**Management
Analysis
& Development**

**State Library Administrative Agency:
Minnesota Department of Education,
State Library Services**

LSTA 2013-2017 Five-Year Evaluation Report

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Management Analysis and Development

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Executive Summary

Introduction and purpose of evaluation

Minnesota receives federal funds for libraries from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The funds are appropriated through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and allocated to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs). State Library Services, a division of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), operates as a SLAA. Every five years, states or SLAAs outline how the funds will be spent with an IMLS approved LSTA five-year plan.

Entities receiving funding are directed by IMLS' authorizing legislation to perform an independent evaluation prior to the end of the five-year plan. The guidelines for the evaluation are found in the IMLS document, "Guidelines for IMLS Grants to States Five-Year Evaluation." There are three sets of questions in the evaluation guidelines, three retrospective questions, three process questions, and four methodology questions. An independent evaluator, Management Analysis and Development (MAD), led this evaluation. MAD is a division of Minnesota Management and Budget, a Minnesota state agency.

Minnesota's LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 has two main goals. The evaluation focused on the extent to which the five-year plan activities made progress towards each goal. Evaluators looked at major activities under each of the two goals:

Major activities to support Goal One:
- Building Library Capacity & Partnerships
- Improving Services to Children and Youth
- Grants (that support Goal One strategies)
- Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)

Major activities to support Goal Two:
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL)
- Grants (that support Goal Two strategies)

Background and methods

MAD conducted this evaluation from August 2016 to March 2017 by gathering and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data from survey results, focus groups, meetings with project staff, reports and other documentation. The evaluators conducted three focus groups with stakeholders and an online survey. The survey and focus group discussion questions asked about value, impact, and access to the main activities funded by LSTA in Minnesota. The evaluators reviewed over 200 documents with a focus on the outputs and outcomes in the 93 reports submitted as part of MDE's State Program Report (SPR) to IMLS. MAD reviewed expenditures spreadsheets and surveys of participants in 61 State Library Services staff-led trainings and events. MAD also reviewed information about competitive grants including applications, reviewer forms, and training presentations.

Findings and recommendations

A-1: Progress on goals

Evaluation question: To what extent did your Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards each goal?

Progress on goals

The evaluators consider Goal One and Goal Two achieved:

- Both Goal One and Goal Two are well-funded at $3,298,991 for Goal One and $4,403,360 for Goal Two.
- Project narrative outcomes from each of the 93 projects in the SPR report showed that projects were beneficial and provided innovative ideas and improvements to libraries in Minnesota.
- Project outputs were strong and provided value to patrons and library organizations in Minnesota. LSTA-funded projects served over 130,000 people in Minnesota. Through these projects, over 9,600 electronic materials were acquired, over 275,000 items were digitized, and over 832,000 items circulated.
- The majority of supporting details for the achievement of Goal One and Goal Two are based on feedback from the survey and focus groups' participants on activities, listed below, organized by goals.

Major Activities to Support Goal One – Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1) Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)

Summary: Focus group and survey participants generally think that MBTBL is an important and necessary resource. However, MBTBL was the only one of the major activities that received lower scores on the survey questions about value and access. A main reason behind the lower scores is that many respondents did not know about or how to access the MBTBL services.

Recommendations: MBTBL should provide more information and better promotion on how to access their services. They may want to emphasize in their promotional materials the target populations for MBTBL services and how their technology and delivery offerings support their clients.

2) Building Library Capacity and Partnerships

Summary: Participants largely see the programs, services, and professional development opportunities offered by State Library Services (SLS) as positive and helpful. Attendees in 32 SLS-led workshops who completed evaluations support this finding. They overwhelmingly felt that their knowledge and confidence in the subject increased as a result of the workshops and that the workshops were of value. Some participants suggested better promotion of the activities and for SLS to offer more workshops for school library staff. They would also like SLS to look into more programs/services related to continuing education.

Recommendations: State Library Services should look at broader promotion of programs and services to reach potential participants who are not on the SLS listserv. SLS should ensure that future program topics benefit schools. For training and professional development of library staff, if it is under the purview of State Library Services, they should look at focusing their efforts in a coordination role with continuing education and offer more career development-related topics.

3) Improving Services to Children and Youth
Summary: Participants felt very positive about the offerings for "improving services to children and youth" and had good awareness of these programs. Respondents rated this area as the second highest in the survey. Participants expressed the importance of activities to connect public libraries and schools. A few mentioned that training may be too focused in the Twin Cities metro area or that promotion should be improved. Attendees in 23 SLS-led workshops who completed evaluations felt that their understanding and confidence increased and that the workshops were of value.
Recommendations: State Library Services can improve promotion and geographic distribution of training or identify ways to reach non-metro staff. Again, as with Building Library Capacity and Partnership, SLS should employ strategies for promotion beyond the SLS listserv. State Library Services should also look at ways to facilitate or coordinate partnerships between school libraries and public libraries because of the strong interest in this area.

Major Activities to Support Goal Two – Summary of Findings and Recommendations
1) Interlibrary Loan[1]
Summary: Participants perceive ILL very positively and see much value in ILL services. ILL was the highest rated area on the survey on value and access. Participants mentioned that schools often lack information about ILL and understanding on how to use ILL.
Recommendations: Minitex can provide more information on how to utilize the service, especially for schools. The promotional materials should clearly explain how ILL service works, especially the technical aspect, because a few participants wondered if some aspects of ILL are needed with the availability of digital content.

Grant Activities Support both Goal One and Goal Two – Summary of Findings and Recommendations
1) Grants
Summary: Participants felt that grants are beneficial, but they sometimes encounter organizational constraints that prevent them from applying for grants (e.g., lack of time or staff). They rated the value and access of grants fairly well in the survey, but between 15-20% said they were not familiar with grants. With the grants process, an even larger number of respondents said they are not familiar enough with the process to answer questions (21-34%). However, in the open-ended questions, respondents provided many positive examples of grant uses and compliments to SLS staff on administration and support. Some participants felt that more training on grant writing and outcome evaluation would be helpful.
Recommendations: State Library Services can continue to simplify or streamline grants. (SLS did receive a Governor's Continuous Improvement Award in 2014 for their work to simplify the grant application form and processes.) They can promote how to apply for grants and provide as much support as possible. In the future, SLS can offer training on grants application and monitoring as well as background knowledge around grants, such as grant writing, approaches to evaluation, such as logic models, and measuring or tracking outputs and outcomes.

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[1] Interlibrary Loan is delivered through Minitex located at the University of Minnesota. Minitex is a cooperative organization that provides for resource sharing throughout the state and through grant agreements with the state library agency.

A-2: Measures of success – Focal areas and intents

Evaluation Question: To what extent did your Five-Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents?

For the purposes of this evaluation, evaluators operationalized "extent" by examining the number and dollar amount of the 93 projects/activities attributed to the Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents. In terms of dollars allocated, with the primary focal areas, the "Information Access" focal area has the highest dollar amount at $4,099,058, followed by "Lifelong Learning" at $2,570,255 and "Institutional Capacity" at $1,163,476. All focal areas have at least four projects classified under the focal area category (including primary and secondary focal areas). The focal area of "Lifelong Learning" has 69 projects on the high end, and "Civic Engagement" has four projects on the low end.

Including both primary and secondary intents, the highest count is for the focal area for improving "General Knowledge and Skills" with 57 projects, and the second highest count is "Ability to Apply Information that Furthers Their Parenting and Family Skills" with a count of 27 projects.

A-3: Substantial Groups

Evaluation question: Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for your Five-Year Plan activities? A substantial focus would represent at least ten percent of the total amount of resources committed by the overall plan across multiple years. For groups that meet the threshold, discuss to what extent each group was reached.

Evaluators operationalized "extent" by examining the number and dollar amount of the 93 projects/activities attributed to beneficiary groups. Four projects met the threshold of ten percent of $8,023,283 (i.e., $802,328). The highest beneficiary group is "Library workforce (23%) with 22 projects totaling $1,849,153, followed by "School-aged youth" (21%) with 35 projects totaling $1,686,747, "Individuals with disabilities" (15%) with five projects totaling $1,232,344, and finally "Individuals below the poverty line"(10%) with 15 projects totaling $817,304. For the groups that meet the threshold, the extent to which each group was reached is discussed in the report.

B: Process Questions and C: Methodology Questions

Details on the responses to the process questions are on page 22; details on the responses to the methodology questions begin on page 23. The process questions section includes information on use of State Program Report data, changes made to the five-year plan and sharing SPR data and evaluation resources. The methodology section includes information on implementation of an independent evaluation, type of statistical and qualitative methods used, stakeholder engagement and sharing of key findings and recommendations.

Introduction

Background

Minnesota receives federal funds for libraries from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The funds are appropriated through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and allocated to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs). State Library Services (SLA), a division of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), operates as a SLAA. Funding is about $2.6-2.7 million dollars annually. Every five years, states or SLAAs determine how the funds will be spent with a LSTA five-year plan. The current plan being evaluated is the Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017[2] (hereafter referred to as Minnesota LSTA Plan). The Minnesota LSTA Plan identifies the state's current library needs and goals to guide spending based on stakeholder feedback gathered in 2011-2012. The goals also address eight federal LSTA priorities for funding. The Minnesota LSTA Plan contains two goals and six corresponding sub-goals that guide how the funds will be spent:

Goal One
1.0 - To facilitate increased access to resources in all types of eligible libraries, especially through collaborative public and private partnerships, for the purposes of expanding programs and services supporting Minnesotans' needs for education, lifelong learning, continuing education, workforce development, and 21st century and digital literacy skills. (LSTA Priorities 3, 5, 6, 8)

Goal One sub-goals
1.1 - Support literacy, including 21st century and digital literacy.
1.2 - Provide educational opportunities for children from early learning through postsecondary, especially targeting children from birth through age 17 from families living in poverty or facing barriers such as language, race, ability, geography, or access to resources such as technology.

1.3 - Promote lifelong learning and continuing education, including the enhancement and expansion of services and resources relating to health, access to justice, and workforce and community development.

1.4 - Promote training and professional development, including continuing education, to improve and expand the current and future library workforce.

Goal Two
2.0 - Through partnerships and statewide initiatives and networks, facilitate access, preservation, and sharing of resources in all types of eligible libraries locally, regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally to support research, education, and innovation. (LSTA Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9)

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[2] The activities and reporting that contribute to the Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 cover federal fiscal years 2013, 2014, and 2015 (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2016).

Goal Two sub-goals

2.1 - Support technology and infrastructure initiatives and services that build the capacity of Minnesota's libraries to serve their patrons.

2.2 - Support statewide initiatives and services that build the capacity of Minnesota's libraries and their staff to serve their communities.

Evaluation overview

Evaluation background

SLAAs are directed by IMLS' authorizing legislation to perform an independent evaluation prior to the end of the five-year plan. The guidelines for the evaluation are found in the IMLS document, "Guidelines for IMLS Grants to States Five-Year Evaluation." There are three sets of questions in the evaluation guidelines, three retrospective questions, three process questions and four methodology questions. The findings in this evaluation report are organized, numbered, and titled according to the ten required evaluation questions.

The independent evaluator, Management Analysis and Development (MAD), led the evaluation. MAD is a division of Minnesota Management and Budget, a Minnesota state agency. More information and background on MAD related to the evaluation can be found in C-1: Implementation of an Independent Five-Year Evaluation on page 23.

Evaluation plan

MAD consultants gathered information to supplement administrative data on program performance. In October and November 2016, MAD conducted three focus groups with stakeholders and also conducted an online survey sent to a broad group of over 1,500 stakeholders in the library community. MAD consultants reviewed related documents, reports submitted to IMLS for fiscal years 2013, 2014, and 2015 as part of the State Program Report (SPR) and a number of other documents, detailed in Appendix C: Documents reviewed and financial information.

Methods

A complete overview of the evaluation methods can be found in section C-2 on page 23 describing the types of statistical and qualitative methods used in conducting the evaluation.

Evaluation Summary

A: Retrospective questions

A-1: Progress on goals

Question from evaluation guidelines:

A-1. To what extent did your Five-Year Plan activities make progress towards each goal? Where progress was not achieved as anticipated, discuss what factors (e.g., staffing, budget, over-ambitious goals, partners) contributed?

- *Organize findings around each goal of the state's 2013-2017 Five-Year Plan*
- *Categorize each goal as either 1) achieved, 2) partly achieved, or 3) not achieved*

Overview of five-year plan goals

Minnesota's LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 has two main goals, each with sub-goals. Goals instead of sub-goals are the unit of analysis in the evaluation.

Table 1: LSTA spending and projects by goal and sub-goal

Sub-goals/Admin	LSTA funding	Sub-goal Project Count	Goal Total	LSTA funding	Goal Project Count
1.1	$179,920	5	Goal 1	$3,298,991	73
1.2	$1,257,393	55			
1.3	$1,699,686	11			
1.4	$161,992	2			
2.1	$3,722,189	8	Goal 2	$4,403,360	17
2.2	$681,172	9			
Admin	$320,932	3	Admin	$320,932	3
Total	$8,023,283	93		$8,023,283	93

Overview of major activities

State Library Services had 93 activities/projects over the time period covered by this evaluation, 36 projects in 2013, 34 in 2014, and 23 in 2015. The MAD evaluators analyzed the data (the outputs and narrative outcomes) in the 93 project reports which comprise the State Program Report. The reporting only provided narrative information on outcomes, which was difficult to aggregate, and provided limited information on outputs on disparate topics. As a result, the data alone was not sufficient to determine the extent to which State Library Services' activities made progress toward each sub-goal. The evaluators conducted a survey and focus groups in order to get more in-depth feedback on the impact of activities.

The evaluators also determined that it was necessary to group similar activities together into categories to discuss and align them with the two goals more succinctly (refer to the summary in Table 2). Two of the categories are made up of a single entity (ILL and MBTBL) because these entities received a high percentage of the LSTA funds. The grant activities for Goal One and Goal Two will be discussed

together in the report because the grant application, review, and monitoring process is the same. Appendix C lists all of the 93 projects/activities by goal/sub-goal and major activity category.

Table 2: Alignment of major activities aligned with goals

Activities	Main sub-goals supported
Major activities to support Goal One	
Building Library Capacity & Partnerships	1.3/1.4
Improving Services to Children and Youth	1.2
Grants (that support Goal One strategies)	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)	1.3
Major activities to support Goal Two	
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	2.1
Grants (that support Goal Two strategies)	2.1, 2.2

Explanation of major activities

1) **Interlibrary Loan (ILL)** - LSTA funds support a portion of interlibrary loan services delivered through Minitex. Interlibrary Loan allows patrons of participating Minnesota libraries to access a wide array of information resources in a range of formats whenever and wherever the information is needed.

2) **Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)** - MBTBL, a program of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, provides direct library service to patrons of all ages with visual, physical, or reading disabilities for whom conventional print is a barrier to reading.

3) **Building Library Capacity and Partnerships** - a portion of the Building Library Capacity and Partnership funding goes to staff salaries as well as programs and services:

   a. **Training and professional development for library staff in collaboration with other agencies** – topics include information about state income tax, the Affordable Care Act, records retention, and social security.

   b. **Programs and services delivered in collaboration with other organizations** - examples include a database of the Historical Star Tribune in partnership with the Historical Society and work on adult basic education and workforce development with the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

4) **Improving Services to Children and Youth** - a portion of the Improving Services to Children and Youth funding goes to staff salaries as well as programs and services:

   a. **Improving library services to children, youth, and families/caregivers** – professional development, programs, and resources to improve library services to children, youth, and families/caregivers, especially with enhancing the educational value of storytimes using a train-the-trainer approach.

   b. **Connecting public libraries and schools** - programs and professional development opportunities designed to connect Minnesota's public schools and libraries. For example, the 90 Second Newbery Film Festival, summer meal program collaborations, and the Libraries Serving Youth Meetup.

5) **Grants** - large, mini, and targeted grants help Minnesota libraries carry out projects that meet a community need and address one or more LSTA sub-goals.

6) **Administration** - SLAAs may use 4% of their annual allocation to administer the state's LSTA program. Minnesota's administrative funds pay a portion of the LSTA coordinator's salary as well as agency costs associated with administering the LSTA program.

Financial overview of major activities

Interlibrary Loan and grants are the two largest expenditure areas for LSTA funding for Minnesota, accounting for 43% and 25% of the funding, respectively. The third highest expenditure area is Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL) at 15%. Together the top three expenditure categories make up 83% of the LSTA spending in Minnesota.

Table 3: Overview of LSTA spending in Minnesota

Activity	2013	2014	2015	Total	Average	Percent
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	$1,167,433	$1,088,014	$1,175,779	$3,431,226	$1,143,742	43%
Grants	$568,095	$763,111	$668,150	$1,999,356	$666,452	25%
MBTBL	$325,163	$398,566	$461,399	$1,185,128	$395,043	15%
Building Library Capacity and Partnerships	$381,519	$237,028	$182,779	$801,326	$267,109	10%
Improving Services to Children and Youth	$66,020	$114,089	$105,207	$285,315	$95,105	4%
Administration	$104,510	$108,367	$108,055	$320,932	$106,977	4%
Totals	**$2,612,740**	**$2,709,174**	**$2,701,369**	**$8,023,283**	**$2,674,428**	**101%***

*Total is higher than 100% due to rounding.

State Library Services allocates LSTA funds in a number of ways: competitive grants (large and mini), sole source grants, targeted grants, professional/technical contracts, State Library Services projects, and administration. These funding types are explained in detail in Appendix C.

Discussion of major activities and findings

This section provides highlights from survey and focus groups' results combined with information from reports to evaluate State Library Services' five major activities and their corresponding goals. Through focus groups and surveys, stakeholders provided information on the activities' value to patrons, organizations, and Minnesota libraries overall, as well as perspective on barriers.

Overview of survey results

Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 show that survey respondents rated six of the seven activities positively (above 60% for positive responses of strongly agree/agree) in terms of providing value to their organization, their patrons, and in contributing to strengthening Minnesota's libraries. MBTBL was the only activity that was rated lower and that rating can be attributed mainly to the large number of survey respondents who responded "did not know" about MBTBL. When the "do not know" responses were excluded, responses about MBTBL were more positive.[3]

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[3] For MBTBL with "did not know" excluded, the positive responses increased: value to organization (47%), value to patrons (60%), and a significant increase on "strengthens Minnesota's libraries" to 81%.

Respondents rated the question about "activities having few barriers" somewhat lower than the three value questions. Respondents rated all but two areas (MBTBL and programs and services) above 40% for positive responses of strongly agree/agree. ILL was the highest rated at 78%, followed by children/youth activities at 62%.

Figure 1: Percent of respondents (strongly) agreeing that activity provides value to their organization
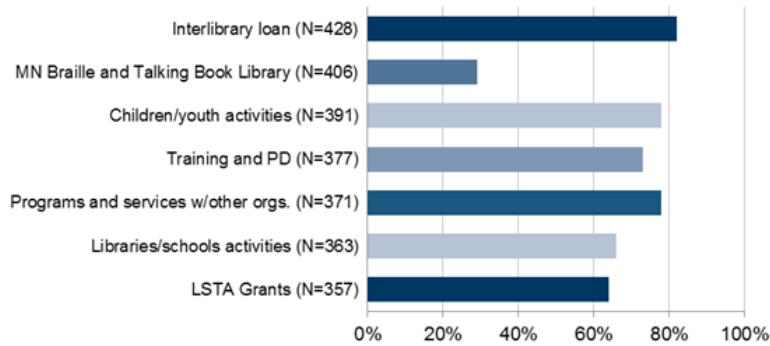

Figure 2: Percent of respondents (strongly) agreeing that activity provides value to their patrons
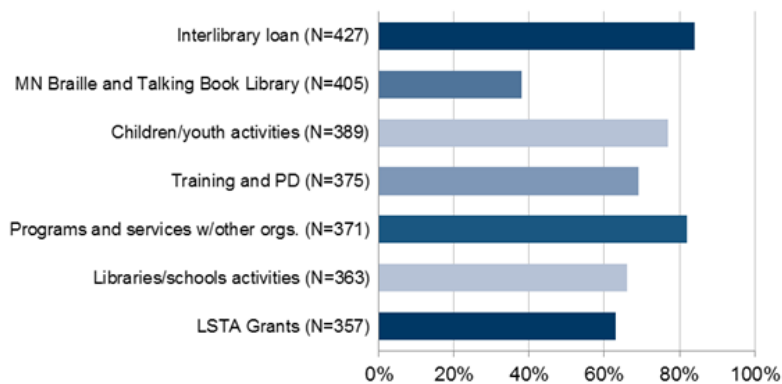
Figure 3: Percent of respondents (strongly) agreeing that activity strengthens Minnesota's libraries
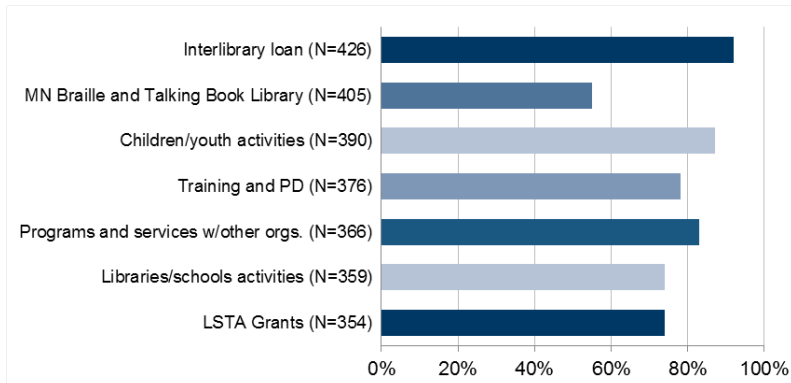
Figure 4: Percent of respondents (strongly) agreeing that activity has few barriers to access
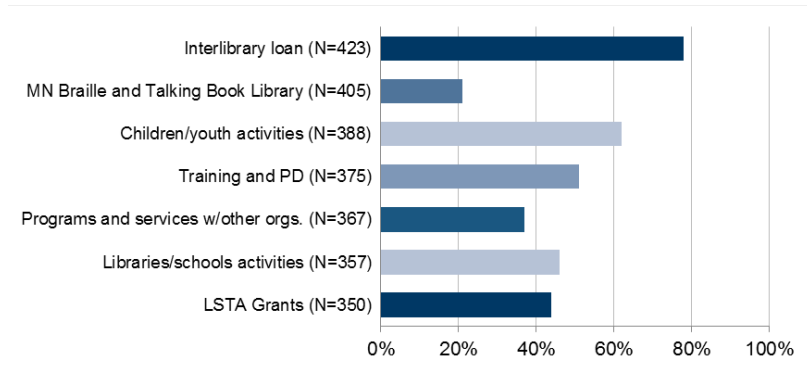
1) Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Minitex staff, who coordinate ILL, received an average of 168,455 requests for materials (including those that were not filled) during FY13-15. Staff were able to fill an average of 95,121 requests per year during FY13-15. The fill rate for public libraries averaged 59% during this same time period. Items were not filled for reasons such as they were already in use or not available in the Minitex region. Over 98% of the requests come from public libraries rather than school libraries. But many public libraries, especially outside the metro area, provide some level of ILL service to schools in the area and so some public library requests may have been for school recipients.

Interlibrary Loan – Survey Analysis

Figure 5: Value of Interlibrary Loan

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	428	58%	23%	10%	2%	2%	5%	
Provides value to my patrons	427	65%	19%	8%	2%	2%	5%	
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	426	74%	18%	4%	1%	0%	3%	

Interlibrary loan (ILL) received the highest rating for positive responses (strongly agree and agree responses combined) on the four questions. The ratings are: providing value to respondents' organizations (81%) and patrons (84%). Respondents also gave ILL the highest rating on the question about strengthens Minnesota libraries (92%) and few barriers to access (78%). A quote from a survey open-ended question seemed to summarize the feeling of many survey respondents: "Interlibrary loan is a vital service and one heavily used by our patrons."

For Interlibrary loan, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization or staff. ILL helps them to:
1) Participate in lifelong learning (68%)
2) Obtain materials/access to digital resources (63%)
3) Engage in learning opportunities (61%)

Interlibrary Loan – Focus Groups Analysis

Participants perceived ILL very positively and saw value in the ILL service. One participant said, "Our (large metro area county's) service would collapse without ILL. Our libraries' physical spaces limit the collection size. Our patrons are very appreciative of ILL." Overall, there is good awareness of ILL except by some schools participants; participants from schools said they need more information on if and how they can use ILL. Participants did acknowledge that ILL is a large portion of the LSTA budget. A few participants expressed surprise at the percentage of the budget spent on ILL and wanted to ensure that ILL is keeping up with emerging technology trends.

2) Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)

During the time period FY13-15, over 10,000 patrons used MBTBL services and MBTBL served about 920 institutions. The average number of items circulated was 289,711 (mainly digital books) of which 66,818 were downloads from the MN BARD mobile app for audio and braille books, magazines and music-related items. While MBTBL serves people of all ages, around 62% of its patrons are over the age of 65 and about 89% are blind or visually impaired.

MBTBL – Survey Analysis

Figure 6: Value of MN Braille and Talking Book Library

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	406	13%	16%	27%	5%	1%	38%	▄▄■▁▁■
Provides value to my patrons	405	19%	19%	20%	4%	1%	37%	■■■▁▁■
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	405	29%	26%	12%	1%	0%	32%	■■▄▁▁■

A large percentage of survey respondents selected "did not know" as their response to questions on value and barriers. For example, 38% of respondents responded "do not know" to the question about providing "value to my organization," "value to patrons" (37%), "strengthen libraries" (32%) and "few barriers to access" (46%). When the "do not know" responses are excluded, two of the MBTBL metrics had positive responses of 60% or over—"value to patrons" (60%) and "strengthens Minnesota's libraries" (81%). Two areas remained below 60% even with the exclusion of the "do not know" responses: "value to organization" (47%) and "has few barriers" (40%).

For MBTBL, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization or staff. MBTBL helps them to:
  1) Participate in lifelong learning (51%)
  2) Engage in learning opportunities (44%)
  3) Obtain materials/access to digital resources (43%)

MBTBL – Focus Group Analysis

Participants felt that MBTBL is an important resource, especially with an aging population. However, many participants do not understand how to access or make referrals to MBTBL. Some feel it may be underutilized because of a lack of information on how to access MBTBL. A focus group participant

said, "Libraries would benefit from more promotion of MBTBL and learning about who's eligible for services." A few participants expressed doubt if the technology at MBTBL is keeping up with the times. One said, "An aging population is likely to increase use, but computer technology and ebooks are supplanting need for these types of special services."

3) Building Library Capacity and Partnerships

There are two topics in the survey and focus groups that relate to this category: Programs and Services Delivered in Collaboration with Other Organizations (programs and services), and Training and Professional Development in Collaboration with Other Organizations (training and professional development). Both of these areas involve programs led by State Library Services staff as well as grants/contracts with external organizations.

Survey Analysis

Programs and services were rated higher than training and professional development (PD) in relation to "value to organization" (78% vs. 73%), "value to patrons" (82% vs. 69%) and "strengthens Minnesota libraries" (83% vs. 78%). Relative to other areas on the value questions, respondents rated programs and services the third highest and rated training and PD around the middle of the response ratings.

Figure 7: Value of programs/services delivered in collaboration with other organizations

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	371	42%	36%	11%	2%	1%	8%	
Provides value to my patrons	371	46%	36%	8%	2%	1%	8%	
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	366	51%	32%	9%	1%	0%	7%	

For programs and services, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff. Programs and services help them to:

1) Obtain materials/access to digital resources (74%)
2) Participate in lifelong learning (73%)
3) Engage in learning opportunities (72%)

Figure 8: Value of training and professional development for library staff

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	377	39%	34%	11%	3%	0%	13%	
Provides value to my patrons	375	34%	35%	15%	4%	0%	13%	
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	376	44%	34%	7%	2%	0%	12%	

For training and PD, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff. Training and PD helps them to:
1) Improve skills in the library workforce (71%)
2) Engage in learning opportunities (69%)
3) Participate in lifelong learning (58%)

Focus Group Analysis
Programs and Services Delivered in Collaboration with Other Organizations (programs and services)
Participants generally saw value in programs and services. In some cases, participants knew about the program but not the link to State Library Services. One participant said, "I'm aware of programs, but unaware that LSTA funds them." Some participants mentioned that program promotion was an issue. The main means of promoting programs to library staff is the State Library Services listserv and some participants do not receive the listserv mailings. Also, some participants felt that these programs are more relevant to public libraries than school libraries.

Professional Development in Collaboration with Other Organizations (training and PD)
Professional development activities (workshops on different topics) presented by State Library Services were fairly well received by some participants. For other participants, the professional development offerings did not have the content that participants were looking for to gain skills and information needed for their career or positions. Some participants wanted State Library Services to focus more on continuing education and play a leadership/coordination role, such as coordinating a training calendar. One participant said, "The continuing education piece is huge. State Library Services should seek it out, look for opportunities and advocate for it."

Additional data - Surveys of seminar participants
Survey results from participants in SLS-led workshops on programs and services, training/PD, and children/youth activities were quite positive. The aggregated results are based on surveys of attendees of 61 programs: 32 programs under building capacity, 23 supporting youth, and 6 trainings on LSTA grant opportunities. The data in Table 4 illustrates the generally positive feedback from workshop participants.

Table 4: Survey results from State Library Services-led programs

Percent agree or strongly agree	Topic
100%	Increase in awareness of subject
95%	Increase in motivation to apply learning
91%	Increase in understanding of subject
90%	Appreciation of opportunity
86%	Appreciation of subject
85%	Value (participate again/recommend to others)
84%	New experience
80%	Increase in interest for subject
76%	Increase in knowledge of subject
56%	Increase in confidence for applying learning

N=419 for survey response. Total attendees: 2,698. Response rate: 16%.

4) Improving Services to Children and Youth

There are two topics in the survey and focus groups that relate to activities that improve library services to children, youth, and families/caregivers and activities that connect public libraries and schools.

Survey Analysis

The respondents' rating of children and youth activities was the second highest of any category, after ILL, while the rating of libraries and schools was one of the lower ratings. The comparison of children/youth activities and libraries and schools for positive ratings is: "value to organization" (78% vs. 66%), "patrons" (77% vs. 66%) and "strengthens libraries" (87% vs. 74%).

Figure 9: Value of activities that improve library services to children

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	391	54%	24%	10%	2%	0%	11%	
Provides value to my patrons	389	55%	22%	10%	2%	0%	10%	
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	390	23%	6%	0%	1%	0%	8%	

For children/youth activities, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff:
1) Engage in learning opportunities (83%)
2) Improve their literacy including digital and 21st century literacy skills (81%)
3) Engage with their community (73%)

Figure 10: Value of activities that connect libraries and schools

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	363	39%	27%	15%	3%	1%	14%	
Provides value to my patrons	363	40%	26%	15%	3%	2%	15%	
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	359	44%	30%	12%	1%	1%	13%	

For activities that connect public libraries and schools, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff:
1) Engage with their community (72%)
2) Engage in learning opportunities (71%)
3) Participate in lifelong learning (60%)

Focus Group Analysis

Activities that improve library services to children, youth, and families/caregivers

Participants are generally aware of children/youth activities and like the programs offered, especially the storytime-related programs or resources. A few participants mentioned barriers, such as the driving distance to training and the difficulty of taking time off work; these participants preferred webinars. However, most participants preferred in-person training to webinars. There were also a few comments

about the training/events being held most often in the metro area. The primary means of promotion for the activities is the SLS listserv. Most participants were familiar with listserv and receive update emails, but if a participant was not on listserv, they were usually not aware of the programs.

Evaluators analyzed surveys of participants in SLS-led workshops that included workshops on children/youth activities. See Table 4 above. Results were positive, such as an 85% rating on value (participate again/recommend to others) and a 95% increase in motivation to apply learning.

Activities that connect public libraries and schools
Participants generally felt positive about the activities to connect public libraries and schools, such as the 90 Second Newbery Film Festival, summer meal program collaborations, and the Libraries Serving Youth Meetup. Participants emphasized the importance of public library and school partnerships and commented on the challenges with partnerships. However, they did not provide many specifics or ideas on how to achieve the partnerships. A few related quotes from participants include:
- "We should use resources of public librarians to support school librarians. Most school librarians are not licensed. Could we find ways for public librarians to 'educate and inspire' school librarians?"
- "Since school and public libraries operate under MDE, it's important for them to strengthen those partnerships. MDE should make it clear why collaboration is important and how to best share resources."

5) Grants
Competitive grants are awarded to grantees who apply for either large grants or mini grants. The large grants are $10,000 to $100,000 and align with a five-year plan goal. The mini grants are $1,000 to $10,000 and align with a five-year plan goal and support several library-based projects that meet an identified purpose.

Grants - Survey Analysis
Positive responses about the value of grants were lower relative to most other activities, but still over 60%. The positive response ratings are for "value to organization" (64%), "value to patrons" (63%) and "strengthens Minnesota's libraries" (74%). Based on the high "do not know" responses for grants (16-19%); lack of familiarity could partially explain the slightly lower ratings.

Figure 11: Value of LSTA Grants

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Comparison
Provides value to my organization, including staff	357	40%	24%	14%	3%	0%	18%	■■_ _ _■
Provides value to my patrons	357	40%	23%	15%	3%	0%	19%	■■_ _ _■
Strengthens Minnesota's libraries	354	49%	25%	10%	1%	0%	16%	■■_ _ ■

For LSTA grants, survey respondents rated the following as the top three positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff:
1) Engage in learning opportunities (67%)
2) Engage with their community (65%)
3) Expand access to technology (64%)

Grants process questions

Two survey questions sought information about the grants process: a question about reasons for not applying for a competitive grant, and a question about the respondent's understanding of the various aspects of the competitive grant process. Table 12 shows that many respondents were unfamiliar with the grants process, with "don't know" responses ranging from 21% to 36%. This may be because survey respondents may not work with grants. As shown in Figure 13, of those who are familiar with the grants process, many find the grants to be beneficial (57% positive response). However, the positive responses are much lower for respondent understanding of application (42%) and selection (31%) processes as well as feeling there is enough support (31%) and communication (31%).

Figure 12: Reasons for not applying to a competitive LSTA grant process (Multiple answers possible) (N=233)[4]

Reason	%
Lacked resources/staff to complete application	33%
Grant opportunity did not seem applicable to our needs	19%
Did not feel we would have an appropriate project	25%
Did not understand requirements/process well enough	18%
The dollar amount available was not sufficient	3%
Don't know	36%
Other	13%
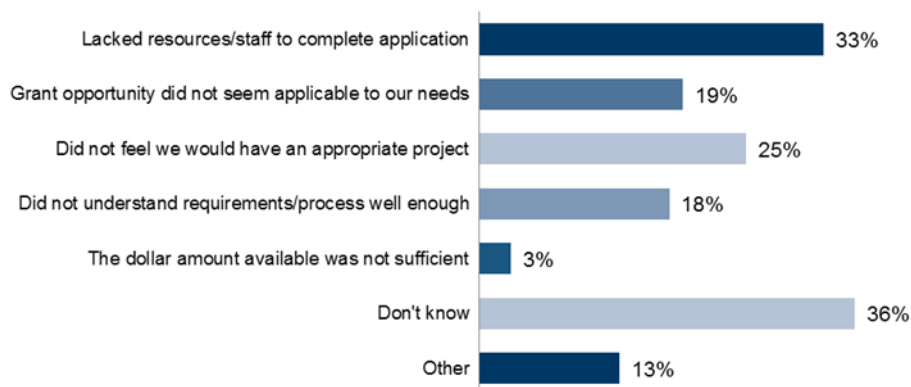
Figure 13: Respondents' views on the competitive LSTA grants (N=340)

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't Know

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
The competitive LSTA grant awards are beneficial to my organization or other organizations I am familiar with	31%	26%	15%	2%		26%
I understand how to apply for a competitive LSTA grant	16%	26%	16%	16%	6%	21%
The competitive LSTA grant award selection process is clear	12%	19%	23%	11%		31%
Sufficient support (such as instruction or training) is available for applying for competitive LSTA grants	11%	20%	22%	11%		34%
I receive enough communication about open competitive LSTA grant opportunities, the selection process and grant project awards	12%	19%	20%	23%	7%	21%

Other comments about grants

The survey included the open-ended question, "Do you have comments about how LSTA funded activities since July 1, 2013 have been helpful to you, your organization or patrons?" Survey respondents

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[4] If a respondent answered "other," they had an opportunity to explain the "other" response. These open-ended responses mirrored response options to the actual question—"did not feel they would be eligible," "lack resources to complete application," "lack knowledge," "lack interest/opportunity," and "too complicated or time consuming." A complete coded list of responses can be found in Appendix F.

answered this question almost exclusively with comments about grants. All of the responses to this question can be found in Appendix F. Respondents had many positive examples of grants uses. Respondents also provided direct compliments to SLS staff on doing a good job with administering and supporting the grants process. However, respondents had negative feedback on the grants on topics similar to the areas in Figure 12 such as lack of resources for grant writing or lack knowledge about grants or if they have an applicable project.

Grants - Focus Group Analysis
Participants felt that the grants are beneficial because they encourage innovation and allow libraries to take risks. One respondent said, "Grants make you think about outcomes and highlight innovations. They make you more disciplined about telling your story." Participants generally gave positive feedback about the grants process, acknowledged process improvements with the simplification of the application, and felt that good support is available from State Library Services. Another participant said, "State Library Services staff are very good to work with. They offer clarifications and answer all our questions."

Some participants felt the application is too long, even with improvements, and organizations often lack staff resources to apply for grants, especially small libraries. Timeframes or deadlines can be an issue, but it depends on the type of library. For example, an application due the first week of school is not compatible with the school calendar. A few participants commented that they would prefer to see the grants focused more on core services and less on innovation. Some participants felt they lack sufficient training on grant writing and also on evaluation and outcomes.

Progress on goals
The evaluators consider Goal One as achieved and Goal Two as achieved. The rationale and supporting evidence:
- Both Goal One and Goal Two are well-funded at $3,298,991 for Goal One and $4,403,360 for Goal Two.
- Project narrative outcomes from each of the 93 projects in the SPR report all showed that projects were beneficial and provided innovative ideas and improvements to libraries in Minnesota. Grantees had various project outcomes that were differentiated and not easily aggregated since each grant or project is unique. A full list of outcomes for all 93 projects can be found in Appendix C. Some examples of outcomes for Goal One projects:
  - Resulted in a number of well-received educational opportunities, available both in person and online, that improved the knowledge and skills of library staff.
  - Provided library services to people with disabilities who cannot read standard print materials.
  - Provided the mechanism for 10 public libraries and 18 library branches to create and market "Play and Learn Spaces" to establish the libraries' efforts to offer more welcoming and engaging spaces supportive of early learning and literacy.
  - Enhanced student and teachers' skills in the use of technology.
  - Students grew in their ability to find and use appropriate digital materials throughout the school year.
- Examples of outcomes for Goal Two projects:
  - Library staff increased their understanding of data-driven collection development.

- o Increased adult basic digital literacy through implementing the Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment and strengthening collaborations between libraries and literacy organizations.
  - o Interlibrary Loan remained popular in Minnesota for physical and digital materials, and the Minitex ILL and delivery system continued to be robust and efficient.
- Project outputs as shown in Table 5 provided value in many ways to patrons and library organizations in Minnesota. Both Goal One and Goal Two outputs were solid and showed contributions appropriate to the types of projects classified under each goal. LSTA-funded projects served over 130,000 people in Minnesota. Through these projects, over 9,600 electronic materials were acquired, over 275,000 items were digitized, and over 832,000 items circulated.

Table 5: Project outputs of 93 LSTA -funded projects FY13-15

Outputs	Outputs that support Goal One projects	Outputs that support Goal Two projects	Total outputs
Number of hardware acquired	836	1	837
Number of software acquired	4	2	6
Number of licensed databases acquired	2	0	2
Number of print materials (books & government documents) acquired	2,330	751	3,081
Number of electronic materials acquired	4,403	5,253	9,656
Number of audio/visual units (audio discs, talking books, other recordings) acquired	83	599	682
Number of items digitized	0	275,475	275,475
Total number of items circulated (includes ebook checkouts)	544,271	288,625	832,896
Retrievables (articles accessed, titles downloaded, songs downloaded, etc. but not ebooks checked out through the traditional library model)	65,000	156,465	221,465
Total number of ILL transactions	1,799	486,755	488,554
Number of persons served	129,512	9,696	139,208
Number of learning resources created (online learning guides, toolkits)	182	4	186

Summary of findings from survey and focus groups and recommendations
The majority of supporting details for the achievement of Goal One and Goal Two are based on the survey and focus groups' feedback on activities. This can be found in the discussion of major activities and findings section starting on page 5. Summaries of the findings for the major activities and recommendations below are organized by goals.

Major Activities to Support Goal One – Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1) Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)
Summary: Focus group and survey participants generally think that MBTBL is an important and necessary resource. However, MBTBL was the only one of the major activities that received lower scores on the survey questions about value and access. A main reason behind the lower scores is that many respondents did not know about or how to access the MBTBL services.
Recommendations: MBTBL should provide more information and better promotion on how to access their services. They may want to emphasize in their promotional materials the target populations for MBTBL services and how their technology and delivery offerings support their clients.

2) Building Library Capacity and Partnerships
Summary: Participants largely see the programs, services, and professional development opportunities offered by State Library Services (SLS) as positive and helpful. Attendees in 32 SLS-led workshops who

completed evaluations support this finding. They overwhelmingly felt that their knowledge and confidence in the subject increased as a result of the workshops and that the workshops were of value. Some participants suggested better promotion of the activities and for SLS to offer more workshops for school library staff. They would also like SLS to look into more programs/services related to continuing education.

Recommendations: State Library Services should look at broader promotion of programs and services to reach potential participants who are not on the SLS listserv. SLS should ensure that future program topics benefit schools. For training and professional development of library staff, if it is under the purview of State Library Services, they should look at focusing their efforts in a coordination role with continuing education and offer more career development-related topics.

3) Improving Services to Children and Youth

Summary: Participants felt very positive about the offerings for "improving services to children and youth" and had good awareness of these programs. Respondents rated this area as the second highest in the survey. Participants expressed the importance of activities to connect public libraries and schools. A few mentioned that training may be too focused in the Twin Cities metro area or that promotion should be improved. Attendees in 23 SLS-led workshops who completed evaluations felt that their understanding and confidence increased and that the workshops were of value.

Recommendations: State Library Services can improve promotion and geographic distribution of training or identify ways to reach non-metro staff. Again, as with Building Library Capacity and Partnership, SLS should employ strategies for promotion beyond the SLS listserv. State Library Services should also look at ways to facilitate or coordinate partnerships between school libraries and public libraries because of the strong interest in this area.

Major Activities to Support Goal Two – Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1) Interlibrary Loan[5]

Summary: Participants perceive ILL very positively and see much value in ILL services. ILL was the highest rated area on the survey on value and access. Participants mentioned that schools often lack information about ILL and understanding on how to use ILL.

Recommendations: Minitex can provide more information on how to utilize the service, especially for schools. The promotional materials should clearly explain how ILL service works, especially the technical aspect, because a few participants wondered if some aspects of ILL are needed with the availability of digital content.

Grant Activities Support both Goal One and Goal Two – Summary of Findings and Recommendations

1) Grants

Summary: Participants felt that grants are beneficial, but they sometimes have organizational constraints that prevent them from applying for grants (e.g., lack of time or staff). They rated the value and access of grants fairly well in the survey, but between 15-20% said they were not familiar with grants. With the grants process, an even larger number of respondents said they are not familiar enough with the process to answer questions (21-34%). However, in the open-ended questions, respondents provided many

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[5] Interlibrary Loan is delivered through Minitex located at the University of Minnesota. Minitex is a cooperative organization that provides for resource sharing throughout the state and through grant agreements with the state library agency.

positive examples of grant uses and compliments to SLS staff on administration and support. Some participants felt that more training on grant writing and outcome evaluation would be helpful. **Recommendations:** State Library Services can continue to simplify or streamline grants. (SLS did receive a Governor's Continuous Improvement Award in 2014 for their work to simplify the grant application form and processes). They can promote how to apply for grants and provide as much support as possible. In the future, SLS can offer training on grants application and monitoring as well as background knowledge around grants, such as grant writing, approaches to evaluation, such as logic models, and measuring or tracking outputs and outcomes.

Note about internal grant review and monitoring process in support of achieving goals:
Evaluators partially based their determination that the grants achieved the goals in the Minnesota LSTA Plan based on a comprehensive, rigorous process that SLS has established for grants. The grants are structured to align with the goals in the LSTA plan. Grantees who apply for the competitive grants select a LSTA goal or sub-goal as part of their application process. State Library Services and the Minnesota Department of Education have a stringent grants monitoring and review process. The grants are awarded based on how well projects will help Minnesota achieve the selected five-year plan sub-goal. Grant applications go through a rigorous, impartial scoring and review process. Once grantees are selected, SLS provides guidance on expectations and monitors grantees though site visits, fiscal monitoring, and quarterly review of financial reports and bi-annual review of narrative reports. Grantees submit final narrative and financial reports that include project outputs and impact statements.

A-2: Measures of Success – Focal Areas and Intents

Evaluation Question: To what extent did your Five-Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents?

For Tables 6 and 7, evaluators operationalized "extent" by examining the number and dollar amount of the 93 projects/activities attributed to the Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents. Most of the activities and projects in Minnesota have both a primary and secondary focal area and corresponding intent. Projects are often complex and encompass several different goals and outcomes. Therefore, to capture the fuller impact of projects, there are two summary tables, one of primary focal areas and intents, and one with secondary focal areas and intents. The tables contain information on total dollar amounts that fall under focal areas and intents. However, dollars allocated across primary and secondary focal areas/intent are not totaled because the total is well beyond the roughly $8 million dollars in LSTA funding for the evaluation period.

Table 6: Primary Focal Areas and Intents for Projects and Activities

Focal Area	Count of Projects by Focal Area	Sum of LSTA dollars by Focal Area	Corresponding Intents Improve users':	Count of Projects by Intent	Sum of LSTA dollars by Intent
Lifelong Learning	62	$2,570,254	Formal education	13	$880,982
			General knowledge and skills	53	$1,928,149
Information Access	14	$4,099,058	Ability to discover information resources	0	
			Ability to obtain and/or use information resources	11	$3,965,387
Institutional Capacity	13	$1,163,475	Improve the library workforce	10	$906,287
			Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure	1	$100,000

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Focal Area	Count of Projects by Focal Area	Sum of LSTA dollars by Focal Area	Corresponding Intents Improve users':	Count of Projects by Intent	Sum of LSTA dollars by Intent
			Improve library operations	1	$51,981
Economic & Employment Development	3	$186,028	Ability to use resources and apply information for employment support	3	$186,028
			Ability to use and apply business resources	0	
Human Services	0		Ability to apply information that furthers their personal, family, or household finances	0	
			Ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness	0	
			Ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills	0	
Civic Engagement	1	$4,466	Ability to participate in their community	1	$4,466
			Ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	0	
Total	93	$8,023,283		93	$8,023,283

Note that focal areas were assigned separately from intents, so focal area totals and their corresponding intents count and dollar totals do not necessarily match.

Table 7: Secondary Focal Areas and Intents

Focal Area	Count of Projects by Focal Area	Sum of LSTA dollars by Focal Area	Corresponding Intents Improve users':	Count of Project by Intents	Sum of LSTA dollars by Intents
Lifelong Learning	7	$610,158	Formal education	0	0
			General knowledge and skills	4	$344,449
Information Access	8	$1,634,605	Ability to discover information resources	0	0
			Ability to obtain and/or use information resources	10	$1,761,500
Institutional Capacity	12	$3,976,744	Improve the library workforce	2	$147,536
			Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure	8	$3,798,507
			Improve library operations	2	$30,701
Economic & Employment Development	7	$132,833	Ability to use resources and apply information for employment support	8	$271,647
			Ability to use and apply business resources	0	0
Human Services	27	$196,287	Ability to apply information that furthers their personal, family, or household finances	0	0
			Ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness	0	0
			Ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills	27	$196,287
Civic Engagement	3	$120,674	Ability to participate in their community	3	$120,674
			Ability to participate in community conversations around topics of concern	0	0
Total	64	$6,671,301		64	$6,671,301

Note that focal areas were assigned separately from intents, so focal area totals and their corresponding intents count and dollar totals do not necessarily match.

Analysis of focal areas and intents

In terms of dollars allocated, with the primary focal areas and intents, the "Information Access" focal area has the highest dollar amount at $4,099,058, followed by "Lifelong Learning" at $2,570,255 and "Institutional Capacity" at $1,163,476. All focal areas have at least four projects classified under the focal area category (including primary and secondary focal areas). The focal area of "Lifelong Learning" has the most with 69 projects and "Civic Engagement" has the least with four projects. With the intents including both primary and secondary intents, the highest count is for the focal area for improving "General Knowledge and Skills" with 57 projects and the second highest count is "Ability to Apply Information that Furthers Their Parenting and Family Skills" with a count of 27 projects.

Explanation of focal area and intents emphasis

The majority of the projects/activities and funding that support the goals in the Minnesota LSTA Plan relate to the focal areas/corresponding intents of "Lifelong Learning," "Information Access," and "Institutional Capacity." The other three focal areas do not relate as well to the goals in the Minnesota LSTA Plan. Therefore, there are fewer projects and less funding classified under the focal areas/intents of "Economic and Employment Development," "Human Services," and "Civic Engagement" especially for the primary focal areas and intents.

Other reasons why there are fewer projects and dollars under these second three focal areas:
- The establishment of the 2013-2017 Minnesota LSTA Plan predates the development of focal areas by IMLS, so SLS staff did not purposely plan initiatives or target their grant funding around these areas.
- State Library Services does not provide direct service to library patrons. It is an administrative agency so it has less opportunity to affect patron's lives directly.

Focal areas aligned with impact areas from survey

Table 8 and Figure 14 show how survey respondents rated the focal area impacts. Some impacts relate to multiple focal areas, so the survey results give a general idea of the respondent ratings. Table 8 shows the results between the focal area counts and respondents' view of which activities have positive impacts on patrons, organization, or staff. The focal area of "Lifelong Learning" emerged as the area with the most projects and also was aligned with the three top impact areas from the survey.

Table 8: Focal areas aligned with impact areas from survey

Impact area from survey (combined positive impacts of activities on patrons, organization or staff)	Count of impacts	Alignment with Focal Area
Improve skills in the library workforce	972	Institutional capacity
Expand access to technology	1036	Information access & Institutional capacity
Overcome barriers to academic achievement	1185	Lifelong learning, Information access & Human services
Engage with their community	1285	Civic engagement
Obtain materials/access to digital resources	1315	Information access, Institutional capacity & Economic & Employment Development
Improve their literacy	1396	Lifelong learning
Participate in lifelong learning	1502	Lifelong learning
Engage in learning opportunities	1583	Lifelong learning

Figure 14: Total number of times respondents indicated the seven library activities had these positive impacts on their patrons, organization, or staff (Note: responses are shown in order from least to most responses)
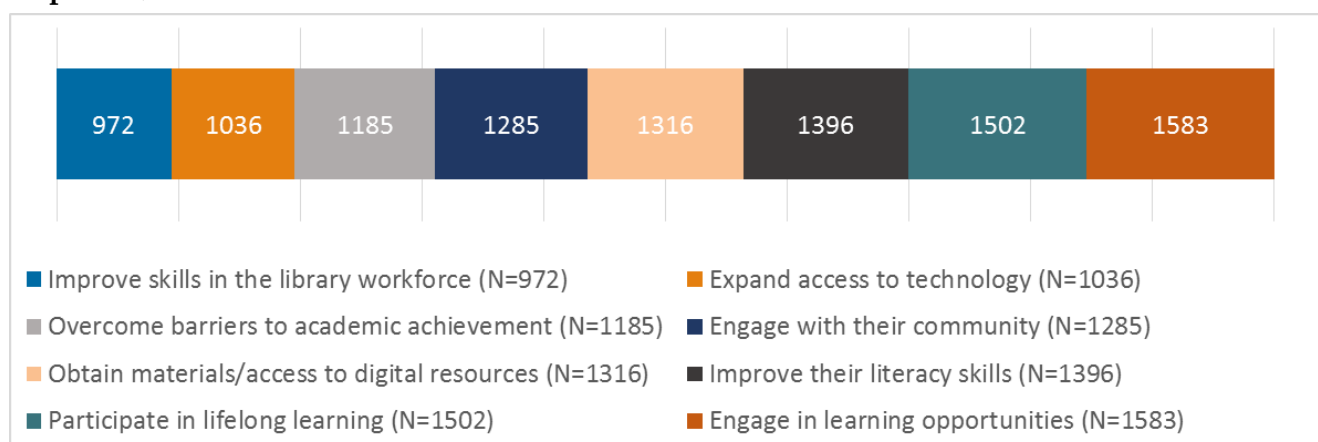
- ■ Improve skills in the library workforce (N=972)
- ■ Expand access to technology (N=1036)
- ■ Overcome barriers to academic achievement (N=1185)
- ■ Engage with their community (N=1285)
- ■ Obtain materials/access to digital resources (N=1316)
- ■ Improve their literacy skills (N=1396)
- ■ Participate in lifelong learning (N=1502)
- ■ Engage in learning opportunities (N=1583)

A-3: Substantial Groups

Evaluation question: Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for your Five-Year Plan activities? A substantial focus would represent at least ten percent of the total amount of resources committed by the overall plan across multiple years. For groups that meet the threshold, discuss to what extent each group was reached.

In Table 9, evaluators operationalized "extent" by examining the number and dollar amount of the 93 projects/activities attributed to beneficiary groups. Since projects are often complex, they can have multiple beneficiaries and benefit more than one group. To determine which groups represented a substantial focus of the five-year plan activities, evaluators assigned projects to beneficiary groups and often more than one group. Then a total of the dollars allocated by the beneficiary group was divided by the total amount of dollars spent over the three fiscal years ($8,023,283) to arrive at the percentages.

Table 9: Analysis of groups with a substantial focus of LSTA Plan activities

Beneficiary Groups	LSTA Dollar Amount*	Percentage	Count*
Library workforce (current and future)	$ 1,849,153	**23%**	22
Individuals living below the poverty line	$ 817,304	**10%**	15
Individuals that are unemployed/ underemployed	$ 173,290	2%	3
Ethnic or minority populations	$ 119,826	1%	7
Immigrants/refugees	$ 169,173	2%	5
Individuals with disabilities	$ 1,232,344	**15%**	5
Individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills	$ 215,620	3%	7
Families	$ 588,309	7%	34
Children (aged 0-5)	$ 583,912	7%	33
School-aged youth (aged 6-17)	$ 1,686,747	**21%**	35

*Dollars and counts are higher than the total dollars and count of projects because projects were attributed to more than one beneficiary group.

Discussion of groups that meet the threshold and extent each group was reached

Four projects met the threshold of ten percent of $8,023,283 (i.e., $802,328). The highest is "Library workforce" (23%), followed by "School-aged youth" (21%), "Individuals with disabilities" (15%), and "Individuals below the poverty line" (10%).

Library Workforce (current and future) – 22 projects

For the "Library Workforce" group, there were 22 projects totaling $1,849,153. The majority of the dollars allocated were at the capacity-building/systems level, such as the State Library Services annual initiatives of "Building Library Capacity" and "Partnerships and Improving Library Services to Children/Youth." These projects have elements that serve the library workforce, including webinars and training, connecting library staff with key information, and resources for early literacy programming, such as posters and bookmarks in multiple languages. Examples of other projects that benefited the library workforce included grant projects such as Electronic Library for Minnesota (ELM) Instruction, which included training and workshops on effective use of ELM, a suite of state-funded research and information resources and databases. The Collective Learning Online Training Hub (CLOTH) project enabled Southeastern Libraries Cooperating to implement enhanced online training.

Individuals living below the poverty line – 15 projects

For the "Individuals living below the poverty line" group there were 15 projects totaling $817,304. The majority of the projects for this group involved digital literacy. Some examples of projects that benefited students living below the poverty line:
- Libraries and Literacy Agencies United for Digital Literacy: partnerships between public libraries and adult education organizations to help individuals with limited digital literacy gain skills.
- Accessible Digital Literacy for All Middle School Learners: a project that helped students to grow in their ability to find and use appropriate digital materials.
- Project 2M: a project that increased access to technology and library materials in school media centers in the district with technology purchases.

An example of a smaller project was "Playful Learning in St. James, Community Connectors: Services for Underserved English Speaking Urban Populations," which involved outreach efforts to remove language, economic, and transportation barriers to library use for families with limited resources.

Individuals with disabilities – 5 projects

For the "Individuals with disabilities" group there were five projects totaling $1,232,344. The majority of the funding/resources for this group was annual funding for the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library. Other programs included Sensory Storytime, a pilot of monthly storytimes for children ages 3-8 with activities specially designed for children who may experience sensory integration issues. The Access for Engagement project included exploring new ways for children and teachers in grades 3-6 to use digital text to enhance learning for learners, including children in special education.

School-aged youth – 35 projects

For the "School-aged youth" group there were 35 projects totaling $1,686,747. Most of the projects benefiting school-aged youth included elements of digital literacy and/or technology. Some examples of projects include:

- The Waconia Digital Navigators project improved the 21st century and digital literacy skills of students and families by developing/implementing supports for students on technology and provided for the purchase of new apps and software.
- The Bridging Literacy through Targeted Instruction project gave struggling elementary school readers more access to reading materials and resources through an extended after-school program, new summer library hours, and targeted outreach efforts.
- The Expanded Extra Reading at the Library (ERL2) project allowed elementary school students to participate in summer reading tutoring services to avoid the "summer slide" and gain reading fluency.

B: Process questions

B-1: Use of SPR data to guide activities in the five-year plan

State Library Services utilized data from the SPR to track the number of awards and amount of funds spent on projects that address each of the five-year plan goals and sub-goals. SPR data identified the goals and sub-goals for the library development activities and statewide single source grants and ensured they were adequately addressing them. The data helped narrow the focus of the competitive grant opportunities to specific sub-goals that needed additional resources and were best accomplished through local library projects.

B-2: Changes made to the five-year plan

State Library Services' original LSTA 2013-2017 Five-Year Plan was developed through a stakeholder engagement process in early 2012. With new leadership at State Library Services beginning in August 2013, SLS reached out to a wider range of people who are engaged with Minnesota's libraries. From one-on-one meetings with school library media specialists to presentations at the Minnesota Library Association's annual conference, SLS asked how to better serve the needs of Minnesotans. A 2014 Libraries and Service Delivery Consultant Group met six times to review Minnesota library structures and service delivery. The conversations included a thoughtful look at how Minnesota libraries will integrate new service models in the coming years. One of the results was an updated LSTA 2013-2017 Five-Year Plan that retained the original goals and sub-goals yet provided a new context for the use of funds to address critical statewide needs and priorities.

B-3: Sharing SPR data and evaluation resources

State Library Services analyzes, compiles, and shares data included in the SPR with both internal and external stakeholders. SLS uses high-level SPR data to create an informational overview of the annual use of LSTA funds. Libraries are invited to share the annual overview with their communities and policymakers. SLS offers professional development opportunities and uses participant evaluation results to determine if the workshops were beneficial and if further training is needed. SLS incorporates evaluation results and various data from competitive and targeted grant projects into reports. Reports are posted on the Minnesota Department of Education website, presented to library stakeholders and community partners, and Minnesota Library Association and Information Technology Educators of Minnesota conference participants. Additionally, SLS regularly shares LSTA project outcomes through the State Library Services newsletter which reaches over 1,500 library stakeholders.

C: Methodology questions

C-1: Implementation of an independent five-year evaluation

As a state agency, State Library Services is required to utilize the services provided by other state agencies when they are available rather than hiring outside contractors. Management Analysis and Development (MAD) is Minnesota state government's in-house, fee-for-service management consulting group. MAD has over 30 years of experience helping public managers increase their organizations' effectiveness and efficiency. MAD provides quality management consultation services to local, regional, state, and federal government agencies and public institutions. MAD evaluated the 2008-2012 Five-Year LSTA Plan and consulted in the development of the 2013-2017 Five Year Plan. MAD's proposal and work plan to perform the 2013-2017 Five-Year Plan evaluation was accepted by SLS.

Karen Gaides, a senior management consultant at MAD, designed the strategy for conducting the five-year plan evaluation. Gaides led State Library Services staff, including the LSTA coordinator, state data coordinator, and state librarian, in gathering the required data and reports and connecting with library stakeholders. To ensure that stakeholder feedback was given freely, online surveys were sent through MAD communication channels and after presenting brief overviews at in-person focus groups, the LSTA coordinator and state librarian were excused to encourage participants to share feedback openly. Henriët Hendriks, another senior management consultant, performed much of the data analysis for the evaluation.

C-2: Types of statistical and qualitative methods used in conducting the five-year evaluation

Focus groups

In October 2016, MAD conducted three focus groups with stakeholders. The focus group discussion questions looked at the main activities funded by LSTA funding in Minnesota. Three focus groups were held in locations around the state with a total of twenty-four participants in attendance.

Survey

In October and November 2016, MAD conducted the LSTA evaluation online survey, which was sent to a broad group of 1,549 stakeholders in the library community. The response rate[6] for the survey was 28% (428 respondents). A copy of the focus group questions and the survey can be found in Appendix D.

Data review

In order to perform data and statistical analysis MAD consultants and State Library Services staff created a companion spreadsheet to the SPR reports with information taken from the primary fields needed for analysis from the SPR reporting. Other classifying information was added to the spreadsheet for each project to relate back to the evaluation questions such as goal/sub-goal, grant type, focal areas, intents, substantial groups (beneficiaries), LSTA funding, outputs, and narrative outcomes. Evaluators aggregated the information to produce data for findings in many sections of the report.

MAD consultants reviewed a number of other types of documents which can be found in Appendix C.

C-3: Description and engagement of stakeholders in five-year evaluation

Focus group attendees represented a broad cross-section of the library community in Minnesota. Attendees included staff/members from:
- Public libraries and schools who had applied for/received and those who had not applied for competitive grants;
- Multi-type and regional public library systems;
- Academic and research libraries;
- School media centers and special libraries, such as the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library; and
- Professional organizations, such as the Minnesota Library Association and ITEM.

Holding the focus groups in three locations around the state allowed for people from different geographic locations to attend. A complete list of participants in the focus groups can be found in Appendix B.

The recipients of the survey are from a similar cross-section of the library community in Minnesota. Some examples of sources for the survey email list include: LSTA grantee program administrators, public library directors, regional and multi-type system directors, school media specialists, youth services librarians, and State Library Services listserv recipients.

C-4: Sharing of key findings and recommendations

State Library Services will prepare a summary report of the key findings and recommendations from the Five-Year Plan Evaluation. SLS will post the report on the State Library Services LSTA webpage and share it directly with Minnesota library stakeholders through their listserv and direct emails to library stakeholder groups. Additionally, SLS will provide the key findings and recommendations to the strategic planning committee to help inform and guide development of the 2018-2022 Five-Year LSTA Plan.

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[6] The response rate included respondents who started the survey and at least answered question 3b.

Appendix A: List of acronyms and terms

Acronyms

ELM: Electronic Library for Minnesota
GRRL: Great River Regional Library System
IMLS: Institute of Museum and Library Services
ILL: Interlibrary Loan
LSTA: Library Services and Technology Act
MBTBL: Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library
SLAA: State Library Administrative Agency
SLS: State Library Services
SPR: State Program Report

General definitions and Minnesota-specific definitions

Library: Included are district and charter school media centers, public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, regional public library systems, multicounty multitype library system, learning resources centers, extension services, information and referral services, archives, and similar repositories.

Library system: A *regional public library system* is a multi-county public library service agency formed under Minnesota statutes by a joint powers agreement that provides free access to all residents of the region without discrimination. In Minnesota, there are six consolidated and six federated systems. A consolidated system is organized with one centralized administrative unit (and board) for libraries in that region. Federated regional systems provide shared services to public libraries that are operated by cities and counties. Each participating library in a federated library system maintains local financial and administrative autonomy.

A *multi-county, multi-type library system* is a multicounty cooperative network formed under Minnesota statutes and composed of any combination of public libraries, regional public library systems, public school libraries, public or private college or university libraries, state government libraries, special libraries, and any other libraries which share services and resources within a designated service area.

Minitex: Located at the University of Minnesota, Minitex is a cooperative organization that provides for resource sharing throughout the state and through grant agreements with the state library agency. Minitex administers statewide interlibrary loan and Ebooks Minnesota.

MnLINK: The statewide library information system and network hosted by Minitex and the backbone of interlibrary loan. MnLINK consists of two main components. The first component is an integrated library automation system shared by many colleges, universities, and state government libraries. The second component is a Z39.50 compliant Gateway linking designated public and academic integrated library automation systems around the state. The MnLINK integrated library systems and the MnLINK Gateway together create one of the largest multi-type shared library systems in the country.

Appendix B: List of people interviewed

Focus group attendees and organizations

Name	Organization
Barber, Anne	Morris Public Library
Betcher, Audrey	Rochester Public Library
Bodeau, Andi	Osseo Area Schools
Boese, Amy	Ramsey County Library/ 2017 Minnesota Library Association President
Burnham, Maria	Sauk-Rapids Rice Public Schools
Dille, Pamela	Pioneerland Library System
Dougherty, Renee	Columbia Heights Public Library
French, Dawn	St. Paul Public Schools
Grussing, Jake	Scott County Library System
Halgren, Kathy	South Saint Paul Public Library
Hayes, Tim	Blue Earth County Library
Hedstrom, Gail	Elbow Lake: Thorson Memorial Library
Horton, Valerie	Minitex
Jordan, Mary	Central Minnesota Libraries Exchange (CMLE)
Lienemann, Stacy	Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library
Mehsikomer, Mary	Technology and Information Educational Services (TIES)
Molaro, Dr. Tony	St. Catherine University, MLIS Program
Nerhaugen, Kristy	Duluth Public Library
Nysetvold, Theresa	Murray County Central Schools
Pundsack, Karen	Great River Regional Library
Ridge, Marian	Kitchigami Regional Library
Stambaugh, Sara	Rasmussen College
Stratton, Monica	Ramsey County Library
Trojanowski, Jim	Plum Creek Library System
Walker-Smalley, Ann	Metronet

Appendix C: Documents reviewed and financial information

Instructions and background documentation:

Guidelines for IMLS Grants to States Five-Year Evaluation
State of Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017
Webinars from ILMS on State Program Report, October 2016

Project related documentation:

A. Additional grantee/background information:
   1. MBTBL Profile at a Glance 2013
   2. MBTBL Profile at a Glance 2015
   3. Web sites:
      State Library Services: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/Lib/sls/index.htm
      MBTBL: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/mbtbl/index.htm
      ILL: https://www.minitex.umn.edu/
B. Grant opportunity background files for FFY 13, 14, 15:
   1. Announcements about grant opportunities
   2. Applications and instructions
   3. Application technical guidance presentations
   4. Reviewer rating forms
   5. Figures on number of applicants and number of grants awarded.
C. Expenditures spreadsheets:
   1. LSTA Expenditures for FFY 2013 SPR Projects
   2. LSTA Expenditures for FFY 2014 SPR Projects
   3. LSTA Expenditures for FFY 2015 SPR Projects
D. Surveys of participants in 61 State Library Services staff-led trainings, webinars, meetups, and resource sharing events in FY 2013- 2015
   1. Access to eBooks: Challenges
   2. eBooks in Libraries: Business Models
   3. 2015 Public Library Report Refresher
   4. 2015 Public Library Survey Update
   5. 2015-16 90-Second Newbery Film Festival Participant Evaluation
   6. 2016 90-Second Newbery Film Festival Screening Evaluation
   7. 2016 LSTA Grant application guidance (March session)
   8. 2016 LSTA Grant application guidance (April session)
   9. 90-Second Newbery Film Festival co-presentation @ NCTE
   10. 90-Second Newbery Film Festival Participant Evaluation
   11. 90-Second Newbery Film Festival Screening Evaluation
   12. 90-Second Newbery Film Festival Workshop October 10, 2015
   13. 90-Second Newbery Film-Making Workshop
   14. Basic Records Management webinar

15. Better Together evaluation
16. Data Privacy for Libraries (ACL Staff Training)
17. Dept. of Commerce workshop - avoiding scams @ Delano Library
18. Dept. of Commerce workshop - avoiding scams @ Howard Lake Library
19. Dept. of Commerce workshop - avoiding scams @ Pierz Library
20. Dept. of Commerce workshop - avoiding scams @ Waite Park Library
21. Dept. of Commerce workshop - financial literacy @ Anoka County Lib
22. Dept. of Commerce workshop - financial literacy @ Zumbrota PL
23. Dept. of Commerce workshop at Perpich Ctr for Arts Education
24. Easy as Sing, Read, Talk, Write and Play: Adults as Partners in Developing Language and Literacy in Young Children Training Evaluation
25. eBook Basics (EeBMN)
26. eBooks in Libraries: Consortial Models (EeBMN)
27. Explore eBooks MN Summit
28. Explore EBooks MN Update
29. How to plan and implement a Storytime for Grown Ups
30. Improve the Health of Your Community through Your Library webinar survey
31. ITEM presentation about Ebooks MN (with Valerie Horton)
32. Libraries Serving Youth Meetup 2016 Participant Evaluation
33. Libraries Serving Youth Meetup Participant Evaluation
34. LSTA Grant Reviewer Training
35. LSTA Grantee orientation webinar (July)
36. LSTA Grantee orientation webinar (August)
37. LSTA Grantee Panel: Igniting Partnerships through LSTA Grants
38. Minnesota E-Learning Summit
39. MLA SLS Information Table
40. MN Coalition of Law Libraries - Get the 411 on Legal Reference
41. MSBA Conference presentation
42. Opportunities for Library Services in Minnesota's Tribal Communities
43. PLD Day
44. Prepare+Prosper
45. ProQuest Historical Star Tribune training @ CMLE
46. ProQuest Historical Star Tribune training @ St. Paul Public Schools
47. ProQuest Historical Star Tribune training @ Viking Library System
48. RLTA and the e-rate process
49. SFSP informational webinar
50. Storytime for Grown Ups Workshop
51. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation Bemidji
52. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation North Branch
53. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation Detroit Lakes, Grand Rapids
54. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation Mankato
55. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation Prior Lake, Owatonna, Redwood Falls
56. Storytimes for Everyone! Training Evaluation St. Cloud
57. Supercharged Storytimes Impact Evaluation

58. Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play Every Day Training of the Trainer Workshop Evaluation St. Cloud
59. Talk, Sing, Read, Write and Play Every Day Training of the Trainer Workshop Evaluation White Bear Lake
60. Tax Resources for Libraries webinar
61. Taxes 101 Webinar Evaluation
62. WBWF Grant Reviewer Training
  E. Grantee reports for each of the 93 projects with LSTA funding during the evaluation period

Table 10: List of Minnesota SPR Projects/Activities FFY13-FFY15

The projects/activities in Table 10 are sorted first by fiscal year and then by sub-goal.

Grant Type Key: LRG=large competitive grant, TGT=targeted, SSG=sole source grant, SLAA=state library services projects, CON=contract for services, A4=administration project

Project Title	Grantee	FY	Sub-goal	Grant Type
Minnesota Book Awards, Support to Librarians Statewide	Friends of the St. Paul Public Library	13	1.1	LRG
Youth Literacy	State Library Services	13	1.2	SLAA
Mini Grants: Play and Learn Spaces	State Library Services	13	1.2	N/A
Dakota County Library: Play and Learn Space	Dakota County Library	13	1.2	MNI
Lake Agassiz: Play and Learn Space	Lake Agassiz Regional Library	13	1.2	MNI
South St. Paul Public Library: Indoor Play Space	South St. Paul Public Library	13	1.2	MNI
Waseca-Le Sueur: Play and Learn Area	Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System	13	1.2	MNI
Stillwater Public Library: Sensory Storytime	Stillwater Public Library	13	1.2	MNI
East Central Regional Library: Opportunity Community Play and Learn Space	East Central Regional Library	13	1.2	MNI
Washington County Library: Play and Learn Spaces	Washington County Library	13	1.2	MNI
Anoka County Library: Play Matters	Anoka County Library	13	1.2	MNI
Carver County Library: Discovery Kits and Learning Centers	Carver County Library	13	1.2	MNI
North Mankato Taylor Library: Imagination Station Kits	North Mankato Taylor Library	13	1.2	MNI
Mini Grants: Expanded Learning through Libraries	State Library Services	13	1.2	N/A
Ogilvie: I D.E.C.L.A.R.E.! It's a Library Fair	Ogilvie ISD #333	13	1.2	MNI
Hoyt Lakes Public Library: WeDo STEM	Hoyt Lakes Public Library	13	1.2	MNI
Saint Paul Public Library: Minnesota Youth Reading Awards in St. Paul Public Schools	St. Paul Public Library	13	1.2	MNI
Literacy Equity: Engaging Resourceful Community Knowledge	Perpich Center for Arts Education	13	1.2	LRG
iPads and Pre-Readers, a Together Project	Hennepin County Library	13	1.2	LRG
Brooklyn Center Reading for the 21st Century	Brooklyn Center ISD#286	13	1.2	LRG
Digital Learning at Oak View	Osseo ISD#279	13	1.2	LRG
Advancing At Risk Youth toward Working Professionals	St. Paul Public Library	13	1.2	LRG
Skills for Success: digital and information literacy for middle school learners	Yinghua Academy	13	1.2	LRG
Partnerships	State Library Services	13	1.3	SLAA

Project Title	Grantee	FY	Sub-goal	Grant Type
Library Development	State Library Services	13	1.3	SLAA
Creative Aging in Mower County	Austin Public Library	13	1.3	LRG
Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	13	1.3	SLAA
Community Connectors: Services for Underserved English Speaking Urban Populations	St. Paul Public Library	13	1.3	LRG
Collective Learning Online Training Hub (CLOTH)	Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO)	13	1.4	LRG
Statewide Interlibrary Loan and Delivery	Minitex Library Information Network	13	2.1	SSG
Murray County School Libraries Addition to the PCLS Catalog	Plum Creek Library System	13	2.1	LRG
Electronic Library for Minnesota (ELM) Instruction	Minitex Library Information Network	13	2.2	SSG
eBooks for Southeastern Minnesota Schools	Southeast Library System (SELS)	13	2.2	LRG
Libraries and Literacy Agencies United for Digital Literacy	St. Paul Public Library	13	2.2	TGT
Supporting Historical Research: Digitized Minneapolis Tribune	State Library Services	13	2.2	CON
LSTA Administration and Coordination Grant	State Library Services	13	n/a	A4
Tech Connects: Digital Literacy & Collaborative Learning	Lake Superior College, Erickson Library	14	1.1	LRG
Access for Engagement	Moorhead Area Public Schools, ISD152	14	1.1	LRG
Rochester Reading Champions	Rochester Public Library	14	1.1	LRG
Project 2M	Cass Lake - Bena, ISD115	14	1.2	LRG
Accessible Digital Literacy for All Middle School Learners	Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools, ISD47	14	1.2	LRG
BOLD Maker Space Exploration	BOLD School District	14	1.2	MNI
The River as Community	Clouquet Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Expanded Extra Reading at the Library (ERL2)	Fergus Falls Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Student-Led STEM-Based Maker Activities	St. Paul Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Together We Can Think It – Make It – Share it!	West Central Area Schools, ISD 2342	14	1.2	MNI
Brick Builders LEGO® Club	Two Harbors Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning at the Wyoming Area Library	East Central Regional Library	14	1.2	MNI
We Play Here	Great River Regional Library	14	1.2	MNI
Together Play and Learn Spots in Hennepin County Library	Friends of Hennepin County Library	14	1.2	MNI
Come Play with Me at Our Library!	Kitchigami Regional Library	14	1.2	MNI
Lake Agassiz Children's Spaces and Storytimes	Lake Agassiz Regional Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning at the Martin County Library	Martin County Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning Spaces for Olivia, Renville and Bird Island Public Libraries	Pioneerland Library System	14	1.2	MNI
Interactive Play Spaces for White Bear Lake Library	Ramsey County Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning in the Redwood Falls Public Library	Redwood Falls Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Baby and Toddler Exploratory Play Space at Hayden Heights Library	St. Paul Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning in St. James	Watonwan Public Library	14	1.2	MNI
Playful Learning in the Wheaton Community Library	Wheaton Community Library	14	1.2	MNI
Improving Library Services to Children and Youth	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	14	1.2	SLAA

Project Title	Grantee	FY	Sub-goal	Grant Type
Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	14	1.3	SLAA
Building Library Capacity	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	14	1.3	SLAA
Building Media Resources in Saint Paul Public Schools	St. Paul Public Schools, ISD625	14	1.4	LRG
Community School Media Centers as Online Partners, 2014	Southeast Library System (SELS)	14	2.1	LRG
Statewide Interlibrary Loan and Delivery	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	14	2.1	SSG
Data-Driven Collection Development	Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO)	14	2.2	LRG
ELM Instruction	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	14	2.2	SSG
Libraries and Literacy Agencies United for Digital Literacy	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	14	2.2	TGT
Digitized Minneapolis Tribune	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	14	2.2	CON
LSTA Administration and Coordination Grant	State Library Services	14	n/a	A4
Waconia Digital Navigators: Students at the Helm	Waconia Public Schools	15	1.1	LRG
Romp and Rhyme	Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System	15	1.2	LRG
Middle School Makerspaces: A Community of Creators	Bloomington Public Schools	15	1.2	LRG
Bridging Literacy Through Targeted Instruction	Farmington Public Schools	15	1.2	LRG
300 Books Before Kindergarten for At-Risk Preschoolers	South St. Paul Library	15	1.2	MNI
Aids to Digital Navigation	Carver County Library	15	1.2	MNI
Building Research-Ready Students in SPPS	Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)	15	1.2	LRG
Creating a Cuture of Literacy among AVID High School Students	Robbinsdale Area Schools	15	1.2	LRG
Traveling iPad Workshops for Leech Lake Reservation Middle School Students	Leech Lake Tribal College	15	1.2	TGT
Improving Library Services to Children and Youth	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	15	1.2	SLAA
Library Lab: Connecting Science and Technology to Teens	Waseca LeSueur Regional Library System	15	1.2	MNI
Making, Creating, and Partnering in the Library for College and Career Readiness	Osseo Area Learning Center	15	1.2	MNI
Minecraft: Coding Camp	Washington County Library	15	1.2	MNI
Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library	15	1.3	SLAA
Cedar Riverside Library Outreach Project	Friends of Hennepin County Library	15	1.3	LRG
Building Library Capacity and Partnerships	State Library Services - Minnesota Department of Education	15	1.3	SLAA
Hmong Resource Center Library Expansion Project	Hmong Cultural Center	15	1.3	LRG
Statewide Interlibrary Loan and Delivery	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	15	2.1	SSG
Identifying Access Needs for E-Government Services	Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)	15	2.1	LRG
eBooks Minnesota	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	15	2.1	SSG
Rochester Books on the Fly	Rochester Public Library	15	2.1	TGT
ELM Instruction	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	15	2.2	SSG
LSTA Administration and Coordination Grant	State Library Services	15	n/a	A4

Project Funding Types

The funding types/mechanisms and an explanation of each is listed below:

- **Competitive grant opportunities:**
    - o **Large competitive grants -** from $10,000 to $100,000 support library-based projects that address a community need and achieve a five-year plan sub-goal.
    - o **Mini grants** - grants from $1,000 to $10,000 support library-based projects that meet an identified goal, such as providing extended student learning opportunities, creating playful learning environments, and addressing Minnesota's academic achievement gap.
- **Sole source grants** – grants awarded when only one agency is able to carry out the work needed to accomplish an activity that will help achieve one of Minnesota's five-year plan goals. There were sole source grants with Interlibrary Loan and Delivery, Ebooks Minnesota, and ELM (Electronic Library for Minnesota) Instruction grants awarded to Minitex as well as a grant to St. Paul Public Library to bring Northstar digital literacy curriculum and assessments to adult education organizations across Minnesota.
- **Targeted grants** - similar to sole source grants. However, more than one entity can be identified as a potential grantee. The entities must all be the same type, for instance tribal or correctional facility libraries, and must all be invited to apply for a grant award. SLS has offered two targeted grant opportunities during the 2013-2016 five-year plan, one for projects that support expanded library services to tribal communities and one for projects that bring library services and resources to transit hubs.
- **Professional or technical contract for services** – for services including but not limited to consultation, analysis, evaluation, and planning, to help SLS staff achieve the goals of the five-year plan. Recent contracted services funded with LSTA, include library statistics data gathering software, hosting the digitized Historical Minneapolis Tribune, expert E-Rate and Early Literacy consultations, and automation software for the Braille and Talking Book Library.
- **State Library Services projects** - SLAA staff coordinate initiatives that help achieve the goals of the five-year plan. SLAA staff salaries are paid with LSTA funds for the portion of their time spent coordinating these initiatives. Examples of recently funded LSTA initiatives include providing library services to individuals who because of a visual or physical disability cannot read standard print materials, providing early-literacy and early-STEM learning opportunities for library staff, the 90 Second Newbery Film Festival and school visits, and helping libraries build partnerships that connect them to one another and to community and statewide entities to improve services to library patrons. SLAA staff host webinars and conference presentations, provide direct library services, and create targeted resources and communication to support these initiatives.
- **Administration** - SLAAs may use 4% of their annual allocation to administer the state's LSTA program. Minnesota's administrative funds pay a portion of the LSTA coordinator's salary as well as departmental costs associated with administering the LSTA program. The LSTA coordinator provides individual technical guidance and webinar orientations for potential grant applicants, grant reviewers, and grantees. Additionally, the LSTA coordinator administers competitive grant opportunities and requests for proposals, monitors grantee and vendor performance, and completes required federal reporting.

Appendix D: Research instruments for focus groups and survey

LSTA Evaluation Focus Group Questions

1) Introductions

Facilitator gives introduction on goals and process with focus group.

a) Name
b) Organization
c) Experience with LSTA grants: *more than one can apply*

- Applied for a competitive LSTA grant and received one
- Applied for a competitive LSTA grant and did not receive one
- Have not applied for a competitive LSTA grant
- I don't know
- Worked in a partnership role with a grant

2) Background presentation by State Library Services:

- LSTA goals/sub-goals
- State Library Services Overview
- Overview of efforts funded by LSTA dollars FFY 13-15
    - Pie chart showing dollar allocations

3) State LSTA goals

a) Thinking back over the past 3 years, how well were the state LSTA goals aligned with your organization's and patron's needs?

LSTA Funding for Programs and Services
4) Interlibrary Loan & Delivery and Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library

a) Are you aware of support for Interlibrary Loan & Delivery and MBTBL?
b) How does support to these organizations provide value to your organization and patrons?
c) Did you experience any barriers or are you aware of any barriers to accessing these resources or programs?

5) Improving Services to Children and Youth

a) Are you aware of items with Improving Library Services to Children and Youth?
b) How do the Improving Library Services to Children and Youth initiatives provide value to your organization and patrons?
c) Did you experience any barriers or are you aware of any barriers to accessing these resources or programs with this strategy?

6) Building Library Capacity and Partnerships

a) Are you aware of items with Building Library Capacity and Partnerships?
b) How do the Building Library Capacity and Partnerships initiatives provide value to your organization and patrons?
c) Did you experience any barriers or are you aware of any barriers to accessing these resources or programs with this strategy?

7) Competitive Grants

a) What are the benefits of the grants for your organization or other organizations that you are familiar with?
b) If you have not applied for a grant, what stopped you from applying for a grant? Any barriers?
c) Process/communication: Any feedback on the application, review process or communication about grants?
d) Any other feedback or ideas for improvement on the LSTA grants or process?

8) Future View

Do you see any future needs in Minnesota's library system that LSTA funding would be helpful with?

LSTA Evaluation Survey Instrument

SURVEY INTRODUCTION

State Library Services is evaluating its State of Minnesota LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) Five-Year Plan 2013-2017. As required by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) the division is assessing programs and services that took place on or after July 1, 2013 and were funded by federal fiscal year 2013, 2014 and 2015 LSTA allocations.

State Library Services would like to get your input on several items related to LSTA funded projects and associated LSTA five-year plan goals. Your responses will be confidential and neither your name nor your organization's name will be disclosed to State Library Services.

Please take 10-15 minutes to complete this survey. Your input is very helpful in informing the evaluation of the State of Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 and in planning for the future.

State Library Services at the Department of Education has asked Management Analysis and Development (MAD) to conduct this survey and prepare an independent evaluation. If you have any questions about or problems with the survey, please contact Karen Gaides at 651.259.3822 or karen.gaides@state.mn.us

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

What best describes your location?
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Suburban

What best describes the type of library or library system at which you work? (check all that apply)
- ☐ Public library
- ☐ Public school, including charter, library
- ☐ Regional library system, multi-county, multi-type library system or other library cooperative
- ☐ Academic library
- ☐ Special library (not-for-profit law, historical, medical, etc.)
- ☐ State agency library
- ☐ Library friends organization
- ☐ Other:

LSTA FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Four percent of Minnesota's annual LSTA allocation is used to administer the LSTA program. The remaining 96% is dedicated to projects that accomplish the goals of the State of Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017. These funds support Interlibrary Loan, the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library, competitive grant awards and other programs and services such as professional development/training for library staff and activities that improve library services to children and youth. Your feedback on how these programs benefit your patrons, organization or staff will help State Library Services to evaluate progress towards the five-year plan goals and plan for the future.

Interlibrary Loan

LSTA funds support a portion of interlibrary loan services through Minitex. Interlibrary loan allows patrons of participating Minnesota libraries to access a wide array of information resources in a range of formats whenever and wherever the information is needed.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
Interlibrary loan provides value to my organization, including staff						
Interlibrary loan provides value to my patrons						
Interlibrary loan activities strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing interlibrary loan						

Key=strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, "don't know"

Interlibrary loan has the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; it helps them to:
- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve skills in the library workforce
- ☐ None of the above

Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)

MBTBL is a program of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The library provides direct library service to patrons of all ages with visual, physical or reading disabilities for whom conventional print is a barrier to reading.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
MBTBL provides value to my organization, including staff						
MBTBL provides value to my patrons						
MBTBL activities strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing MBTBL						

MBTBL has the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; it helps them to:
- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning

- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

Activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers

State Library Services staff coordinate professional development, programs and resources to improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers. For example, Every Child Ready to Read 2 workshops, Supercharged Storytimes, Minnesota Storytime Hub, early literacy bookmarks and posters.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
Activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers provide value to my organization, including staff						
Activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers provide value to my patrons						
Activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers						

Activities that improve library services to children, youth and families/caregivers have the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; they help them to:
- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

Training and Professional Development for library staff and in collaboration with other agencies.

State Library Services staff coordinate and connect Minnesota library staff with training and professional development in collaboration with other agencies. For example, tax information from the MN Department of Revenue, Records Retention with the Minnesota Historical Society and social security information from the Social Security Administration.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
Training and professional development provide value to my organization, including staff						
Training and professional development provide value to my patrons						
Training and professional development activities strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing training and professional development						

Training and professional development opportunities for library staff have the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; they help them to:

- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

Programs and Services delivered in collaboration with other organizations

State Library Services staff coordinate and connect Minnesota library staff and patrons with programs and services delivered in collaboration with other organizations. For example, the Resilient Communities exhibit by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, EBooks MN from Minitex, Historical Star Tribune through the Minnesota Historical Society, Better Together: Strengthening Adult Learning Communities with Minnesota Adult Basic Education, and Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
Programs and services like these provide value to my organization, including staff						
Programs and services like these provide value to my patrons						
Programs and services like these strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing programs and services like these						

Programs and services like these have the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; they help them to:

- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities

- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

Activities that connect public libraries and schools

State Library Services staff develop and coordinate programs and professional development opportunities designed to connect Minnesota's public schools and libraries. For example, the 90 Second Newbery Film Festival, summer meal program collaborations, and the Libraries Serving Youth Meetup.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
Activities that connect public libraries and schools provide value to my organization, including staff						
Activities that connect public libraries and schools provide value to my patrons						
Activities that connect public libraries and schools strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing activities that connect public libraries and schools						

Activities that connect public libraries and schools have the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; they help them to:
- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

LSTA Grant-funded Projects

Large and mini competitive grants and targeted grants help Minnesota libraries carry out projects that address community needs, strengthen local libraries and address one or more LSTA sub-goals.

Please select your degree of agreement, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each statement below.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
LSTA grant-funded projects, including competitive grants, provide value to my organization, including staff						
LSTA grant-funded projects, including competitive grants, provide value to my patrons						
LSTA grant-funded projects, including competitive grants, strengthen Minnesota's libraries						
There are few barriers to accessing LSTA grant awards, including competitive LSTA grant awards						

LSTA grant-funded projects, including competitive grant projects, have the following positive impacts on my patrons, organization or staff; they help them to:
- ☐ Improve their literacy (including digital and 21st century literacy) skills
- ☐ Expand access to technology
- ☐ Obtain materials/access to digital resources
- ☐ Engage in learning opportunities
- ☐ Overcome barriers to academic achievement
- ☐ Participate in lifelong learning
- ☐ Engage with their community
- ☐ Improve library workforce's skills
- ☐ None of the above

Please indicate your organization's level of experience with Minnesota's **competitive LSTA grant-funded projects**:

Check all that apply

Since July 1, 2013, my organization has:

- ☐ Applied for a competitive LSTA grant and received one
- ☐ Applied for a competitive LSTA grant and did not receive one
- ☐ Not applied for a competitive LSTA grant
- ☐ I don't know

Skip logic to:

Why did your organization not apply for a competitive LSTA grant? (check all that apply)
- ☐ Lacked resources/staff to complete grant application and process
- ☐ Grant opportunity did not seem applicable to my organization's or community's needs
- ☐ Did not feel we would have an appropriate project
- ☐ Did not understand requirements and process well enough
- ☐ The dollar amount available wasn't sufficient
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other:

Competitive LSTA Grant Awards since July 1, 2013 – Selection and Application process.

Staff at State Library Services and the Grant Services divisions of the Minnesota Department of Education coordinate the competitive LSTA grant application & selection process.

	SA	A	N	D	SD	DK
The competitive LSTA grant awards are beneficial to my organization or other organizations I am familiar with.						
I understand how to apply for a competitive LSTA grant						
The competitive LSTA grant award selection process is clear						
Sufficient support (such as instruction or training) is available for applying for competitive LSTA grants						
I receive enough communication about open competitive LSTA grant opportunities, the selection process and grant projects awards						

LSTA FIVE-YEAR PLAN SUB-GOALS

Approved by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the State of Minnesota LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 identifies Minnesota libraries' current needs and goals. All Minnesota LSTA funds, including competitive grants, are used to address one or more of the following six sub-goals in the plan.

During July 1, 2013-present timeframe, which LSTA five-year plan sub-goal(s) most closely reflected the needs of your patrons, organization and library staff?

Please rank the top three. Place "1" next to the sub-goal that most reflected the needs of your patrons/organization/staff, a "2" for the second most and a "3" for the third most.

LSTA five-year plan sub-goal	Ranking
1.1 Support literacy, including 21st century and digital literacy.	
1.2 Provide educational opportunities for children from early learning through postsecondary, especially targeting children from birth through age 17 from families living in poverty or facing barriers such as language, race, ability, geography, or access to resources such as technology.	
1.3 Promote lifelong learning and continuing education, including the enhancement and expansion of services and resources relating to health, access to justice, and workforce and community development.	
1.4 Promote training and professional development, including continuing education, to improve and expand the current and future library workforce.	
2.1 Support technology and infrastructure initiatives and services that build the capacity of Minnesota's libraries to serve their patrons.	
2.2 Support statewide initiatives and services that build the capacity of Minnesota's libraries and their staff to serve their communities.	

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Do you have other comments about how LSTA funded activities since July 1, 2013 have been helpful to you, your organization or patrons?

What other support would you like to see from State Library Services in the future?

Note: responses to this question will be sent directly to State Library Services for use in developing the next LSTA five-year plan. Your name, organization and contact information will not be shared.

Looking ahead to 2022, what do you consider your community's greatest needs?

Please select (or rank) your communities top three needs

Access to information (physical and digital resources)

Access to technology and broadband

Adult literacy, including English-language learning

Early literacy, including kindergarten readiness

Immigrant and refugee services

Improved services for people living in poverty

Library workforce development

Services for lifelong learners, including seniors

Support for learners, including K-12 students

Workforce development, including digital literacy

Why do these needs stand out?

Appendix E: Additional output of statistical findings

Demographics of survey respondents

Survey respondents included a good mix of rural (42%), urban (23%), and suburban (34%) location of respondents. Three main library types or systems with the highest representation in the survey include public library (46%), public school (40%), and regional library system, multi-county, multi-type library system or other library cooperative (12%).

Table 11: Location of survey respondents

Library location	# of survey respondents	% of total respondents
Rural	181	42%
Urban	99	23%
Suburban	145	34%
No reply	3	1%
Total	428	100%

Table 12: Library or library type where survey respondents work

Library type or system	# of survey respondents	% of total respondents
Public library	197	46%
Public school, including charter school, library	172	40%
Regional library system, multi-county, multi-type library system or other library cooperative	51	12%
Academic library	17	4%
Special library (not-for-profit law, historical, medical, etc.	5	1%
State agency library	5	1%
Library friends organization	3	1%
Other	5	1%
No reply	2	1%
Total	428	100%

Appendix F: Summaries of coding used in qualitative analyses

Focus Groups – Summary of Findings

This document contains a summary of findings from the focus groups organized by activity area. Direct quotes from participants are also included.

Inter-Library Loan
- Good awareness of ILL except by schools
- Schools need more information on if they can use ILL and how
- Important in rural areas (and beyond)
- Important to home school families, academic libraries
- Acknowledge large portion of pie/percentage of budget
- Interest may have waned in recent years, examples below but does not seem to be a strong theme.
    - "I'm "absolutely aware" and support those programs even though ILL has declined in our area."
    - "ILL is minimal in our school and is drastically reduced from previous years."

ILL Quotes – in support of ILL:
"People assume you can use any library in the state as a basic right."

"Every day we receive requests for materials outside our library collection."

"(Large metro area county library's) service would collapse without ILL! Our libraries' physical spaces limit the collection size. Our patrons are very appreciative of ILL."

"Our patrons are fascinated with where their ILL books come from! They believe the world has opened up for them."

"ILL on demand is important."

Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library (MBTBL)
- More information and promotion needed
    - "(Large metro area county library) does not use MBTBL services. We don't really know it's there."
    - "Libraries would benefit from more promotion of MBTBL and learning about who's eligible for services."
- Not well understood how to access, may be underutilized
- Libraries do not have enough information to make referrals to MBTBL
- Important resource especially with aging population
- Some questioned if the technology approach is outdated, examples:
    - "An aging population is likely to increase use, but computer technology and ebooks are supplanting need for these types of special services."
    - "Resources include digital cassettes and playback equipment that are provided by mail."

- o "I've toured MBTBL and don't understand – it seems outdated when you consider services that are commercially available."

Services to Children and Youth
- Summary: Awareness of programs is good, these programs are well known and liked (seemed to especially like storytime-related programs or resources)
- Promotion somewhat of an issue since the main means of promotion is the SLS listserv update emails
- Varied feedback on familiarity with the SLS listserv update emails, most participants are familiar with and receive listserv update emails. However a few focus group participants had not heard of many SLS-sponsored programs since they did not receive and/or had not heard of SLS listserv update emails.
- Geographic barriers of training location mentioned by some, therefore they tend to favor online training, webinars, etc. A few comments about the trainings/events being too metro-focused and a comment about the MeetUp being more local.
- Taking time off also mentioned as a barrier in attending trainings:
  - o "Supercharged Storytime is great because it's available online, but staff didn't have enough time for homework – no time for 90sN either."

Other quotes:
"Maybe we could have 90sN screenings around the state."

"Staff have gone through Every Child Ready to Read, Supercharged Storytimes, and the STEM workshop. This training is absolutely critical. Some staff had not had training like that before."

Theme of support for schools and libraries working together or needing to work together but few ideas on how to carry out partnerships effectively.
Quotes:
- "It's critical that schools and libraries align."
- "We should use resources of public librarians to support school librarians. Most school librarians are not licensed. Could we find ways for public librarians to educate and inspire school librarians?"
- "You can only beat your head against the wall so many times. Schools are very hard to partner with."
- "Schools have so much to do; partnerships are not a priority."
- "Since school and public libraries operate under MDE, it's important for them to strengthen those partnerships. MDE should make it clear why collaboration is important and how to best share resources. I understand, though, that strong relationships between the two could appear to threaten their own job security. But, what could State Library Services do?"
- "Connecting school and public librarians is difficult because of the school schedule. Staff are required to be in the building. The Meetups are good, but they should be facilitated more at the local level rather than just statewide at MDE."
- "We need more efforts to get public and school libraries to work together."

Building Library Capacity and Partnerships
- Summary: Many have heard of these programs but are not as familiar with them as they are with Services to Children and Youth programs and also in some cases do not associate the Building

Library Capacity programs with State Library Services. These programs mainly/especially touch public libraries.

- Awareness and promotion, getting word out an issue somewhat of an issue
- For many, the Building Library Capacity programs are not explained or understood well
- There seemed to be confusion for some on how the Building Library Capacity and Partnerships activities encompassed professional development. In many cases it was not the type of professional development that staff really need.
- Seem to want Professional Development and Continuing Ed focused in different areas, various examples:
    - Professional development and continuing ed for library staff a need
    - Some requests for SLS to be in coordination role with PD, coordinate a calendar.

Quotes:
- "I'm not aware of most of these programs nor of any LSTA involvement in them."
- "I'm aware of programs, but unaware that LSTA funds them."
- "The professional development activities are good, but distance is a barrier."

Quotes:
- "The continuing education piece is huge." State Library Services should seek it out, look for opportunities and advocate for it."
- "For K-12 librarians, the real issue is initial education. There are not enough qualified, licensed applicants with MLS degrees to fill professional positions."
- "As a new system director, I don't feel well-prepared to be a system director. New directors don't get a walk-through of the calendar or state statute."
- "Lots of continuing education opportunities are available from various sources. A continuing education calendar would be helpful; the state could play a coordination role."
- "Continuing education should be a priority for professional development. Because of structural problems State Library Services is not addressing continuing education because it's not really their responsibility."

Competitive Grants
Positive comments about competitive grants:
- More accessible now, improved application, simplified
- Process improvements with grants acknowledged
- A few quotes/comments on SLS staff helpful with support and questions
    - "Staff from SLS are always quick to respond to calls or emails for help."
    - "State Library Services staff are very good to work with. They offer clarifications and answer all our questions."
    - "Support is good – online help is helpful as are phone calls to staff."

Challenges with competitive grants:
- Application long even with improvements
- Timeframes can be an issue but it depends on type of library what the preferred timeframes are.
- Challenge is in ability/staff resources to apply for grant
    - "Staff in small libraries have hardly any time off the desk. How do they have time to apply, implement or evaluate grants? System support is only way grants are possible."

Viewpoint on grants as beneficial:
- Overall feel that competitive grants are good/great since they encourage innovation
  - The grants are a resource for innovation.
- People like the opportunities that grants provide
- Able to take a chance on something, try something different, with how the grants are structured it makes an organization think—the needs assessment and outcomes aspect are helpful.
  - "Grants make you think about outcomes and highlight innovations. They make you more disciplined about telling your story."
  - "The needs assessment before the grant application process is very helpful. It informs everything else you do. The process provides long-term benefits even if you don't get the grant."

Some dissatisfied with the focus of the grants/funding:
- Would like to see grants that are less about innovation and more about core services, building collections
- Cannot always apply for what they want to, problem with alignment with goals and grants, some examples with infrastructure and core services
  - "Just because SLS is in MDE, grant opportunities shouldn't be limited to K-12. The regions serve K-12 but also others."
  - "We are a region of the aged. The region's schools are well-funded. Our region doesn't fit what LSTA is funding."

More training would be helpful:
- Would like training on grant writing and also evaluation and outcomes
  - The competitive grants make sure projects are aligned with the local strategic plan and state goals, and they ensure strong outcomes. "I want to move the needle in my community and not just have nice program." The competitive grants "encourage innovation."
  - "One of my staff members was a LSTA reviewer and afterwards said applicants need training on understanding outcomes."
  - "People also need training on evaluation."

LSTA Goals
- Only one of the three groups commented much on LSTA goals so do not have enough data to generate findings
- For other two focus groups goals discussion turned into a springboard to discussing grants since participants had a lot to say about grants

State Library LSTA Plan Survey
Categorized results for open-ended questions responses

Why did your organization not apply for a competitive LSTA grant?

*Responses below are the comments for the "Other, please specify" response option:

Not eligible:
- Private academic libraries usually are not eligible.
- The Lake Elmo Public Library writes and receives many grants but I'm not sure we qualify for LSTA grants.
- Not eligible.
- Was told that multi-type, multi-county library systems in Minnesota could not apply for LSTA grants.
- Received benefit of LSTA through regional library local libraries didn't have to apply individually.
- State/Government Libraries are not eligible to apply.
- The grant looks like you apply as a district not as a school.

Lack resources:
- Did not have administrative support within the organization for the grant proposal
- Not enough RLBSS and other funds to match the grant.
- Licensed staff only works part-time and teaches classes as well as manages library during that time.
- Our library position was completely cut by our school district two years ago.

Lack knowledge about grants:
- I have not had any experience or training on how to apply for grants.
- I don't know about LSTA grants. All grants are written at the regional office.
- Was not aware that it was even available. Also, does it apply to public school libraries?
- Need more information about them. Wasn't aware of the opportunity
- Was unaware of the grants.

Lack interest/opportunity:
- Haven't yet had an opportunity.
- Working on building project; had grants from foundations to do.
- Too close to deadline to complete the grant application.
- Organization does not seek grant funding, partly because of state view of organizations of our type.
- Currently not interested, but if an opportunity came up, I would definitely apply.

Too complicated or time consuming, Comments on process:
- The work involved, including paperwork, exceeds the value of the potential projects.
- Paperwork & application process seemed excessive, more time-consuming than other grant opportunities.
- Too much time is wasted on the application process. The process should be simpler.
- Time and effort to get a grant didn't seem to fit with our staffing nor needs we were trying to fill
- It's more trouble than it is worth for something you only get to do one time with no follow through.

Don't know:
- I am unable to answer this question.
- I am new to my position and do not know whether we have applied for one in the time period noted.
- I am not the staff person who would apply for such grants. Whatever you do to improve literacy helps.

What other comments do you have about how LSTA funded activities since July 1, 2013 have been helpful to you, your organization or patrons?

Positive examples of grant uses/Complimentary comments
Schools:
- LSTA has provided the school librarians with an opportunity to collaborate that we otherwise would not have. As school librarians, we are isolated and have no direct colleagues in the building. Working together last year, we were able to offer services beyond what we would have been able to do alone.
- The awarded LSTA grant in our school greatly improved library "providings" and services to our patrons. It has been transformational.
- The LSTA grants have allowed our school libraries the opportunity to try new services and study the effects of the services.
- These grants have been hugely impactful in providing technology, training and digital citizenship/media literacy instruction to our K-8 students. All the work has married with district goals to make the gains more impactful and relevant.

Mini-grants:
- I loved the mini-grant - it was the perfect amount for a small project to be efficient and meaningful without being burdensome on staff resources.
- Competitive LSTA grants have also had positive impacts on our libraries/patrons (we received a mini grant).

Technology-related (non-school):
- LSTA funds have helped with project that moved our organization further along with digital literacy.
- We have been able to purchase Smart boards, cameras, etc. for almost every classroom and our media centers. We have greatly increased the amount of reading materials for our pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students.
- I believe LSTA funds helped supply our public library region with laptop computers which has made possible training for patrons in our rural branches that would not have been possible otherwise.
- Not sure how arrowhead library system is involved with this, but they have been extremely helpful. I hope those programs continue to support us, including the ebook system. (*repeated under programs section*)

General:
- We have many resources and have learned many things about our methods thanks to grant funds.
- Ability to work with others (think tanks) to generate, support, and implement grant requests.

- LSTA has jump-started our new relationship with our community--increasing our event attendance and lifelong learning reach substantially.
- As a recipient and grant reviewer I have seen that LSTA funds make important programs and projects possible for public and school libraries around the state.
- LSTA funds provide resources and opportunities that we may not otherwise have.
- The LSTA grant allowed our organization to leverage additional resources to build the infrastructure for a model literacy program involving multiple agencies working toward the same goal.
- I've really loved the training offered to library staff - since I am a new library it has been invaluable!
- I was privileged to be part of implementing an LSTA grant-funded project that sought to increase awareness of and participation in library services within the Cedar Riverside community. The grant and support from SLS helped make it possible to host pop-up libraries in the neighborhood and train volunteer ambassadors.

Direct compliments to SLS staff/process:
- Thank you for your work!
- State Library Services staff is very supportive with the process.
- We received a LSTA Grant for the enhancement of our children's area. I worked with a great person and she helped with any questions that I had. It was a great experience. I would highly recommend it to any library that would like help in their children's area.
- The mini-grant process was a more streamlined application.

Resource concern:
- The grants are great, but the paperwork involved is way too time-intensive for small libraries with one staff person.
- Grant writing is a significant enterprise and require both time and expertise. Often working LMS's lack both.

Concern with grant process:
- The grant period could have different timing, especially when a public library and school library are collaborating. We lose at least three months of working together when school is not in session.
- As a busy public school librarian, I would say that I simply haven't had time to look into the LSTA grant program sufficiently enough to know a lot about how the types of things it can be used toward would be useful to me in my school. I know there are numerous programs offered through the public libraries that we schools can cooperate on, but in the cases where we have tried to participate with a public library program, we have sometimes been told that there were no times available for us once the public library slots were filled or the program was only for public libraries, etc. Overall, I guess it has left a bad taste in my mouth.
- As our library time is cut from schools, grants have been a lifeline. I want to see more advocacy for the connection between 21st century skills, technology and a librarian. The perception of a book checkout person seems prevalent in administration in the public schools.

Transparency/Reporting:
- No transparency in the way LSTA funds are allocated.

- I believe the expenditure of LSTA funds needs to be completely transparent. The previous state library posted a simple report on the website every year. Receipts: total amount received for all areas. Disbursements: Recipient group sometimes with short explanation of activities funded total amount for each. Receipts = Disbursements. I am baffled as to why this can't seem to be accomplished. It couldn't possibly take more than an hour.
- It is difficult to know. There is not sufficient transparency in the selection process or in the mid-grant/post grant reporting process that enables the broader library community to understand either the value of grant activities or the priorities used by the state library/MDE to distribute LSTA funding. While one might have the ability to determine from a title that there is theoretical value in a given project, but actual follow-up benefits, if any, are much harder to track.

Don't Know/Lack Knowledge:
- Our district has a grant. That's all I know.
- Unfortunately I know very little about LSTA and the grants offered at our elementary school in Brainerd. I am pulled in so many directions for my job, I can barely keep up. So sorry.
- I admittedly have not been in a position to apply for an LSTA grant and since my system is so large I don't really know a whole lot about them. In my MLIS program we did mock grant writing projects built around the LSTA, and I think it provides ample opportunities to support education and foster communities through library programming.
- I don't really know anything about the LSTA grants but I am thinking that I should research how to apply as I have projects in mind that would align with the goals of the program.
- I don't know anything about this
- The question above did not allow me to give a complete answer. In my current library, I am working as a reference/ info librarian and am not in an administrative position that files for grants. In my former position I did assist in working on a grant request for out library.
- As a public school librarian, I feel I don't always know what services/resources the State Library provides, other than ELM—which is an amazing resource. *(repeated under programs section)*
- I am not aware of how our library system has used LSTA funds.
- Haven't applied for a grant
- Not familiar with this funding
- I feel like people use the acronym LSTA like everyone knows what that is, and I am sorry, but I don't understand the process at all.
- I am unaware of any LSTA funded activities I have participated in or any grants that have been funded in this area during that time.
- I am not included in the discussions about LSTA funded activities, grants, etc. Have absolutely no knowledge of how this actually affects my library system. Although I am a front line, professional (MLIS) worker and could offer insight into organizational and staff needs, I am not surveyed within my organization on these topics.
- Many of the questions were geared towards organizations that have already benefited from receiving an LSTA grant. Because my organization is not among those, my survey results, and those of others in my position, may skew the data.

Not applicable/not sure if applicable:
- I have not applied for any because they did not seem applicable to my small libraries.

- I would like more information on the LSTA grants. I have not looked into them since I have assumed that since I'm not from an urban school that I would not qualify. If they are available to all schools, I would be interested.
- We do a great job of resource sharing in our state. The grant programs don't offer much to smaller libraries who are already stretched thin, and primarily benefit larger, already well funded, libraries. That money is needed to support smaller institutions.
- Public school libraries could not benefit from the grants, unfortunately. It wasn't clear either.
- I am not aware of State Library Grants that support school districts. I would need additional information, so districts in rural Minnesota could take advantage of possible funding.

Comments on particular programs - Support for MnLINK, ILL and infrastructure, ELM:
- Being a small rural library, we rely heavily on MnLINK- interlibrary loan with other libraries around the state - in order to meet our patron's needs. Please keep this service going indefinitely! Also, we rely heavily on your support of infrastructure. Our patrons need internet access for everything, from applying for jobs to taking care of their banking. Unfortunately, not only are service fees for internet high, but then we also need expensive hardware, like the switches. Thank you so much for helping us out with this!
- It is important to maintain funding for our interlibrary loan service, as patrons have grown to expect and depend upon this service. A great way to share resources.
- Our library relies on ILL and other statewide projects funded with LSTA funds to continue operations.
- Interlibrary loan is a vital service and one heavily used by our patrons.
- Resource sharing is critical. Elm is critical.
- As a public school librarian, I feel I don't always know what services/resources the State Library provides, other than ELM—which is an amazing resource.
- Minnesota EBooks project has had a very positive impact on our library and should be continued.
- Not sure how arrowhead library system is involved with this, but they have been extremely helpful. I hope those programs continue to support us, including the ebook system.

Statements about needs:
- We could really use some more help with School Libraries, Programming, support, advocacy, staffing, more LMS licensed programs that aren't just St. Kates and ALA certified.
- More communication between public and school libraries
- I am a Para working in a rural elementary school. I am limited to 4.5 hours per school day with very little prep time. I am disappointed that our school district does not have a licensed librarian. All of our libraries are staffed with untrained para staff. This is my second year working in the media center and I have been fighting to get new books. When I first asked last year I was told there is no budget for new books. I finally did get some new books this year after contacting a community member who said they would look into it. I was only able to order from Scholastic and was limited to $1500. I am worried that school officials are working to get the libraries removed from our schools. I heard a rumor and feel it is in the works.

Other:
- I'm not sure if this is the correct funding, but I LOVE the national history day support we receive both in outside events and people coming in giving support at our school.
- Keeping our libraries across the state strong and vibrant is vital.

- Anything you do to improve literacy and knowledge of library resources helps patrons prepare for success in college so they are better able to take advantage of the resources we offer
- My students would greatly benefit by linking their school library account/school ID with the local Hennepin county library system. Connecting our interoffice delivery could connect with the interlibrary loan system with minimal adjustments.