outcomes such as improved child literacy were more difficult to assess. One participant reported that she observed increased library usage by the target population because kids and parents brought the “literacy bags” they received back to the library with them. A participant stated that a father had thanked literacy project staff because his son “reads better, ” and another participant said that a parent told her “my toddler thinks he’s going to school” when he goes to the library.

Expected and Unexpected Outcomes

All participants indicated that their programs served the population(s) to which they were targeted. Unexpected outcomes noted were positive: one participant said that her library started one baby story time a week and now has six, with about 40 toddlers that attend on Tuesdays. Another participant observed that parents tended to come earlier and stay later after baby story time, talking with other parents of very young children. An unexpected outcome of some technology was that staff was “constantly replacing batteries.”

Future use of LSTA Grant Funds

Participants in the Children’s and Teen’s Services focus group were generally positive about LSTA grants. Two participants stated that this was their first LSTA grant. One said that she found State Library staff “truly helpful” and “all about library advocacy” during the application process. The other first time grantee observed that the LSTA workshop and State Library staff ideas for possible grant were very helpful. Concerns about LSTA funding voiced by participants included poor timing of the grant in summer, which left a short time between implementation and evaluation, and difficulty continuing the program after the grant expired. For example, the “Games and More” project in the Marlboro County library system was very popular, but now that LSTA funding has expired there are no staff dedicated to the program despite continuing high demand.

Discussion Summary: Workforce Development Focus Group

Five LSTA subgrants to county libraries were represented by six participants in the Workforce Development focus group. One additional participant had no LSTA grants in this area but shared insights on a similar project funded by the State Library. Two other participants were employed by non-library workforce development partners. *LSTA expenditures in this service area addressed IMLS Federal Purposes #1, #4, #5, and #6.*

Projects Represented

All five of the LSTA subgrants addressed county workforce development issues by increasing the number of library computers and/or specialized software available for use by jobseekers in the following counties: Charleston, Edgefield, Lancaster, Sumter, and Williamsburg. The projects also trained adults—especially the unemployed—in the basic computer skills needed to apply for jobs in today’s job market. In Lancaster and Charleston County libraries, for example, the purchase of laptop computers and installation of wireless networks allowed staff to move classes out of the public area and into library meeting spaces. Participants from three projects noted that the new laptops let the library give patrons more time to work on job searches than is allowed on public use computers. Participants from all five LSTA projects and the non-LSTA project expanded the number and content of computer training classes offered to patrons.

At the state level, SCLS used LSTA funding to employ a Workforce Development Coordinator to create and implement services for librarians, enabling them to better serve citizens seeking employment. Services included development of a resource-rich website, strong partnerships with state and local employment agencies, and purchase of online resources heavily used by job

seekers. Participants in this focus group also used statewide LSTA-funded digital and online resources and technology training for staff to support their projects. One participant also discussed his library's use of LSTA-funded grandparenting grants and summer reading grants from the State Library.

Technology Choices

Technology choices made for LSTA projects discussed by the Workforce Development focus group were designed to: 1) increase the amount of technology available to serve the target audience, 2) access specific software, and 3) develop partnerships with other organizations.

Programming Choices

Programming choices discussed by Workforce Development focus group participants were in direct response to library patrons' observed need for basic computer literacy, especially for older unemployed persons having difficulty negotiating online job resources. One participant stated that her library saw "daily requests for assistance with [online] job searches." Two other participants observed that their older patrons had poor computer skills and needed the most help from library staff. The two library partners remarked on the importance of library-based training in computer literacy to their clientele, because they expect their clients to have basic computer skills prior to entering their programs.

Implementation Challenges

The only implementation challenges reported by focus group participants had to do with program marketing and patrons. Four participants reported difficulty reaching unemployed persons in their communities. Two participants had problems with "no-shows" at classes and added reminder calls and/or a waiting list to increase attendance. Several participants related problems balancing patron desire for immediate information (and library services) with their program's focus on class training. One participant observed that demand for training was lower when reservations were required—"people want help when they want it." Another made one-on-one reservations with a librarian available when patrons couldn't attend a class. Four participants agreed that finding class times that work for the majority of patrons was important; three of the four offered their programs in late afternoon or early evening. One participant observed that the project made "staff much busier" and another said the program "stretched" staff and that the library "found who's good at it and who's not." No technology challenges were noted by participants.

How were program outputs and outcomes measured?

Three participants administered post-training evaluations to patrons and/or instructors after each class. Four participants also asked patrons participating in their workforce development programs to report back to the library if they got a job. In Charleston County, many participants were "very pleased" with and "grateful" for services offered by the Workforce Center, and five "success story" forms were turned in. For the projects discussed in this focus group, successful outcomes include learning how to search and apply for jobs online, how to create a resume on the computer, and getting a new job. Focus group participants overall were positive about their project's success training patrons in basic computer skills, especially unemployed workers.

Information about patrons getting new jobs was more anecdotal, however, and one participant stated that “librarians hear stories about patrons they know.”

Expected and Unexpected Outcomes

All participants indicated that their programs served the population(s) to which they were targeted. A general “anti-outcome” voiced by focus group participants was the difficulty they experienced in both recruiting patrons from the ranks of the unemployed, and getting those who signed up for classes to attend them. From the perspective of project staff, one participant reported that library staff found the project “very rewarding.” Another participant reported that when one library staff member criticized the amount of time he spent helping an unemployed patron, saying “we don’t spend that much time on people,” the participant’s response was “we do now.”

Future use of LSTA Grant Funds

All participants in the Workforce Development focus group voiced some criticism about the LSTA subgrant program. One participant said that the grant process was “cumbersome,” that “evaluation is the problem,” and that it was “hard to say if the project was a life-changing experience for someone.” Several participants were disappointed with the low level of funding available and that they had to scale back their initial proposals. One stated that it was “hard to shape a big idea for a small amount of money,” and another said that it was “disheartening” when their project budget was reduced so much. Four participants said that higher levels of funding were required to help libraries provide needed one-on-one service to unemployed patrons with poor computer skills.

Despite the criticisms, two participants stated that State Library staff were “accessible” and “open to questions.” One participant said that his library will continue to use the LSTA program because they can get money for it. He supported continuation of individual local grants and encouraged the State Library to make the LSTA program an annual open grant, as it had been in past years.

SURVEYS

This analysis used three distinct survey instruments to fully evaluate the scope and breadth of the State Library's LSTA funds and programming efforts. The primary analysis utilized a statewide survey of all public library staff that may have participated in or been familiar with any part of an LSTA project, particularly those awarded through the State Library's competitive process for county library systems. Two additional surveys, one for Friends of the Library (FOL) organizations and one for clients of the Talking Books program, provided additional depth to our understanding of State Library activities as they relate to LSTA funding.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team used an online survey platform, Survey Monkey, for all three surveys. This is a platform with which statewide library staff is already familiar and comfortable. The survey was emailed to 353 library staff on February 24, 2012 and to 136 members of FOL organizations on February 28. Responses were requested by March 12. The response rate for the staff survey was 49.7 percent and 48.5 percent for the FOL Survey. The team used results from a Talking Books Survey administered by the State Library. The objective in this approach was to ensure that as many viewpoints as possible were incorporated into the study. To ensure multiple viewpoints, the survey sample included as many different types of positions and roles within individual libraries around the state as possible.

LIBRARY STAFF SURVEY

Table 1 illustrates the results for the primary library responsibilities held by survey respondents. After talking with county library staff in focus groups and State Library staff in interviews, it was clear that most, if not all, public library staff serve several different primary roles within their library. In the survey framework, survey respondents could choose up to three answers in response to their primary roles and responsibilities. These results reveal that survey respondents represent a wide range of responsibility within their libraries, with branch managers (34.4%), public services/reference/public programs (25.5%), and children and/or teen services (21.0%) most represented.

Table 1: Survey Respondent Background

Primary Library Responsibilities	Percent Response	Response Count
System Director	16.6	26
Branch Manager	34.4	54
Public Relations	8.9	14
Children's and/or Teen Services	21.0	33
Training	5.7	9
Accounting/Bookkeeping	4.5	7
Circulation	9.6	15
Public Services/Reference/Public Programs	25.5	40
Technology and Website	12.7	20
Other (please specify)		20

Methodology

In developing the survey instrument, we did not assume that all survey participants would have direct knowledge of LSTA funds and their library's use of them. In fact, one of the primary objectives of our approach was to clarify the scope of knowledge about the State Library and LSTA programming at libraries throughout the state. Survey results revealed that 33 percent of respondents are very familiar with LSTA funds and the programming it supports. Fifty-three percent are somewhat familiar and almost 14 percent are not familiar at all with LSTA funds and related programming. The majority of respondents (80.1%) are aware if their library has received LSTA funds at any time in current or past years. Of those that are aware of LSTA funding within their library, approximately 90 percent have some knowledge of how their library has used or currently uses these funds.

This survey also had an additional objective to understand the breadth of types of LSTA programming around the state and the knowledge of individuals involved with these efforts. Of those surveyed, 47.5 percent have played an active role in an LSTA-funded project in South Carolina. Survey results also revealed a range of responsibilities of individuals who have played a role in these projects. Over half of the respondents were involved with idea creation, grant writing, and program management, implementation and evaluation.

Figure 1 provides detail on the types of LSTA projects for which libraries around the state have applied. Technology and children's and teen's services are the most popular types of projects applied for with approximately half of respondents applying for those two categories of projects, with approximately one-quarter of the respondents applying for family literacy and library school tuition/conference attendance projects. However, less than 15 percent of respondents have applied for lifelong learning, workforce development or special needs/diverse audience projects. It is of interest to note that almost 30 percent of respondents are not familiar with the types of projects for which their library has applied.

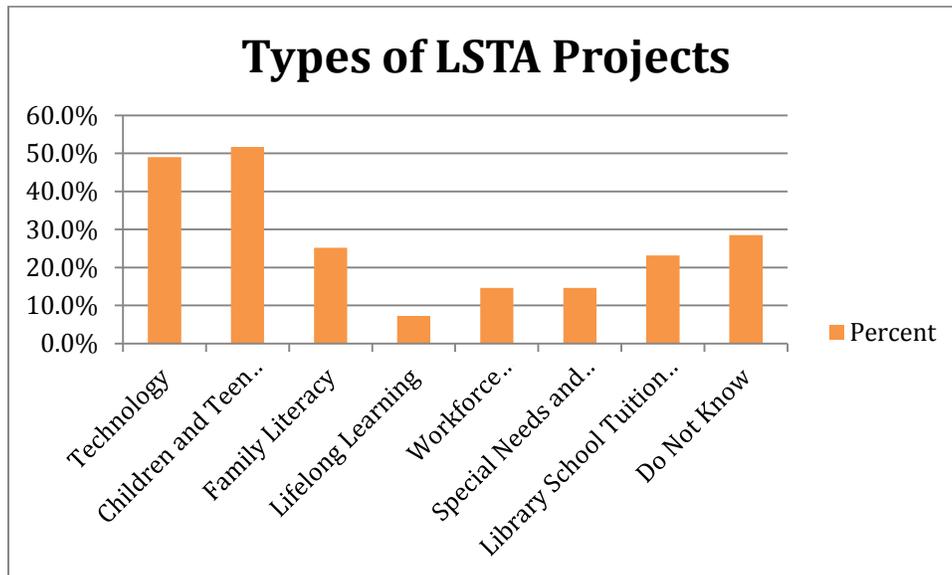


Figure 1. Types of LSTA Projects

An ongoing issue for the State Library concerns the evaluation of programming efforts related to the use of LSTA funds. The State Library requires all projects to file reports identifying estimated outputs and/or outcomes. However, project evaluation methods are related to the type of project and ease in measuring outputs and/or outcomes. Table 2 provides additional information on the breadth of methodologies used in measuring the success of LSTA projects. The majority of respondents focus on output measurements like attendance, participation, circulation measures, and changes in numbers of resources. These results reveal the limits of understanding the full range of qualitative outcomes from library programming. There are a variety of ways to measure outcomes but, generally, focus groups, interviews and surveys provide more of this information than the measurement techniques.

Table 2: Measurement Tools for LSTA Projects

How has your library measured the success of LSTA-funded projects?	Percent Response
Surveys	31.5
Client follow-up/Interviews	19.2
Focus groups	3.4
Attendance/Participation Measurement	56.8
Circulation numbers	35.6
Increase in resources/Materials	43.2
Do Not Know	37.7

Statewide LSTA Programs

An additional survey question dealt with the satisfaction of public libraries with LSTA-funded statewide programs. This was an important evaluation question because a substantial portion of LSTA funds are used for ongoing statewide efforts. Table 3 reveals the results of questions focused on a wide range of statewide LSTA programming across the state. For a significant number of these statewide programs a rather large number of respondents had no opinion. This is likely due to the fact that respondents are not familiar with all statewide LSTA programming efforts and their impacts. Programs where approximately 50 percent of participants or more had no opinion include: Tuition Reimbursement, Digitization Services, Grandfamily Resource Centers, Services to Spanish Speakers and Trustee Training.

Table 3: Satisfaction with Statewide Programs

How satisfied are you with the use of LSTA funds for the following statewide programs?	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	No Opinion
DISCUS online resources	0.00	0.00	11.72	39.31	43.45	5.52
Talking Books services	0.00	0.69	8.97	37.24	25.52	27.59
Tuition reimbursement	0.70	3.52	11.27	17.61	10.56	56.34
Conference attendance	0.70	6.29	11.89	26.57	20.28	34.27
Workforce development services including SCLS workforce consultant	0.00	1.38	12.41	25.52	40.69	20.00
Grandfamily Resource Centers	2.08	2.08	9.03	18.06	20.14	48.61
Summer reading	0.69	0.69	8.33	29.17	47.22	13.89
AWE Early Literacy Stations	3.45	2.07	9.66	22.07	22.07	40.69
Digitization services	1.40	6.29	9.09	18.88	9.09	55.24
Services to Spanish language speakers	2.78	4.86	15.28	17.36	6.25	53.47
Statewide conferences	0.00	4.14	11.03	32.41	26.90	25.52
Trustee training	0.00	4.17	7.64	15.97	8.33	63.89
Networking, exchanges	0.00	2.05	10.96	30.82	33.56	22.60
On-site training (Customer Service, Tech Petting Zoos, Etc.)	0.69	2.08	13.19	31.94	25.69	26.39

Of those who were able to respond, the following statewide programs had well over half of respondents either very or extremely satisfied with the use of LSTA funds:

- DISCUS Online Resources (82.7%)
- Talking Books Services (62.76%)
- Workforce Development Services including State Library Workforce Consultant (66.21%)
- Summer Reading Program Grants (76.39%)
- Statewide focused conferences, such as Collection Development (59.31%)
- Networking, Exchanges (64.38%)
- On-site Training (Customer Service, “Technology Petting Zoos,” Etc.) (57.6%)

With a large number of respondents indicating no opinion and a large number extremely or very satisfied with specific programming efforts, there are not a lot of LSTA-funded programs with a substantial number of respondents unsatisfied. The following programs were rated by 15 percent or more of participants as not at all satisfied or only slightly satisfied.

- Tuition Reimbursement (15.49%)
- Conference Attendance (18.88%)
- AWE Early Literacy Stations (15.18%)
- Digitization Services (16.78%)
- Services to Spanish Speakers (22.92%)
- Statewide Focused Conferences (15.17%)
- On-site Training (Customer Service, Technology Petting Zoos, Etc.) (15.96%)

Comparing these results to the programs rated as very or extremely satisfactory and those with a high percentage of no opinions are instructive. The only two programs to overlap with high levels of satisfaction are Statewide Focused Conferences and On-site Training. These programs may not require substantial improvement but may be in need of review and collaboration with public libraries around the state. Overlapping with no opinion are Tuition Reimbursement, Digitization Services, and Services to Spanish Speakers. These programs may need more exposure across the state so public libraries are aware of them and recognize them as beneficial for their populations. However, conference attendance and AWE Early Literacy Stations may require State Library staff to review these programs more carefully for opportunities for improvement and support.

The LSTA Grant Process

One of the objectives of this analysis was to evaluate the process and procedures used by the State Library for the application and use of LSTA funds. As a result, several survey questions relate to the processes used by the State Library to support and manage the LSTA program. With regard to the ease of applying for LSTA funds, approximately 23 percent characterized the process as very or somewhat easy, almost 11 percent indicated it to be somewhat or very difficult

and almost 44 percent did not know enough about the process to answer the question. As to respondents overall satisfaction with LSTA programs, approximately 75 percent of respondents are moderately to extremely satisfied and only 1.4 percent slightly satisfied. However, similar to the previous question, over 30 percent of respondents had no opinion about their overall satisfaction with the LSTA program. Based on these responses, it is not surprising that over 95 percent of respondents would apply for LSTA funds again in the future.

In contrast, Table 4 reveals why libraries would consider not applying for LSTA funds in the future. This question was meant to complement earlier State Library process questions as well as to highlight possible constraints within individual libraries. While the majority of libraries will continue to apply, almost 20 percent of respondents indicate challenges in finding matching dollars, and staffing constraints for grant writing and/or program management. These are important considerations for the State Library in the future as these types of constraints may put rural and distressed community libraries at an even bigger disadvantage.

Table 4: Reasons for Not Applying in the Future

Identify the reason(s) that your library would consider not applying for LSTA funds in the future	Percent Response
Library has difficulty finding matching dollars	17.5
Lack of program knowledge	6.3
Understaffed for grant writing	19.0
Understaffed for program implementation and management	17.5
Program categories do not fit our current needs	5.6
Application process	5.6
Already well funded	0.0
Reporting/Evaluation Requirements	3.2
Difficulty getting grant funding accepted by/passed through county	6.3
We will continue to apply	81.0

LSTA Federal Purposes and State Goals

Table 5 highlights how well survey respondents believe the State Library has met federal priorities for LSTA funding. Most respondents believe all IMLS Federal Purposes have either been met or at least partially met by the State Library. Similarly, most respondents believe that the state goals for LSTA funding have been met or partially met. Overall, a smaller percentage of respondents feel that the state goals are unmet or are uncertain than they do for the IMLS Federal Purposes. See Appendix 4 for more information on state goals.

Based on these results, there appear to be information gaps about LSTA-funded projects and progress towards federal goals. These gaps are understandable as public library staff are not likely to know about all State Library programs and how they align with federal and state goals. However, these results do indicate there may be room for improvement in informing public

libraries and communities how LSTA-funded programming is attempting to meet these different objectives. A number of respondents (between 13-28%) are uncertain whether any federal priorities have been met. See Appendix 4.

Table 5: Federal Purposes for LSTA Funding

To what extent has the State Library met the federal purposes for LSTA funding?	Met	Partially Met	Not Met	Uncertain
Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in any of a variety of formats, in any type of libraries, for individuals of any age.	66.44	13.70	0	19.86
Develop library services that provide users with access to information through electronic networks.	70.55	15.75	0	13.70
Provide electronic and other linkages among and between libraries.	64.83	12.41	1.38	21.38
Develop partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.	52.74	21.92	3.42	21.92
Target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, with disabilities, and/or with limited functional literacy or information skills.	52.05	17.12	2.74	28.08
Target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and/or to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line.	47.26	20.55	4.11	28.08

Critical Programming Needs

One of the critical objectives of this analysis is to provide a level of prospective evaluation to assist the State Library with defining objectives for the next five year plan. Table 6 illustrates responses from public libraries concerning their most critical program needs over the next three years. We asked about all types of programming, even programming that is not available for LSTA funding, because of feedback received in focus groups that other priorities and constraints were critical areas of need. Even if the State Library cannot assist in meeting these needs, it is important for the State Library to understand these constraints as it may influence the types of programs it chooses to emphasize in the next five year plan.

In South Carolina, public libraries’ most pressing needs are with technology, workforce development, and children and teen’s services. Technology and workforce development are areas where libraries may feel particularly constrained by staffing and knowledge constraints. This may be an important area for additional partnerships and ongoing resource development.

Table 6: Critical Programming Needs in the Next Three Years

Most critical programming needs over the next three years (even if not LSTA-funded or available for LSTA funding)?	Percent Response
Technology Projects and Upgrades	80.6
Children and Teen Services	50.0
Family Literacy	41.0
Lifelong Learning	21.5
Workforce Development	52.8
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	18.1
Tuition and Conference Attendance	25.0
Funding for basic library operations	36.1
Space/infrastructure constraints	43.8

TALKING BOOKS SURVEY

The Talking Books program is a critical component of State Library statewide LSTA programming. Moreover, a significant portion of annual LSTA funds are used for the Talking Books program. Given the importance of this service, it was important to understand the program's strengths and weaknesses. In October 2011 the State Library surveyed clients using the South Carolina Talking Books program. Five hundred twenty people participated and overall provided very positive opinions of the program. Most respondents felt library staff is friendly, professional, and helpful. Only one survey respondent indicated that Talking Books staff were unavailable and three responded that staff were not very helpful.

Over 90 percent of respondents believe reading materials are always in good condition and received in a timely manner. Almost 100 percent of participants believe the Talking Book equipment is in good condition and is provided quickly. Talking Books recently introduced descriptive videos (movies on DVD) to its clients and over half of participants said they are interested in this addition. There were numerous positive comments about the program and many clients expressed appreciation for the program. Some survey respondents suggested adding new authors more regularly to Talking Books would benefit the program. One respondent even went so far to say, "Y'all have always been great. The only state agency I haven't had to complain about."

Overall, this program is a resounding statewide success. Clients appear to be well-served and most importantly, are benefitting from the program. The State Library could enhance use of this program through a statewide advertising effort in places clients might receive service for existing disabilities. Additionally, regular equipment maintenance and introduction of enhanced services is important to ongoing effort and an improvement to the program.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY SURVEY

The Friends of the Library (FOL) survey was an additional methodological instrument used to understand the scope and breadth of the State Library LSTA program. The primary objective of this survey was to determine how much the FOL knew about this program and whether these individuals were actively involved in any of the programming efforts related to LSTA programming within their own libraries. Over 70 percent of respondents were very or somewhat familiar with LSTA programming in general. Fewer respondents (57.8%) knew if their library had received LSTA funds now or in the past.

Of those that were aware of LSTA funding, over three-quarters of participants knew how their library had used these funds and the types of programming applied for. FOL recipients seem most aware of technology, children and teen services, family literacy, and library school and conference attendance programming efforts. FOL respondents are generally satisfied with LSTA-funded statewide programs. Over 50 percent of participants are very or extremely satisfied with DISCUS, Talking Books, and summer reading grants programs. Over one-third were also extremely or very satisfied with Workforce Development services, statewide focused conferences, trustee training, and networking and exchange options. Similar to the statewide survey, a large number of FOL respondents are unaware of many programs.

Finally, FOL organizations have a supporting role in their local libraries and therefore may have a unique understanding of library needs over the next few years. Table 7 provides the responses from FOL participants on where they see critical programming needs of their libraries over the next few years. The top three are technology projects, children and teen services, and funding for basic library operations. These results are instructive as we also had responses in focus groups that indicated that some of the most critical needs are not LSTA-funded and if these needs are not met, it may make it difficult to apply for and/or manage LSTA programming. Some of these issues are not within the purview of the State Library but this information can provide insight into additional ways the State Library may provide assistance and future programming efforts.

Table 7: FOL Critical Programming Needs

Your library's critical programming needs over the next three years	Response Percent
Technology Projects and Upgrades	71.2
Children and Teen Services	52.5
Family Literacy	32.2
Lifelong Learning	16.9
Workforce Development	35.6
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	18.6
Tuition and Conference Attendance	8.5
Funding for basic library operations	55.9
Space/infrastructure constraints	37.3

INTERVIEWS WITH STATE LIBRARY PARTNERS

Interviews conducted with State Library partners confirm focus group and survey results, providing further confirmation of the State Library's efforts to meet specific IMLS Federal Purposes through the LSTA projects it undertakes.

An ongoing partnership with the South Carolina Arts Commission and the Humanities Council created a Literary Arts Coordinator position that has enhanced collaboration between these agencies and enabled each agency to expand its reach to diverse clients and stakeholders. The coordinator serves as the primary clearinghouse for all literary programs across the state. The coordinator has also encouraged a wide range of programming from book festivals and other literary events to a state-wide high school poetry competition, Poetry Out Loud. A representative from the Humanities Council, whom we interviewed, spoke of the continued value of this collaboration and its ability to meet a wide range of federal and state goals for all three agencies. This project has forged a unique partnership; no other state has a collaborative group of agencies all focused on statewide literacy efforts.

The strength of the shared position, however, is also its weakness as it is very difficult for three agencies to share one position. It can be challenging for the Literary Arts Coordinator to move between the agencies and fully understand the organizational issues of three distinct organizations and balance them. However, this weakness is a potential strength in that there is one person who understands the nuances of three state agencies. There is less overall duplication in this area when three agencies are able to stretch constrained budgets by combining their organizational efforts.

The South Carolina Digital Library is another important statewide collaboration that addresses several federal purposes. This is a collaborative effort between 34 state institutions committed to building and enhancing digital resources. The project is focused on scanning and sharing resources with libraries that do not have funding to have hard copies of resources. The project has also been beneficial for educating librarians and graduate students on the digitization process. The State Library currently estimates that the number of users is increasing by approximately 3,000 every year. As the project continues SCSL will work on understanding which patrons use the system and for what purpose.

LSTA funds have been essential for these partnership efforts. The South Carolina Literary Arts Partnership would not have happened without LSTA funds. Budget cuts have forced agencies to find resourceful ways of doing more with less. The South Carolina Digital Library would also be a shade of its current scope without LSTA funds. Two interview participants reported that the LSTA process is more stringent than some and is cumbersome and time-consuming. Confirming survey results, the Humanities Council representative indicated ongoing confusion over the matching requirements. Other concerns focused on the difficulty using PDF forms and the State Library's website. Overall, however, interviewees reported that State Library staff continues to be helpful, friendly and committed to encouraging good projects throughout the state.

Interviewees had distinct opinions about the State Library's future plans for LSTA funds. One interviewee indicated that literacy should be the state's number one priority, as research shows that a lack of literacy contributes negatively to the whole state through increased rates of incarceration, obesity, diabetes, and unemployment, among others. This person also wants the State Library and public libraries to remain committed to increasing access to technology. Another interviewee echoed focus group concerns that the State Library seems to focus on new, innovative projects at the expense of tried and true programming efforts. This could be a broader concern for all libraries because some successful projects may be worth continuing or launching in other communities.

One interviewee confirmed focus group findings regarding the changing scope of libraries. As community and economic environments have changed across the state—particularly since 2008—South Carolina libraries have risen to the challenge and have transformed into community centers of sorts, addressing local needs and providing services that other organizations do not, or no longer provide. LSTA funds have been a primary contributor to those efforts. Given this situation, it is important that the State Library understand these changes and how they affect libraries and the future LSTA projects that will serve those communities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Focus groups, surveys and interviews reveal that the State Library and county public libraries use LSTA funds thoughtfully and creatively to address IMLS’s six Federal Purposes. The State Library and public libraries use a range of metrics to measure outputs from these projects. In the focus groups and interviews, library staff and partners identified positive outcomes resulting from LSTA-funded projects, although they felt that many outcomes—such as increased literacy and/or improved school or job performance—are difficult to measure because they emerge over the long term.

Overall there is little doubt that there are positive outcomes from LSTA-funded programs in South Carolina, but in many areas knowledge of these outcomes is purely anecdotal. Several participants noted that traditional output measures, like program attendance, increased library and special collections circulation, are good proxies for outcomes. Participants who spoke about projects targeting specific populations (Spanish-speaking families, at-risk preschoolers, etc.) indicated that increased library usage by these targeted groups is both an output and outcome measure of significance. Increased demand for specific types of programming is another measure that potentially serves as both an outcome and output measurement.

The workforce development focus group provided the most concrete detail on outcomes associated with LSTA-funded programs. Several participants administered post-training evaluation surveys and others asked clients to report back when they got a job. Five success stories were reported at one library. Additional outcomes measured by workforce development programs included learning how to search and apply for jobs online, how to create a resume, and getting a new job. Libraries are more likely to hear about positive outcomes than negative ones.

The evaluation process revealed some areas for improvement during the next LSTA funding cycle. There were many individual comments for improvement that are discussed throughout the individual evaluation sections. We identified four recommendations for future improvement that were repeated throughout the evaluation process by many different libraries and organizations. Considering these areas for future improvement could potentially benefit a much wider audience of libraries and partnering organizations. The recommendations are:

- Public libraries would benefit from the State Library providing model project descriptions for LSTA subgrant applicants, including “best practice” examples from previously funded projects and additional clarification on desired outputs and outcomes. This additional information would particularly benefit libraries with few resources for grant writing.
- The State Library should consider the time involved in county budgeting and funding approval requirements when setting its schedule for grant applications. In some South Carolina counties, grant applications cannot move forward unless local matching funds (including staff time) are approved by county council.

- The State Library should identify ways to provide additional support or mentorship to subgrantees implementing new program concepts in South Carolina and to subgrantees addressing special needs and diverse audiences. Both types of projects tended to have more implementation challenges than some other projects.
- Similarly, many respondents highlighted the ongoing need for the State Library to support diverse technology and the different types of programming needs of children and teens. Respondents also indicated an ongoing need for programming to support the growing issue of workforce development and basic computer skills. As the State Library considers the next five year plan, it should consider the diversity of issues facing communities and the libraries that serve them.
- Finally, the survey revealed that many library staff did not understand the scope and breadth of LSTA funding in the state and how those program choices relate to federal priorities. During the next LSTA planning effort, the State Library may want to revisit and revise how it educates its public libraries, library partners and other library stakeholders on the importance of this funding source and its objectives for South Carolina.

This evaluation supports the conclusion that the South Carolina State Library is meeting all or at least partially meeting all six of the IMLS Federal Purposes. The State Library has provided statewide LSTA programming and subgrants for programs at public libraries across all six federal priorities. This conclusion is supported by evidence revealed in focus groups, surveys, interviews and written material reviewed during this evaluation. As community and economic environments have changed—especially since 2008—South Carolina’s libraries have risen to the challenge and have transformed into community centers of sorts, addressing local needs and providing services that other organization do not, or no longer provide. LSTA funds have been a primary contributor to those efforts.

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APPENDICES

1. Acronyms
2. “Outputs and Outcomes” Handout for Focus Groups
3. Focus Group Interview Guide
4. Library Staff Survey Questions
5. Friends of the Library Survey Questions
6. IMLS Federal Purposes and SCSL State Goals

APPENDIX 1: ACRONYMS

ABBE	Aiken Bamberg Barnwell Edgefield Regional Library System
DISCUS	South Carolina's Virtual Library
ILS	Integrated Library System
IMLS	Institute of Museum and Library Services
LSTA	Library Services and Technology Act
SC LENDS	South Carolina Library Evergreen Network Delivery System
SCSL	South Carolina State Library
SLAA	State Library Administrative Agencies
STI	Strom Thurmond Institute

APPENDIX 2: “OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES” HANDOUT FOR FOCUS GROUPS

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES WORKSHEET

- What did you produce with your LSTA funds?

What items, things, or services (outputs) resulted?

Outputs are measures of the volume of a program’s activity and are focused on the purely quantitative aspects of a project. They are measures of the volume of a program’s activity, thus they are almost always numbers: Number of times a workshop was presented, number of attendees at a program, number of publications printed and distributed, number of hours a Bookmobile is on the road, etc. Think of outputs as the “things” portion of evaluation.

Examples:

- 50 staff members will complete training
 - 37 libraries will participated in reference training
 - 6 workshops will be held
 - Participants will receive 3 continuing education credits (CEUs)
-

- What difference did this project make for people in my community? Did our project make a difference in people’s lives?

What are the outcomes of this project?

*Outcomes are benefits that occur to participants of a program; they show the program’s impact. Typically, they are measures of an achievement, change in **behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, status, or life condition** of people who participated in a program or service. In this evaluation, outcomes focus on what participants will say, think, know, or feel about mechanisms of processes which programs use to create their hoped-for results. Outcomes are the “people” or the “so what” piece of the evaluation – what happened because of the outputs.*

Examples:

- Library staff will provide fast, more accurate, and more complete answers to reference questions.
- Visitors will register to vote.
- Students will demonstrate information literacy skills.
- Patrons will report high satisfaction with the automated ILL services.

APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Focus Group Categories

- Services to Persons Having Difficulty Using Libraries and Focuses on Expanding/Improving Library Services/Resources /Programs and Enhancing Library Diversity
- Strengthen families and children and Focuses on Youth Services
- Technology, Connectivity and Services and focuses on Enhancing the Technology Environment of South Carolina Libraries
- Enhance a Lifetime of Learning Opportunities and/or Provide Access to Information, Resources and Ideas, Focusing on Improving Community Workforce Development

Brief intro to LSTA and the five year plan / evaluation process. Grants to public libraries just a portion of LSTA but all expenditures must be according to plan. We will provide handout.

In order to ensure that we receive as much of your feedback as possible and that we do that in our short time together, we will ask each question of you in turn. If you could be as concise and specific as possible would allow us to gather as much information as possible about the libraries use of LSTA funds.

Provide a handout at the beginning that defines **Outputs** and **Outcomes**.

Please consider the following definitions for the purposes of this focus group:

Outcomes are measures of the volume of a program's activity: products created or delivered, people served activities and services carried out. These potentially represents an achievement, change in behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, status or life condition or participants related to participation in a program.

For example, “what difference did this project make for people in my community?”

Outputs are more focused on the purely quantitative aspect of the project. They are almost always numbers; number of attendees, number of publications, number of grants made, number of workshops presented etc.

For example, “How many things did you produce with this project?”

Focus Group Questions:

- 1a. What is your name and the role in the organization or library that you represent?
- 1.b. Have you been involved with an LSTA-funded project in the past three years? Please explain your role in the project.

*You have been asked to participate in this focus group today **for one of the following reasons:** 1) because you received LSTA funding that falls under the general category of Library, Technology, Connectivity and Services and focuses on Enhancing the Technology Environment of South Carolina Libraries; 2) Because you yourself work in this area now at your library and know something about how your community is receiving or reacting to those services.*

In the next set of questions we are targeting Library Directors and Staff who have had direct involvement in the specific project in which you were provided summary information prior to this meeting. However, we recognize the value of responses related to all projects in this category more generally and will follow up with several more general questions after we discuss these projects specifically. Thus, for a few moments we would like to target our questions to John, Susie etc. (Target to specific audience)

2. For those of you who have worked on an LSTA-funded project, Please identify the primary purpose and your role in the project you received LSTA funding for?
- 3a. What were the services or items you intended to produce in this project? For example, workshops or new collections of materials or electronic devices for the public or family programs. Did you produce the services or items you intended to produce, or did something change along the way?
- 3b. Who was the intended audience of your project?
- 4a. What are the primary outcomes that you identified for this project? That is, what benefits or changes (such as better skills, better quality of life, improvement in life situation) did you intend to produce for people in your community? How were these outcomes measured?
- 4b. Did you encounter difficulties in measuring these outcomes?
5. Did you realize these outcomes? Were the outcomes different than you anticipated? Explain.
6. Identify the main challenges your organization had in implementing this project. Highlight one key strength and one key weakness of this project.

*The next set of questions will be focused more generally on projects that your library has undertaken in the area: **Library, Technology, Connectivity and Services** and focuses on **Enhancing the Technology Environment of South Carolina Libraries**. Thus, we would like to **first hear from those who were not able to speak directly to the earlier questions**.*

7. For your library, what are the types of **outcomes** that you seek to achieve with projects focused on enhancing the technology environment of the library? Have you had different **outcomes** than you expected with specific projects? Explain.
8. Are there specific audiences that your library is attempting to target with these types of projects?

9. Identify the main challenges with these types of projects generally. If possible, please highlight one key strength and one key weakness of a project in this category (not necessarily LSTA-funded).

All Participants

1. What types of assistance could the SC State Library provide to improve broader use of LSTA funds by libraries in the state? Be specific.

2. Would you apply for LSTA funds again in the future? Why or Why not.

3. With regard to the primary purpose area focused on *Enhancing the Technology Environment of South Carolina Libraries*. (Customize this to the individual focus groups), where does your library/organization see the greatest need programmatically in the next 1 year? 3 years?

4. Referencing the broader list of LSTA purposes and State goals for the library, where does your library/organization see the greatest need programmatically in the next 1 year? 3 years?

APPENDIX 4: STAFF SURVEY QUESTIONS

1) What are your primary responsibilities within your library?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Director	16.6%	26
Branch Manager	34.4%	54
Public Relations	8.9%	14
Children's and/or Teen Services	21.0%	33
Training	5.7%	9
Accounting/Bookkeeping	4.5%	7
Circulation	9.6%	15
Public Services/Reference/Public Programs	25.5%	40
Technology and Website	12.7%	20
Other (please specify)		25
<i>answered question</i>		157
<i>skipped question</i>		13

2) How familiar are you with LSTA funds and the programming it supports?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Familiar	13.7%	22
Somewhat Familiar	53.4%	86
Very Familiar	32.9%	53
<i>answered question</i>		161
<i>skipped question</i>		9

3) Are you aware if your library has received LSTA funds at any time (current or past years)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	80.1%	129
No	19.9%	32
<i>answered question</i>		161
<i>skipped question</i>		9

4) Are you aware how your library has used or currently uses LSTA funds?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	89.1%	115
No	10.9%	14
<i>answered question</i>		129
<i>skipped question</i>		41

5) Have you played an active role in an LSTA-funded project in South Carolina?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	47.5%	75
No	52.5%	83
<i>answered question</i>		158
<i>skipped question</i>		12

6) Please identify your primary role(s) in the of LSTA funds within your library. (Check all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Created Idea for the LSTA-funded project	51.3%	39
Grant Writer	53.9%	41
Program Management (i.e. managed the budget, wrote the reports, etc.)	50.0%	38
Program Implementation	77.6%	59
Program Evaluation	55.3%	42
No direct role but assisted generally	23.7%	18
<i>answered question</i>		76
<i>skipped question</i>		94

7) For which types of project(s) has your library applied for LSTA funds? (Check all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Technology	49.0%	74
Children and Teen Services	51.7%	78
Family Literacy	25.2%	38
Lifelong Learning	7.3%	11
Workforce Development	14.6%	22
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	14.6%	22
Library School Tuition and Conference Attendance	23.2%	35
Do Not Know	28.5%	43
Other (please specify)		12
<i>answered question</i>		151
<i>skipped question</i>		19

8) How has your library measured the success of LSTA-funded projects? (Check all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Surveys	31.5%	46
Client follow-up/Interviews	19.2%	28
Focus Groups	3.4%	5
Attendance/Participation Measurement	56.8%	83
Circulation Numbers	35.6%	52
Increase in Resources/Materials (ex. computers, books, computers, etc.)	43.2%	63
Do Not Know	37.7%	55
Other type of evaluation (please specify)		4
<i>answered question</i>		146
<i>skipped question</i>		24

9) How would you characterize the process of applying for LSTA funds through the State Library?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Easy	7.4%	11
Somewhat Easy	16.2%	24
Neutral	21.6%	32
Somewhat Difficult	9.5%	14
Very Difficult	1.4%	2
N/A or Do Not Know	43.9%	65
<i>answered question</i>		148
<i>skipped question</i>		22

10) How would you characterize your satisfaction with the LSTA program in general?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not at all Satisfied	0.0%	0
Slightly Satisfied	1.4%	2
Moderately Satisfied	15.5%	23
Very Satisfied	33.1%	49
Extremely Satisfied	16.2%	24
No opinion	33.8%	50
<i>answered question</i>		148
<i>skipped question</i>		22

11) Would you/your library apply for LSTA funds again in the future?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.5%	138
No	3.5%	5
<i>answered question</i>		143
<i>skipped question</i>		27

12) Identify the reason(s) that your library would consider not applying for LSTA funds in the future.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Library has Difficulty Finding Matching Dollars	17.5%	22
Lack of Program Knowledge	6.3%	8
Understaffed for Grant Writing	19.0%	24
Understaffed for Program Implementation and Management	17.5%	22
Program Categories Do Not Fit Our Current Needs	5.6%	7
Application Process	5.6%	7
Already Well Funded	0.0%	0
Reporting/Evaluation Requirements	3.2%	4
Difficulty Getting Grant Funding Accepted by/Passed through County	6.3%	8
We Will Continue to Apply	81.0%	102
Other (please specify)		6
<i>answered question</i>		126
<i>skipped question</i>		44

13) What are you library's most critical programming needs over the next three years (even if not LSTA-funded or available for LSTA funding)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Technology Projects and Upgrades	80.6%	116
Children and Teen Services	50.0%	72
Family Literacy	41.0%	59
Lifelong Learning	21.5%	31
Workforce Development	52.8%	76
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	18.1%	26
Tuition and Conference Attendance	25.0%	36
Funding for basic library operations	36.1%	52
Space/infrastructure constraints	43.8%	63
Other (please specify)		5
<i>answered question</i>		144
<i>skipped question</i>		26

14) Please indicate to what extent you feel the State Library has met the federal purposes for LSTA funding.

Answer Options	Met	Partially Met	Not Met	Uncertain	Response Count
Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in any of a variety of formats, in any type of libraries, for individuals of any age.	97	20	0	29	146
Develop library services that provide users with access to information through electronic networks.	103	23	0	20	146
Provide electronic and other linkages among and between libraries.	94	18	2	31	145
Develop partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.	77	32	5	32	146
Target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, with disabilities, and/or with limited functional literacy or information skills.	76	25	4	41	146
Target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and/or to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line.	69	30	6	41	146
<i>answered question</i>					146
<i>skipped question</i>					24

15) Please indicate to what extent you feel the State Library has met the state purposes for LSTA funding.

Answer Options	Met	Partially Met	Not Met	Uncertain	Response Count
Resource Sharing: Ensure equal and universal access to quality information through electronic resource sharing and delivery.	98	23	0	24	145
General Library Services: Improve services, programs and resources (with emphasis on the underserved, persons of diverse backgrounds, children and teens); explore the concept of "library as community"; facilitate lifelong learning; create appreciation for libraries, reading, information seeking, and literary/cultural arts programming.	89	32	2	22	145
Continuing Education for Library Staff: Provide educational opportunities for library personnel.	97	24	3	21	145
Technology Projects: Improve the delivery of library services by a) improving infrastructure; b) improving the technology skills of library staff; c) developing accessible web sites; and d) implementing and other technology-based services.	81	39	3	22	145
Collaborative Efforts: Create partnerships and collaborative projects with other libraries and with cultural organizations/agencies, private foundations, library associations and other groups working together to advance the goals	78	28	4	35	145

and objectives of libraries.

Services to People with Disabilities: Ensure equal and universal access to quality library services, programs and resources.

Encourage awareness of and support for South Carolinians with disability conditions and their caregivers.

answered question

146

skipped question

24

16) How satisfied are you with the use of LSTA funds for the following statewide programs?

Answer Options	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	No Opinion	Response Count
DISCUS Online Resources	0	0	17	57	63	8	145
Talking Books Services	0	1	13	54	37	40	145
Tuition Reimbursement	1	5	16	25	15	80	142
Conference Attendance	1	9	17	38	29	49	143
Grants							
Workforce Development Services including State Library Workforce Consultant	0	2	18	37	59	29	145
Grandfamily Resource Centers	3	3	13	26	29	70	144
Summer Reading Program	1	1	12	42	68	20	144
Grants							
AWE Early Literacy	5	3	14	32	32	59	145
Computers							
Digitization Services	2	9	13	27	13	79	143
Services to Spanish Speakers	4	7	22	25	9	77	144
Statewide focused conferences, such as Collection Development, Library Planning, Teen Technology	0	6	16	47	39	37	145
Trustee Training	0	6	11	23	12	92	144
Networking, Exchanges	0	3	16	45	49	33	146
On-site Training (Customer Service, Technology Petting Zoos, Etc.)	1	3	19	46	37	38	144
answered question							146
skipped question							24

17) Please provide us your contact information. (Optional)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Name	95.6%	65
Library	97.1%	66
City	97.1%	66
County	100.0%	68
email	95.6%	65
answered question		68
skipped question		102

APPENDIX 5: FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY SURVEY QUESTIONS

1) How familiar are you with LSTA funds and the programming it supports?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not Familiar	28.1%	18
Somewhat Familiar	43.8%	28
Very Familiar	28.1%	18
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

2) Are you aware if your library has received LSTA funds at any time (current or past years)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.8%	37
No	42.2%	27
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		0

3) Are you aware how your library has used or currently uses LSTA funds?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	75.7%	28
No	24.3%	9
<i>answered question</i>		37
<i>skipped question</i>		27

4) For which types of project(s) has your library applied for LSTA funds? (Check all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Technology	76.0%	19
Children and Teen Services	64.0%	16
Family Literacy	36.0%	9
Lifelong Learning	16.0%	4
Workforce Development	4.0%	1
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	12.0%	3
Library School Tuition and Conference Attendance	32.0%	8
Do Not Know	12.0%	3
Other (please specify)		3
<i>answered question</i>		25
<i>skipped question</i>		39

5) What are you library's most critical programming needs over the next three years (even if not LSTA-funded or available for LSTA funding)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Technology Projects and Upgrades	71.2%	42
Children and Teen Services	52.5%	31
Family Literacy	32.2%	19
Lifelong Learning	16.9%	10
Workforce Development	35.6%	21
Special Needs and Diverse Audiences	18.6%	11
Tuition and Conference Attendance	8.5%	5
Funding for basic library operations	55.9%	33
Space/infrastructure constraints	37.3%	22
Other (please specify)		4
answered question		59
skipped question		5

6) How satisfied are you with the use of LSTA funds for the following statewide programs?

Answer Options	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	N/A	Unaware of Program	Response Count
DISCUS Online Resources	0.00%	1.82%	7.27%	38.18%	36.36%	3.64%	12.73%	55
Talking Books Services	0.00%	1.82%	10.91%	30.91%	38.18%	5.45%	12.73%	55
Tuition Reimbursement	0.00%	1.85%	12.96%	5.56%	7.41%	14.81%	57.41%	54
Conference Attendance Grants	0.00%	3.85%	13.46%	11.54%	15.38%	11.54%	44.23%	52
Workforce Development Services including State Library Workforce Consultant	3.77%	5.66%	13.21%	20.75%	22.64%	9.43%	24.53%	53
Grandfamily Resource Centers	1.85%	3.70%	14.81%	12.96%	5.56%	16.67%	44.44%	54
Summer Reading Program Grants	1.82%	1.82%	10.91%	25.45%	41.82%	5.45%	12.73%	55
AWE Early Literacy Computers	1.85%	0.00%	16.67%	16.67%	11.11%	14.81%	38.89%	54
Digitization Services	0.00%	1.89%	15.09%	18.87%	9.43%	15.09%	39.62%	53
Services to Spanish Speakers	1.92%	0.00%	15.38%	15.38%	3.85%	19.23%	44.23%	52
Statewide focused conferences, such as Collection Development, Library Planning, Teen Technology	0.00%	3.70%	16.67%	22.22%	16.67%	11.11%	29.63%	54
Trustee Training	1.85%	3.70%	12.96%	24.07%	11.11%	12.96%	33.33%	54
Networking, Exchanges	0.00%	1.89%	15.09%	18.87%	20.75%	13.21%	30.19%	53
On-site Training (Customer Service, Technology Petting Zoos, Etc.)	1.89%	3.77%	15.09%	20.75%	7.55%	11.32%	39.62%	53
answered question								57
skipped question								7

7) Are there any specific areas/needs that the South Carolina State Library could assist your local library in? (Optional)

Answer Options	Response Count
answered question	19
skipped question	45

Open ended responses to Question 7:

1. Update regarding research on the value of public libraries for all segments of the populations.
2. Staff Training; Technology upgrades
3. E-books!
4. Fund all public libraries at the established rate!!!
5. Again, this survey does not directly apply to Friends groups, I do think that development of Friends groups is closely related to development/training of Trustees but was unaware and uninvolved in the Trustee Training activities.
6. It seems to me that the SCSL could develop advertising for programs that they fund that every library in the state using LSTA funds could use to advertise those funded programs. I had to ask our director what LSTA funds to answer this questionnaire. The Friends supports may programs too so I don't really know how much is from LSTA. However, thanks for everything that you do. Lynne Miller
7. Staff increase and space
8. More assistance with identifying grants for capital needs. Continuing assistance with trustee training/education.
9. I do know that the State Library has been very encouraging of our Friends Group, but have not been made aware of the funding provided to the Library System
10. Convincing County Council and taxpayers that a new modern, well equipped library is needed.
11. Not being a library staff member, I am not sure how to answer this.
12. Don't know. Our Friends group uses the Let's Talk About It programs, and these are a great way to bring people in to the Friends and the Library. Some of the titles in these series aren't great though. We have frequently heard that it would be nice to have some newer titles in some of the series. Not sure if the State Library can assist with that, but we do get this type of feedback. Funds for book series for diverse audiences would also be greatly appreciated. Our library hosted a FOSCL meeting and our Friends leadership learned a great deal. We hope to do more of this in the future, and any funds that can help promote local and statewide groups would be good, in my opinion.
13. Grants for bricks
14. The loss of personnel, particularly consultants, at the State Library has left a vacuum in leadership in the state that the few remaining employees simply cannot fill. We badly need the expertise these positions used to provide.
15. Data base availability
16. More data bases
17. Assist with setting up a teen program and other such programs at various branches.
18. Technology
19. The State Library's budget has been cut so much that we fear that in the near future they will no longer exist. As a small library system we depend on them when we need to consult a library expert. We don't have the funds to hire consultants, as larger systems are able to.

APPENDIX 6: IMLS FEDERAL PURPOSES AND SCSL STATE GOALS

Institute of Museum and Library Services Congressional Priorities (IMLS Federal Purposes)

- Expanding 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;
- Developing library services that provide all users with access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;
- Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;
- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
- Targeting 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; and
- Targeting 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 in accordance with section 9902(2) of Title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved.

State Goals

South Carolina State Library LSTA Five Year Plan FY 2008-2012

- Resource Sharing: Ensure equal and universal access to quality information through electronic resource sharing and delivery.
- General Library Services: Improve services, programs and resources (with emphasis on the underserved, persons of diverse backgrounds, children, and teens); explore the concept of “library as community;” facilitate lifelong learning; create appreciation for libraries, reading, information seeking, and literary/cultural arts programming.
- Continuing Education for Library Staff: Provide educational opportunities for library personnel.
- Technology Projects: Improve the delivery of library services by a) improving infrastructure; b) improving the technology skills of library staff; c) developing accessible web sites; e) implementing other technology-based services.
- Collaborative efforts: Create partnerships and collaborative projects with other libraries and with other cultural organizations/agencies, private foundations, library associations and other groups working together to advance the goals and objectives of libraries.
- Services to People with Disabilities: Ensure equal and universal access to quality library services, programs and resources. Encourage awareness of and support for South Carolinians with disabilities and their caregivers.

APPENDIX 7: INTERVIEWEES

FOCUS GROUP ONE: TECHNOLOGY

Library Systems Represented

Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Edgefield (ABBE)
Berkeley
Cherokee (2)
Dorchester
Florence
Georgetown

FOCUS GROUP TWO: DIVERSITY

Library Systems Represented

Beaufort
Berkeley
Darlington
Greenville
Laurens
Lexington
Oconee

FOCUS GROUP THREE: CHILDREN

Library Systems Represented

Anderson
Dillon (2)
Florence
Greenwood
Kershaw
Marlboro
Richland

FOCUS GROUP FOUR: WORKFORCE

Library Systems Represented

ABBE
Charleston
Lancaster
Laurens
SC Works
Sumter
Williamsburg (2)
Work Keys Coordinator