



TEXAS STATE LIBRARY
AND
ARCHIVES COMMISSION

Notice of Funding Opportunity



Library Infrastructure Facility Improvement (LIFI) Grant Application Guidelines 2026

Application Due Date:
April 28, 2025

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**Comments regarding the programs and services of the
Texas State Library and Archives Commission can be addressed to:
Director and Librarian
P. O. Box 12927 ♦ Austin, Texas 78711-2927
512-463-5437 ♦ 512-463-5436 fax**

A. Background and Overview

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) has been awarded funding through the American Rescue Plan Act – Capital Projects Fund (ARPA-CPF), administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This funding is dedicated to supporting capital infrastructure projects that enable work, education, and health monitoring in communities with critical needs. With these funds, TSLAC has established the Library Infrastructure Facility Improvement (LIFI) Grant Program, which aims to expand broadband access and enhance digital connectivity in rural and underserved communities across Texas.

Through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), TSLAC is making available \$6 million in grant funding to support broadband infrastructure improvements in eligible libraries. These improvements are designed to enhance internet connectivity, improve technology infrastructure, and ensure broad access to digital resources for library patrons. By investing in broadband infrastructure, TSLAC seeks to strengthen public library facilities as community hubs for digital access, workforce development, remote learning, and telehealth services. TSLAC will also provide ongoing technological support for awarded libraries to assist them with the implementation of these services.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) provides detailed information regarding program purpose, eligible applicants, allowable uses of funds, and the evaluation criteria that will be used to determine grant awards. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all requirements and ensure their proposed projects align with the overall goals of the LIFI Program and the Treasury's ARPA-CPF guidelines.

B. Program Description

Goals and Purposes

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, many communities in Texas, particularly historically disadvantaged ones, have had difficulty safely accessing facilities and broadband that provide critical resources to support workforce development, education/training, and health monitoring.

The TSLAC LIFI program has been developed to help public libraries cover the costs for infrastructure construction projects related to broadband and digital access such as laying fiber and physical accommodation for broadband. Additionally, the program will support the expansion and improvement of physical space (i.e., "facility access improvement") for digital access projects, such as telehealth, job training, and classroom labs.

Infrastructure projects include fiber, trenching and related construction, internal connections, networking equipment, cabling, electrical work (to improve internet) with the end goal of significantly increasing internet speeds in library facilities.

Facility access improvement projects include light remodeling and construction such as electrical work, moveable walls, and expanded physical space including classrooms (education), job interview rooms (work), and telehealth rooms (health monitoring). The goal of these projects is to improve access to library technology services within the facility to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring.

To ensure the sustainability of the capital investment, all awarded libraries will continue to receive TSLAC assistance on applying for the federal E-Rate discount and have access to free technology training and consulting with TSLAC staff for at least five years from the completion of the LIFI program. Additionally, TSLAC will share best practices learned from grant recipients via webinars, blogs posts, and presentations.

The purpose of these funds is not for collection development, or other activities primarily focused on the acquisition of library materials or resources.

C. Award Information

Approximately \$6 million is expected to be available, subject to approval by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the availability of funds. Funding is provided by the U.S. Treasury Department as a subaward of the Capital Projects Fund under the American Rescue Plan Act.

Assistance Listing Number/Title: 21.029 Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund

Maximum Award

The maximum award for broadband infrastructure projects is \$250,000, while the maximum for facility access improvements is \$100,000. However, based on the number of applications received, the demonstrated need, and the amount requested, TSLAC reserves the right to adjust these maximum award amounts.

Length of Funding

All funds must be expended by December 31, 2026.

D. Eligibility Information

Through their governing authority, accredited public libraries, local public library systems, or non-profit organizations that are applying on behalf of accredited libraries, are eligible to apply for funds.

An applicant that is a nonprofit organization is eligible only if the organization's charter, operating guidelines, or mission statement includes providing direct support for affiliated library activities and goals as a defined objective. Friends groups are only eligible to apply if they are the fiscal agent for the library for which they are applying.

Public library applicants must be accredited by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission for the full grant timeline beginning when the grant contracts are issued.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include broadband infrastructure, facility access improvement, or both. Libraries will be expected to document in their application the type of project that they are seeking funds for. Funding priority will go towards fiber and last-mile projects to support libraries who lack needed connectivity and reliability. For library grantees, last mile broadband projects involve the installation of high-speed internet connections that extend from the nearest network infrastructure directly to the library, ensuring reliable service for public access and community use.

Funds can be used for the following purposes, as permitted by Treasury's ARPA-CPF, Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS), and 2 CFR Part 200:

- Broadband infrastructure - with the end goal of increasing library internet speeds to at least 100/100 Mbps:
 - Fiber
 - Trenching and related construction
 - Internal connections
 - Networking equipment
 - Cabling
 - Electrical work
- Facility Access Improvement - will cover light remodeling and construction such as:
 - Electrical work
 - Moveable walls
 - Expanded physical space for classrooms (education), job interview rooms (work), or telehealth rooms (health monitoring)
 - Cabling

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

Eligible Expenses

Below is a non-exhaustive list of eligible costs:

- Pre-project development costs and uses, including data-gathering, feasibility studies, community engagement and public feedback processes, assessments and planning, and needs assessments; permitting, planning, architectural design, engineering design, and work related to environmental, and historical reviews.
- Costs of repair, rehabilitation, construction, improvement, equipment (e.g., devices and office equipment), and facilities (e.g., telecommunications equipment, including infrastructure for backhaul, middle, and last-mile networks)
- Personnel costs, including salaries and fringe benefits for staff and consultants required for carrying out a Capital Project (such as project managers, program directors, subject matter experts, access consultants, grant administrators, financial analysts, accountants, and attorneys)
- Ancillary costs necessary to operationalize and put the capital assets to full use, including costs to increase broadband adoption and improve digital literacy
- Costs associated with monitoring of and reporting on projects in compliance with Treasury requirements, including award closeout costs
- Costs associated with collecting and measuring performance data and conducting activities needed to establish and maintain a performance management and evaluation regime related to projects funded by the Capital Projects Fund program.

Ineligible Expenses

Unless otherwise permitted by Treasury, Capital Projects Fund grant funds through the LIFI program may not be used for the following purposes:

- Furniture
- Website hosting
- Software purchases
- Acquisition of spectrum licenses
- Operating expenses, other than grant administration costs
- Short-term operating leases

- Payment of interest or principal on outstanding debt instruments, or other debt service costs incurred prior to March 15, 2021
- Fees or issuance costs associated with the issuance of new debt
- Satisfaction of any obligation arising under or pursuant to a settlement agreement, judgment, consent decree, or judicially confirmed debt restructuring plan in a judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceeding; or
- Support or opposition of collective bargaining. This does not affect the ability to use funds to comply with 41 C.F.R. 60-1.4 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-41/subtitle-B/chapter-60/part-60-1/subpart-A/section-60-1.4>).
- Costs associated with collection development, or other activities primarily focused on the acquisition of library materials or resources

E. Application and Submission Information

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

Project Development and Draft Review

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

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

To allow adequate time to review the draft proposal, submit the draft via e-mail to grants@tsl.texas.gov, with the subject line “2026 LIFI Draft Proposal,” by **April 4, 2025**.

Grant Management System (GMS) Access

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

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

Application Components

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

1. Application certification form (print from GMS portal, sign, and upload)
2. Program narrative and budget

3. Letters of cooperation (if applicable) — If the project is collaborative in nature, letters of cooperation indicating commitment of time, funds, volunteers, or other resources must be submitted from all participating organizations. Letters should be addressed to TSLAC Grants Team, TSLAC, P. O. Box 12927, Austin, Texas 78711-2927. Applicants are encouraged to upload letters in GMS.

Additional information about application components may be found at TSLAC Grants FAQ (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ldn/grants/faq>).

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

Other requirements

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

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

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

Who can submit the online application?

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

Deadline and Submission

Completed applications and **all** required documents must be submitted to GMS **by 11:59 p.m. Central Time, April 28, 2025**. *Please be advised that technical support will not be available after 5 p.m. April 28, 2025*

If you are unable to submit your application and/or required documentation via GMS, you may submit documents via mail, e-mail, or fax. All submissions must be received by the April 28, 2025 deadline to be considered. Please send to the attention of: **2026 Grants, Library Development & Networking Division**, via e-mail to grants@tsl.texas.gov, fax at 512-936-2306, or mail to Library Development & Networking Division, TSLAC, P. O. Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711, (TSLAC street address: 1201 Brazos, Austin, TX 78701).

Late submissions will not be accepted. However, if required documentation is unavailable by the due date, TSLAC will accept it if the applicant communicates with TSLAC before the deadline that the documentation is forthcoming and provides an estimated submission date.

Program Timetable

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|--------------------------|---|
| March 17, 2025 | NOFO Issued |
| March 25, 2025 | Webinar/Q&A |
| April 4, 2025 | Draft proposals due to TSLAC for review (recommended, but not required) |
| April 28, 2025 | Applications and required forms due in GMS |
| May 2025 | Application packets evaluated by Grant Review Panel |
| June 2025 | Applicants notified of Grant Review Panel recommendations |
| June 6, 2025 | TSLAC Commission meets and approves projects; Contracts issued |
| July 2025 | Projects begin |
| September 2025 | Contracts due |
| November 1, 2026 | Final day to obligate grant funds |
| November 30, 2026 | Last day to submit final requests for funds with final documentation |
| December 31, 2026 | Projects End |
| March 31, 2027 | Subrecipients complete close-out of grant and submit final reports to TSLAC |

F. Application Review Information

Criteria for Award

This grant program is competitive. The LIFI Grant Review Panel will score proposals on the eight criteria listed below. The maximum number of points for each category is listed.

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

- Applicant library will receive 5 points if they serve a community with a population of 30,000 or less.
- Applicant library will receive 5 points if they have not received a TSLAC grant in the past 3 years.

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

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

Project Type Identification (Required – Not Scored)

Applicants must identify their project type as either broadband infrastructure, facility access improvement, or both:

- **Broadband Infrastructure:** Infrastructure construction projects are related to broadband and digital access in order to cover the costs of laying fiber and physical accommodation for broadband.
- **Facility Access Improvement:** Facility access improvement projects include light remodeling construction such as electrical work, moveable walls, and expanded physical space including classrooms (education), job interview rooms (work), and telehealth rooms (health monitoring).

Applicants should ensure their responses align with the appropriate project category.

1. Needs Assessment (15 points)

- Describe why the project is needed, the project goals and audience.
- Describe the greater community to be served and include demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements.
- Attach letters of cooperation showing commitment to the project from agencies to be involved, if applicable.

2. Project Design & Technical Feasibility (20 points)

- **Broadband Infrastructure:**
 - Clearly describe the project and the network technology (fiber, fixed wireless, coaxial cable).
 - Outline expected speeds and reliability.
 - Identify services to be contracted to complete the construction project (e.g. general contractor, electricians, engineers, etc.).
 - Describe any partnerships with Internet service providers (ISPs), municipalities, or community organizations.
- **Facility Access Improvement:**
 - Clearly describe the project, including planned physical modifications (e.g., creating telehealth rooms, installing Wi-Fi access points, improving IT infrastructure).
 - Identify services to be contracted to complete the construction project (e.g. general contractor, electricians, vendors for telehealth equipment).
 - Describe any partnerships with municipalities or community organizations.

3. Project Impact & Community Benefit (15 points)

- **Broadband Infrastructure:**
 - Explain how the project enhances economic development, digital access, and workforce access.
 - Provide projected usage data (e.g., estimated number of visitors benefiting from improved services) and highlight any focus on rural, Tribal, or disadvantaged communities.
- **Facility Access Improvement:**
 - Describe how the upgraded facility will expand access to telehealth, remote work, online education, or other broadband-enabled services.
 - Provide projected usage data (e.g., estimated number of visitors benefiting from improved services) and highlight any focus on rural, Tribal, or disadvantaged communities.

4. Personnel (5 points)

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

5. Timetable (5 points)

- Provide a detailed timetable.
 - **For Broadband Infrastructure:** Engineering, permitting, construction, activation.
 - **For Facility Access Improvement:** Design, renovation, installation.
- Demonstrate that necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements are accounted for.
- Explain how staff will be hired and trained in time to carry out the services as planned.

6. Performance Measurement (10 points)

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

7. Budget & Cost Justification (20 points)

- Provide a detailed budget.
- Justify the budget by describing how budgeted items will contribute to the project and identify a source for the stated costs (e.g., city pay classification for staff, catalog or city/county bid list for equipment).
- Demonstrate the costs are reasonable to achieve project objectives.
- If new staff are to be hired, consider the time for a realistic hiring process to occur.

8. Sustainability (10 points)

- Describe the resources that will be used to support and sustain the services developed through the grant in the future.
- Provide a written commitment of future support from governing bodies, if applicable. The written commitment of future support is desirable but not required.

Selection Process (13 TAC §2.113)

- (a) To be eligible for review, each application must be submitted by the specified deadline with all required components and all necessary authorization signatures.
- (b) Agency staff will review each application for the following:
 - (1) legal eligibility of the institution to participate in a grant program and appropriate authorizing signature;
 - (2) conformance to the federal and state regulations pertaining to grants;
 - (3) inclusion of unallowable costs;
 - (4) errors in arithmetic or cost calculations;
 - (5) submission of all required forms;
 - (6) compliance with submission procedures and deadlines; and
 - (7) relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the purpose of the grant program.
- (c) Agency staff will raise issues and questions regarding the needs, methods, staffing and costs of the applications. Staff will also raise concerns regarding the relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the purpose of the grant program. Staff comments will be sent to the review panel with the applications for consideration by the panel.

- (d) Applicants will be sent a copy of the staff comments to give applicants an opportunity to respond in writing. Applicants may not modify the proposal in any way; however, applicants' responses to staff comments will be distributed to the panel.
 - (1) Applications with significant errors, omissions, or eligibility problems will not be rated. Applications in which the project design and activities are not relevant and appropriate to the purpose of the grant program will be ineligible.
 - (2) Agency staff will be available to offer technical assistance to reviewers.
- (e) The agency may use peer review panels to evaluate applications in competitive grant programs.
 - (1) Peer reviewers may include professionals, citizens, community leaders, and agency and library staff to evaluate grant applications. Peer reviewers must have appropriate training or service on citizen boards in an oversight capacity and may not evaluate grant applications in which there is, or is a possible appearance of, a conflict of interest.
 - (2) The agency staff will distribute selected applications to reviewers and will provide written instructions or training for peer reviewers. Reviewers must complete any training prior to reviewing applications.
 - (3) The reviewers will score each application according to the review criteria and requirements stated in the grant guidelines.
 - (4) Each evaluation of an application for competitive grants shall be appropriately documented by the peer reviewer conducting the evaluation. The documentation shall include the scores assigned by the peer reviewer. The peer reviewer may also include comments that may be shared with the applicant.
- (f) Applications will be scored using the following process:
 - (1) The peer reviewers will review all complete and eligible grant applications forwarded to them by agency staff and complete a rating form for each. Each reviewer will evaluate the proposal in relation to the specific requirements of the criteria and will assign a value, depending on the points assigned to each criterion.
 - (2) No reviewer who is associated with an applicant or who stands to benefit directly from an application will serve on the review panel for the grant program in which the application is submitted for that grant cycle. Any reviewer who is associated with a potential applicant in the respective category must inform the agency and their organization about a potential conflict of interest. Any reviewer who feels unable to evaluate a particular application fairly may choose not to review that application.
 - (3) Reviewers will consider and assess the strengths and weaknesses of any proposed project only on the basis of the documents submitted. Considerations of geographical distribution, demographics, type of library, or personality will not influence the assessment of a proposal by the review panel. The panel members must make their own individual decisions regarding the applications. The panel may discuss applications, but the panel's recommendations will be compiled from the individual assessments, not as the result of a collective decision or vote.
 - (4) Reviewers may not discuss proposals with any applicant before the proposals are reviewed. Agency staff is available to provide technical assistance to reviewers. Agency staff will conduct all negotiations and communication with the applicants.
 - (5) Reviewers may recommend setting conditions for funding a given application or group of applications (e.g., adjusting the project budget, revising project objectives, modifying the timetable, amending evaluation methodology, etc.). The recommendation must include a

statement of the reasons for setting such conditions. Reviewers who are ineligible to evaluate a given proposal will not participate in the discussion of funding conditions.

- (6) Reviewers will submit their evaluation forms to the agency. In order to be counted, the forms must arrive before the specified due date.

Funding Decisions (13 TAC §2.114)

- (a) The agency staff will submit a recommended priority-ranked list of applicants for possible funding. Final approval of a grant award will be made by the commission in an open meeting.
- (b) Applications for grant funding will be evaluated only upon the information provided in the written application, including attachments, if any.
- (c) The agency staff may negotiate with selected applicants to determine the terms of the award. To receive an award, the applicant must accept any additional or special terms and conditions listed in the grant contract and any changes in the grant application.
- (d) The agency staff will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing.
- (e) The agency has the right to reject applications or cancel or modify a grant solicitation at any point before a contract is signed. The award of any grant is subject to the availability of funds.

Grant Recommendation and Award Process (13 TAC §2.115)

To be considered eligible for funding, any application must receive a minimum adjusted mean score of more than 60 percent of the maximum points available. However, eligibility does not guarantee funding. The commission may also choose to award extra points to libraries that have not received funding within a specified time frame to be determined by the agency or that have limited resources. To reduce the impact of scores that are exceedingly high or low, or otherwise outside the range of scores from other reviewers, agency staff will tabulate the panel's work using calculations such as an adjusted mean score.

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

Multiple Applications (13 TAC §2.119)

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

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

Scoring Rubric

| | | |
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| Project Scoring Total in Eight Areas: 100 points Extra Points in One Area: 10 points | | |
| <p>Relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the goals and purpose of the LIFI grant program will be considered in the scoring of all criteria. Members of the LIFI Grant Review Panel may score each criterion as follows:</p> <p>0-1 points: Project does not meet the goals and purposes of the LIFI grant program. 2-3 points: Project partially meets the goals and purposes of the LIFI grant program. 4-5 points: Project is a clear fit for the goals and purposes of the LIFI grant program.</p> <p>Up to 10 extra points will be awarded for the following: 5 points: Awarded if applicant library serves a community with a population of 30,000 or less. 5 points: Awarded if applicant library has not received a TSLAC grant in the past 5 years.</p> <p>Please note that scoring criteria applies to both project types, broadband infrastructure and facility access improvement, unless otherwise indicated.</p> | | |
| Abstract | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of project type and summary of project • Concise (1,000 characters) • Includes: who, what, where, when, why, for whom | | |
| 1. Needs Assessment (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 3; Final score = 15 max) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant describes why the project is needed, the project goals and audience. • Applicant describes the greater community to be served and include demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements. • Applicant attaches letters of cooperation showing commitment to the project from agencies to be involved, if applicable. | | |
| 0-1 points | 2-3 points | 4-5 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides no evidence of need for project. • Project goals and population to be served are not defined. • Does not describe needs assessment process and/or how need was determined (i.e., no description of community served, demographic statistics, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides partial/some evidence of need for project. • Project goals and population to be served are defined but show little to no connection to description of need. • Needs assessment process seems vague and incompletely describes how stated need was determined. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clear and convincing evidence of need for project and why they are best suited to meet this need. • Project goals and population to be served are clearly connected to description of need. • Clearly describes needs assessment process including how stated need was determined. |
| 2. Project Design & Technical Feasibility (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 4; Final score = 20 max) | | |
| Broadband Infrastructure: | | |

- Applicant clearly describes the project and the network technology (fiber, fixed wireless, coaxial cable).
- Applicant outlines expected speeds and reliability.
- Applicant identifies services to be contracted to complete the construction project (e.g. general contractor, electricians, engineers, etc.).
- Applicant describes any partnerships with ISPs, municipalities, or community organizations.

Facility Access Improvement:

- Applicant clearly describes the project including planned physical modifications (e.g., creating telehealth rooms, installing Wi-Fi access points, improving IT infrastructure).
- Applicant identifies services to be contracted to complete the construction project (e.g. general contractor, electricians, vendors for telehealth equipment).
- Applicant describes any partnerships with municipalities or community organizations.

| 0-1 points | 2-3 points | 4-5 points |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project lacks definition and is unclear. Project appears to lack direction and planning and does not relate to described needs. • For broadband infrastructure projects: Does not identify expected speeds and reliability. • Does not identify services to be contracted. • Does not identify whether there is a planned partnership for this project, and if there is a partnership planned, does not describe partnership role and support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is defined. Project has direction and some relationship to described needs. • For broadband infrastructure projects: Identifies expected speeds and reliability but does not tie to stated project need. • Identifies services to be contracted but does not tie to project. • Identifies whether there is a planned partnership for this project, and if there is a partnership planned, partially describes partnership role and support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is clearly defined, including timetables and resources required. Project shows evidence of clear direction and planning and strong relationship to described needs. • For broadband infrastructure projects: Identifies expected speeds and reliability and ties to stated project need. • Identifies services to be contracted and explains how services support the project. • Identifies whether there is a planned partnership for this project, and if there is a partnership planned, fully describes partnership role and support. |

| 3. Project Impact & Community Benefit (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 3; Final score = 15 max) | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Broadband Infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant explains how the project enhances economic development, digital access, and workforce access. Applicant provides projected usage data (e.g., estimated number of visitors benefiting from improved services) and highlights any focus on rural, Tribal, or disadvantaged communities. <p>Facility Access Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant describes how the upgraded facility will expand access to telehealth, remote work, online education, or other broadband-enabled services. Applicant provides projected usage data (e.g., estimated number of visitors benefiting from improved services) and highlight any focus on rural, Tribal, or disadvantaged communities. | | |
| 0-1 points | 2-3 points | 4-5 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not address any of the impacts the project may have on library users. Does not provide projected usage data. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes impact of the project but doesn't show an association with library users. Provides projected usage data but does not tie these issues to the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes both impact and measurable benefits the project will have on library users. Provides projected usage data and ties them to local project. |
| 4. Personnel (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 1; Final score = 5 max) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant identifies who will administer the funds and which positions will provide the services. Applicant lists how much time will be spent in each position on assigned duties. Applicant lists how the qualifications of each person relate to their job duties. Full job descriptions are required for new hires. | | |
| 0-1 points | 2-3 points | 4-5 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not identify fund administrator and which positions will provide services. No description of time spent in each position on assigned duties. No description of qualifications of key personnel. No job descriptions for new hires. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund administrator identified without explanation and positions briefly described. Time spent on project by each staff member briefly identified. Some description of qualifications of key personnel. Partial or seemingly incomplete job descriptions available for new hires. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund administrator identified with full explanation and positions that will provide the services fully described. Time spent on project by each staff member identified and justified. Describes qualifications of key personnel in detail, including experience with similar projects, and how each will contribute to the project's success. Full job descriptions provided for new hires. |

5. Timetable (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 1; Final score = 5 max)

- Applicant provides a detailed timetable.
 - **For Broadband Infrastructure:** Engineering, permitting, construction, activation.
 - **For Facility Access Improvement:** Design, renovation, installation.
- Applicant demonstrates that necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements are accounted for.
- Applicant explains how staff will be hired and trained in time to carry out the services as planned.

0-1 points

- Timetable is missing or incomplete (i.e., does not include a list of actions with specific target dates for completion).
- Does not identify or account for necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements.
- No explanation of hiring or training of staff to carry out project in project period.

2-3 points

- Timetable exists but is not clearly relevant to achieving the project goals.
- Timetable seems unachievable within the project period.
- Identifies necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements but does not demonstrate how these aspects will be accounted for.
- Brief or incomplete explanation of hiring or training of staff to carry out project in project period.
- No time given for staff to be hired, if applicable.

4-5 points

- Timetable includes a list of actions with specific target dates and is clearly relevant to achieving the established objectives.
- Timetable seems achievable within the project period.
- Identification and full explanation of necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements.
- Full explanation of hiring or training staff that will allow project to be carried out during the project period.
- Realistic timetable given for hiring new staff, if applicable.

Evaluation criteria continue on the next page.

| 6. Performance Measurement (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 2; Final score = 10 max) | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant sets achievable, measurable outcomes, and presents a reasonable method to collect data. Applicant presents a method to count users of the services as well as measure the effectiveness of the services using IMLS tools and LBB measures. | | |
| 0-1 points | 2-3 points | 4-5 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not include either project outputs or outcomes. No method to collect data provided. No method to count users of services or measure effectiveness of services. Will not determine success of the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides project outputs and/or outcomes but does not clearly relate to project. Method to collect data provided. Method to count users of services provided, but not to measure effectiveness of services. Provides some indication of the success of the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly describes appropriate project outputs and/or outcomes. Method to collect data is provided that clearly relates to project services and documented need. Method to count users of services and measure effectiveness of services provided. Will effectively determine success of the project and its impact. Project evaluation can be used as model for other similar projects. Project evaluation incorporates “best practices” from other similar projects. |

Evaluation criteria continue on the next page.

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

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

0-1 points

- Budget table is incomplete.
- Provides no narrative description (justification), beyond the budget column, of how funds will be spent.

2-3 points

- Budget table is complete.
- Budget narrative description exists but does not clearly relate to the project and sources for costs are not stated.
- Items listed in the budget description do not match those in the budget form.
- Costs do not seem reasonable and description is unclear.

4-5 points

- Budget table is complete and clearly describes how the dollars will be used for the project.
- Clearly identifies source of stated costs and justification for their reasonableness.
- Items listed in the budget description match those in the budget form.

8. Sustainability (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 2; Final score = 10 max)

- Applicant describes the resources that will be used to support and sustain the services developed through the grant in the future.
- Applicant provides a written commitment of future support from governing bodies, if applicable. The written commitment of future support is desirable but not required.

0-1 points

- Description of resources used to support and sustain the project after grant completion is vague and unspecific.

2-3 points

- Some evidence of future support and sustainability described.

4-5 points

- Clear evidence of sustainability described.
- A written commitment of future support from governing bodies is provided, if applicable.

9. Extra Points – Up to 10 Extra Points

5 points: Awarded if applicant library serves a community with a population of 30,000 or less.
5 points: Awarded if applicant library has not received a TSLAC grant in the past 5 years.

G. Award Administration Information

Notice of Award

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

The panel's recommendations will be submitted to TSLAC at its June 6 meeting for consideration and approval. Once the awards have been approved, successful applicants will receive instructions on how to proceed and mandatory training required for all TSLAC competitive grant recipients.

Protest Procedure — Texas State Library and Archives Commission (13 TAC §2.55)

- (a) An aggrieved person who is not satisfied with a decision, procedure, or service received from the staff of the commission or who is an actual or prospective bidder, grantee, or contractor aggrieved in connection with a solicitation, evaluation, or award may file a protest with the director and librarian in accordance with this rule.
- (b) A protest must be submitted to the director and librarian within 21 days after the person knows or should have known of the matter which is protested. The director and librarian have the discretion to allow a protest filed after 21 days if the protestant shows good cause for the late filing or if the protest raises an issue significant to the general policies and procedures of the commission.
- (c) The protestant shall mail or deliver a copy of the protest to all interested persons. The Director and Librarian will furnish a list of interested persons to a protestant. For protests of a competitive selection (bid, contract, or grant), interested persons shall include all persons who have submitted a bid, proposal, or application.
- (d) A protest must be in writing and identified as a protest under commission rule 13 TAC §2.55, and contain the following:
 - (1) a description of the protestant's interest in the matter;
 - (2) the issue(s) to be resolved and remedy(s) requested;
 - (3) the protestant's argument supporting the protest, including a statement of relevant facts and applicable law, specifying the statutes, rules, or other legal authority alleged to have been violated;
 - (4) the protestant's affirmation that facts set forth in the protest are true; and
 - (5) A certification that a copy of the protest has been mailed or delivered to all interested persons.
- (e) Upon receipt of a protest conforming to the requirements of this section, the commission shall not proceed with the solicitation, award, or contract until the protest is resolved, unless the director and librarian makes a written determination that delay would harm the substantial interests of the state.
- (f) The director and librarian have the authority to decide, settle, or resolve the protest and will make a written determination. The director and librarian may solicit written responses to the protest from other parties. The director and librarian shall inform the protesting party and other interested parties by letter of his determination, and how to appeal the determination to the commission, and how to respond to any appeal that is filed.
- (g) An interested party may appeal the determination of the director and librarian. An appeal must be in writing and conform to paragraph— (1) - (3) of this subsection:

- (1) The appeal must be received in the office of the director and librarian no later than 15 days after the date the determination is mailed to interested parties;
 - (2) A copy of the appeal must be mailed or delivered by the appealing party to all interested parties and contain a certification of mailing or delivery;
 - (3) The appealing party must state whether or not an opportunity is requested to make an oral presentation to the commission in open meeting.
- (h) The director and librarian shall refer the matter to the commission for their consideration at an open meeting.
 - (i) The chair of the commission has the discretion to allow an appeal filed more than 15 days after the director and librarian's determination if the appealing party shows good cause for the late filing or if the appeal raises an issue significant to the general policies or procedures of the commission.
 - (j) An interested party may file a response to an appeal of the determination of the director and librarian no later than 15 days after the appeal is mailed or delivered. The chair of the commission has the discretion to allow a response filed more than 15 days after the appeal of the determination by the director and librarian if the interested party shows good cause for the late filing or if the response raises an issue significant to the general policies or procedures of the commission.
 - (k) Copies of the appeal and responses of interested parties, if any, shall be mailed to the commission by the director and librarian.
 - (l) The chair of the commission has the discretion to decide whether or not a request for oral presentations will be granted and will set the order and amount of time for oral presentations that are allowed. The chair also has the discretion to decide whether presentations and written documents presented by Commission staff and interested parties will be allowed.
 - (m) The commission will determine properly filed appeals and make its decision in open meeting. The commission shall vote to uphold or reverse the decision of the director and librarian. Failing a majority vote of the commission, the director and librarian's decision is upheld. The commission's decision is final and not subject to judicial review under the statutes governing the commission.
 - (n) A decision issued either by the commission in open meeting or in writing by the director and librarian shall be the final administrative action of the commission.
 - (o) Documentation concerning a protest of a competitive selection is part of the commission's records series for that selection and is retained in accordance with the commission's approved records retention schedule.

Policy Requirements

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

LIFI grant recipients are also subject to the Guidance for the Coronavirus Capital Funds Project (<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Capital-Projects-Fund-Guidance-States-Territories-and-Freely-Associated-States.pdf>).

Subrecipient Monitoring

TSLAC, as a pass-through entity for CPF funds, is required to manage and monitor subrecipients to ensure compliance with requirements of the CPF award pursuant to 2 CFR 200.332 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.332>).

Our monitoring activities will include regular reviews of submitted reports to ensure that all funds are being expended for their intended purposes. We may conduct an audit for each subrecipient, including desk and on-site reviews, to assess the subrecipient's compliance with contract terms of their award.

If any issues are identified during monitoring, we will develop recommendations on how the subrecipient can work toward addressing these corrective actions. Formal responses from subrecipients on how, when, and who from their organization will address these issues will be required.

Noncompliance with the terms and conditions of this grant, including reporting requirements and performance obligations, may result in the withholding or termination of grant funds.

Reporting

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

General Terms and Conditions

Once TSLAC has validated application completeness and applicant eligibility, the eligible applicant's authorized representative will execute a grant contract. The grant contract will, among other things, contain terms and conditions related to the following:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Grant payments
- Eligible uses of funds (see Section D.)
- Period of performance, which ends on December 31, 2026
- Accounting and reporting requirements
- Compliance requirements and remedies for noncompliance, including but not limited to return of funds where appropriate
- Subrecipient monitoring procedures
- Audits, recordkeeping, and internal controls
- Other terms required or permitted by federal law

H. Contacts

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

Taylor Gardner, Grants Coordinator
Phone: 512-463-5468
E-mail: grants@tsl.texas.gov

Dominic Gonzales, Grants Administrator
Phone: 512-463-5581
E-mail: grants@tsl.texas.gov

Henry Stokes, LDO Manager
Phone: 512-463-6624
E-mail: hstokes@tsl.texas.gov

Grant Program *

2026 Library Infrastructure Facility Improvement

Name

Harris County Public Library

Legal Entity

Harris County

Project Title *

Branching Out: Expanding Library Access Across Harris County

Project Manager *

Ty Beauchamp

Submit Date

4/28/2025 2:40 PM

Program Partners

Leadership from the potential satellite library locations, including Harris County Precinct offices

Aldine Library Branch

Local community organizations and municipal authorities

Program Abstract

Harris County Public Library seeks to bridge the digital divide in an underserved community by expanding high-speed fiber connectivity to potential satellite library locations and enhancing the computer lab at Aldine Branch Library. Fiber access will transform satellite sites into digital hubs for remote work, digital access and education. The lab expansion will offer improved resources for workforce training, distance learning, and community programs. Partnering with local organizations and contractors, this initiative will strengthen digital access, support economic growth, and promote community engagement.

Criterion 01

Needs Assessment: Describe why the project is needed, the project goals and audience; the greater community to be served and include demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements; Attach letters of cooperation showing commitment to the project from agencies to be involved, if applicable.

Answer

Harris County Public Library (HCPL) serves a diverse and historically underserved population across Harris County, Texas. Many of the neighborhoods targeted in this project are home to predominantly low-income families, communities of color, and immigrant populations. According to the latest U.S. Census data, nearly 28% of households in the satellite service areas lack reliable broadband access, compared to just 10% in more affluent parts of the county. In these areas, median household income is substantially lower than the county average, and educational attainment rates lag state benchmarks.

Currently, the potential satellite library locations are constrained by limited and unreliable broadband connectivity, relying on outdated copper lines or low-bandwidth wireless solutions that are often disrupted, slow, and incapable of supporting remote work, appointments, or virtual learning environments. In contrast, library locations with robust fiber connectivity have been able to host virtual job fairs, online screenings, coding classes, and GED preparation programs, none of which are feasible at the satellite branches today due to bandwidth limitations.

Community surveys conducted in 2024 identified strong demand for enhanced digital services, including:

Access to remote work resources such as resume workshops and online certification programs.

Navigation services and private spaces for virtual consultations.

Adult and youth digital literacy classes, particularly in basic computing, financial literacy, and online learning platforms.

Expanded access to devices and reliable internet for students engaged in remote K-12 and college coursework.

Letters of support from local school districts, community centers, and workforce boards underscore the urgency of this need and validate that residents currently face barriers to employment, education, and digital access because of inadequate digital infrastructure. Harris County Precincts, Bridging the Digital Divide, Spring Branch Family Development Center will be key partners.

This project directly addresses these inequities by delivering high-speed fiber (100/100 Mbps minimum) connectivity to multiple satellite library locations, transforming them into true digital hubs equipped to meet the evolving needs of the communities they serve.

Criterion 02

Project Design & Technical Feasibility

Broadband Infrastructure: Clearly describe the project and the network technology; Outline expected speeds and reliability; Identify services to be contracted to complete the construction project; Describe any partnerships with Internet service providers, municipalities or community organizations.

Facility Access Improvement: Clearly describe the project, including planned physical modifications; Identify services to be contracted to complete the construction project; Describe any partnerships with municipalities or community organizations.

Answer

Project Design & Technical Feasibility

a. Broadband Infrastructure – Fiber Extension to Potential Satellite Library Locations

Technology Overview

Harris County Public Library proposes the installation of fiber-optic cable to extend high-speed broadband to potential satellite library locations. The system will deliver symmetrical internet speeds of at least 20 Mbps upload and 100 Mbps download, meeting or exceeding FCC minimum standards for broadband service and supporting future scalability.

Scope of Work

Trenching and Conduit Installation: Excavate and install underground conduit paths where necessary to protect fiber-optic lines.

Fiber Laying: Deploy fiber-optic cable through new or existing conduit systems.

Internal Building Connections: Terminate fiber connections inside satellite buildings and install necessary network drops.

Networking Equipment: Install routers, switches, access points, and backup systems to enable full operational connectivity.

Contracting Plan

General Contractors and Electricians: Engage qualified local contractors to handle physical construction, electrical integration, and basic site preparation.

Telecom Engineers: Contract specialized firms for fiber splicing, network configuration, and performance testing.

Partnerships and Regulatory Coordination

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): Partner with local ISPs for backhaul and peering arrangements to ensure continuity of service.

Municipal Authorities: Collaborate with local government bodies, ensuring compliance with city and county codes.

b. Facility Access Improvement – Computer Lab Expansion at Aldine Library

Scope of Work

The project will expand and modernize the existing computer lab at the Aldine Branch Library to increase capacity and improve technological capabilities. Specific improvements include:

Physical Expansion: Remodeling the space to accommodate additional workstations.

Electrical Infrastructure: Upgrading wiring, adding new circuits, and enhancing load capacity to meet expanded demand.

Network Cabling: Installing new Cat6A or higher-grade cabling to ensure high-speed network performance.

Facility Enhancements

Workstations: Increase the number of computer workstations

Environment: Design a versatile space that supports digital literacy classes, workforce training sessions, appointments, and remote work environments.

Accessibility: Ensure ADA compliance and adaptive technology resources.

Contracting Plan

Remodeling Firms: Hire local commercial contractors experienced in library or educational facility renovations.

IT Equipment Vendors: Procure adequate computing devices, peripherals, and assistive technology solutions through qualified vendors offering government pricing contracts.

Technical Feasibility

The proposed broadband and facility upgrades are fully technically feasible based on:

Established Technologies: Fiber-optic internet and scalable computer lab solutions are proven, standardized technologies with broad industry support.

Criterion 03

Project Impact & Community Benefit

Broadband Infrastructure: Explain how the project enhances economic development, digital access, and workforce access; Provide projected usage data and highlight any focus on rural, Tribal, or disadvantaged communities.

Facility Access Improvement: Describe how the upgraded facility will expand access to telehealth, remote work, online education, or other broadband-enabled services.

Answer

The proposed fiber extension will transform potential satellite library locations into vibrant community digital hubs, offering reliable, high-speed internet access where it is currently lacking. These hubs will support remote work opportunities, digital services, and a range of educational programs, directly addressing barriers to digital inclusion faced by underserved residents.

Simultaneously, the expansion and modernization of the computer lab at Aldine Library will significantly increase access to digital resources. The enhanced facility will provide critical support for remote learning, job training initiatives, small business development, and community workshops, creating a flexible environment responsive to evolving community needs. Many of the neighborhoods targeted in this project are home to predominantly low-income families, communities of color, and immigrant populations. According to the latest U.S. Census data, nearly 28% of households in the satellite service areas lack reliable broadband access, compared to just 10% in more affluent parts of Harris County. In these areas, median household income is substantially lower than the county average, and educational attainment rates lag state benchmarks. We project that over 300 community members will benefit monthly from enhanced connectivity and expanded digital literacy programming, with particular focus on historically underserved populations such as low-income families, seniors, and students.

By strengthening digital infrastructure and access, this project will:

Narrow the digital divide within the community.

Promote workforce readiness and economic self-sufficiency.

Enhance educational outcomes through improved access to online learning tools.

Foster community engagement through inclusive technology programs and services.

Ultimately, these improvements will stimulate local economic development, empower individuals with essential digital skills, and

Criterion 04

Personnel

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

Answer 04

The project will be managed by the Project Director, with support from:

- Project Manager (50% FTE): Oversees day-to-day operations and contractor coordination.
- IT Coordinator (25% FTE): Manages technical installations and ensures network performance.
- Construction Manager (25% FTE): Supervises on-site construction and remodeling work.

Criterion 05

Timetable

Provide a detailed timetable.

For Broadband Infrastructure: Engineering, permitting, construction, activation.

For Facility Access Improvement: Design, renovation, installation.

Demonstrate that necessary approvals, permits, and compliance requirements are accounted for; Explain how staff will be hired and trained in time to carry out the services as planned.

Answer 05

May 2025-June 2025: Award Acceptance and project initiation

August-December 2025: Finalize project design and secure necessary permits.

Jan 2025-March 2025: Contractor solicitation

April 2025: contractor selection and site preparations begin.

July – September 2026: Execute fiber installation at the potential satellite library locations and commence computer lab remodeling.

October 2026: Install IT equipment and complete lab expansion.

November 2026: Conduct system testing, staff training, and project activation.

Ongoing: Quarterly monitoring and performance reporting until project completion (by December 31, 2026).

Criterion 06

Performance Measurement

Set achievable, measurable outcomes, and present a reasonable method to collect data; Present a method to count users of the service as well as measure the effectiveness of the services using IMLS tools and LBB measures.

Answer 06

To ensure the success and impact of the project, Harris County Public Library will implement a robust performance measurement framework covering infrastructure reliability, user engagement, and community outcomes.

Broadband Infrastructure Component

Connectivity Standard: Achieve and maintain a minimum broadband speed of 20 Mbps upload / 100 Mbps download at each satellite library location.

Reliability Goal: Maintain a network uptime rate of 99% or higher.

Measurement Tools: Utilize standard network monitoring and reporting tools (such as SolarWinds, PRTG, or ISP-provided analytics) to regularly measure and document network speed, uptime, and performance.

Reporting Frequency: Generate quarterly performance reports to track system reliability and identify areas for improvement.

Computer Lab Expansion Component

User Engagement Target: Track and document monthly user counts at the expanded Aldine Library computer lab, with a goal of 300+ users per month.

Facility Readiness: Conduct technical reviews to ensure that all workstations, networking equipment, and accessibility features are fully operational.

Outcome Metrics and Evaluation

Digital Literacy and Service Uptake: Use outcome measurement tools developed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and standards from the Texas Legislative Budget Board (LBB) to assess:

Improvements in digital literacy skills among participants.

Criterion 07**Budget & Cost Justification**

Provide a detailed budget; Justify the budget by describing how budgeted items will contribute to the project and identify a source for the stated costs (e.g., city pay classification for staff, catalog or city/county bid list for equipment); Demonstrate the costs are reasonable to achieve project objectives; If new staff are to be hired, consider the time for a realistic hiring process to occur.

Answer 07

The requested funds will directly support the extension of fiber broadband infrastructure to multiple underserved satellite library locations and the expansion of the computer lab at the Aldine Library Branch. These infrastructure improvements are critical to delivering enhanced digital services focused on workforce development, education, and digital access to historically disadvantaged communities.

Cost estimates are based on current vendor quotes and local bid lists, ensuring each expense directly contributes to project success.

Budget Category: Description: Requested Amount

Salaries/Wages/Benefits: Project management and technical support personnel: \$20,000

Consultant Fees: Fiber installation experts, network engineers, and lab design consultants: \$40,000

Supplies/Materials: Fiber-optic cable, trenching materials, and networking hardware: \$90,000

Equipment: Computers, servers, network switches, routers for satellite sites, and Aldine Branch Library: \$80,000

Indirect Costs (up to 10%): Administrative overhead and grant financial management: \$20,000

TOTAL: \$250,000

Broadband Infrastructure:

The fiber extension now covers multiple satellite library locations instead of a single site. This requires increased fiber length, additional trenching, network hardware per site, and site-specific internal wiring.

Equipment and Minor Facility Improvements:

Each satellite location needs new networking equipment (e.g., routers, switches, patch panels), fiber termination hardware, and basic client equipment (computers or kiosks). Basic internal modifications such as fiber drop terminations, electrical adjustments, and small-scale remodeling (e.g., adding network closets or conduits) at satellite locations are essential for operational readiness.

Staffing and Consultant Support:

Increased project scope requires additional project management oversight and consulting expertise for designing, coordinating, and

Criterion 08

Sustainability

Describe the resources that will be used to support and sustain the services developed through the grant in the future; Provide a written commitment of future support from governing bodies, if applicable. The written commitment of future support is desirable but not required.

Answer 08

Sustainability is a core component of this project’s design, ensuring long-term impact well beyond the grant period. Clear operational plans and established community partnerships support both the fiber infrastructure and the expanded computer lab.

Fiber Connectivity

The high-speed fiber connections installed at potential satellite library locations will be fully integrated into each site's long-term operational budgets. Harris County Public Library will work with local Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to secure cost-effective service agreements and ensure reliable performance through ongoing support and maintenance. Additionally, collaboration with municipal agencies will help technical assistance, and infrastructure coordination. These efforts ensure that connectivity remains sustainable and aligned with the broader digital inclusion goals of the region.

Computer Lab at Aldine Library

The expanded computer lab at the Aldine Library Branch will be maintained through existing county funding streams, including technology replacement cycles and facilities maintenance budgets. HCPL will also continue to work with local partners and IT vendors to support hardware and software updates, training needs, and program delivery. Annual maintenance contracts, coupled with scheduled technical reviews, will support the long-term functionality and relevance of the space.

Capitalization Level

—

Max Grant Amount

\$350,000.00

Salaries/Wages/Benefits

\$20,000

\$0

\$20,000

Salaries/Wages/Benefits Description

Funding will cover partial salaries for a Project Manager and Technical Support Specialist responsible for day-to-day project oversight. Duties include coordinating fiber installation activities, managing vendor contracts, supervising computer lab expansion, ensuring compliance with grant deliverables, and reporting progress to TSLAC. Their expertise is critical to keeping the project on schedule

Consultant Fees

\$40,000

Consultant Fees Other Funds

\$0

Total Consultant Fees

\$40,000

Consultant Fees Description

Consulting services include design, engineering, and oversight of fiber optic installation and facility improvements.

Travel

\$0

Travel Other Funds

\$0

Total Travel

\$0

Travel Description

—

Supplies/Materials

\$90,000

Supplies/Materials Other Funds

\$0

Total Supplies/Materials

\$90,000

Supplies/Material Description

Supplies include Fiber optic cabling, network conduit, trenching materials, junction boxes, internal network supplies such as Cat6A cabling, routers, switches, wireless access points, and power backup, as well as miscellaneous materials for minor facility modifications to accommodate new fiber and network drops and other materials essential to the project.

Equipment

\$80,000

Equipment Other Funds

\$0

Total Equipment

\$80,000

Equipment Description

Equipment includes new computer workstations with high-speed network servers and secure networking devices, adaptive technology tools, and security firewalls.

Services

\$0

Services Other Funds

\$0

Total Services

\$0

—

Total Direct Costs

\$230,000

Base

\$20,000

Indirect Rate (0-1)

1.0000

Total Direct Other Funds

\$0

Total Direct Total Costs

\$230,000

Indirect Costs

\$20,000

Indirect Costs Total Cost

\$20,000

Indirect Costs Description

Necessary overhead in Harris County Public Library for successful project implementation, including grant project management, compliance, and reporting, ensuring direct operational support in HCPL.

Total Grant Fund

\$250,000

Total Other Funds

\$0

Total Costs

\$250,000

Expected Program Income

—