

2023 LORI Summer Reading Mini-Grants: Pre-Award Instructions & FAQ



Overview

The Office of Library & Information Services (OLIS) is providing Summer Reading Mini-Grants to all public libraries that host a summer reading program to support reading and learning activities. The program will reimburse pre-approved expenditures for programming at libraries this summer which fall into OLIS' priorities for summer programming. Libraries may request up to \$600 for youth activities and up to \$300 for adult activities. Library systems may request \$300 per additional location for youth activities.

Instructions

- Complete the Summer Reading Mini-Grant Request Form to indicate your intent to receive a summer reading grant
- Include the requested library information, and your plan for using the summer reading mini-grant funds (see below for allowable purchases)
- If you would like to hire an educational presenter, please list the name of the presenter in the Description column of your request form
- Use the Purpose & Outcomes column to explain what activities you will do and what the anticipated learning outcomes will be. To express learning outcomes you might write, "as a result of this activity, participants will...."
 - ...learn to..."
 - ...create..."
 - ...build confidence..."
 - ...become aware of..."
 - ...understand..."
 -develop skills..."
- Return the completed form to Danielle Margarida (Danielle.margarida@olis.ri.gov) and Emily Goodman (Emily.goodman@olis.ri.gov) by March 20, 2023
- OLIS will either accept your request form as submitted or return for corrections, which are due back by March 27, 2023
- When your interest form is accepted, OLIS will initiate your award through the new eCivis Grants Management System (GMS). For directions on accepting and managing your award, see the Accepting and Managing Your Award Instructions and FAQ.

Allowable Expenses

This program is limited to providing supplies and services to support reading and hands-on, experiential learning activities. Please contact OLIS if you have questions about allowable expenditures.

Supplies & Materials

Program Supplies

- Can be for in-person, virtual, or hybrid programs, as well as pop-up libraries
- Art, craft, and other programming supplies
- StoryWalk® supplies (e.g. books, laminate, mounting)
- Scavenger hunt supplies (e.g. printing, laminate, mounting)
- Nature programming (e.g. gardening, citizen science projects kits, bird watching, astronomy)
- Sound system, microphones, cameras, or other AV equipment
- Green screen

Circulating Materials/Kits

- Book Club Kits, Book Clubs in a Bag, Early Literacy Kits, STEM Kits, Storytime Kits, Nature-themed Kits, Library of Things
- Durable packaging (e.g. tote bags, backpacks, plastic bins)
- Printing supplies (e.g. ink, paper)
- Books, including local simultaneous or extra copies of eBooks
- Manipulatives (e.g. physical objects used as teaching tools)
- STEM supplies (e.g. Makey Makey, Squishy Circuits, robots, building toys)
- Other themed supplies (e.g. gardening materials, bird watching supplies, cooking tools and cookbook club materials, role playing game materials)

Take & Make/Grab & Go Kits

- Packaging materials (e.g. bags, containers, rubber bands)
- Printing supplies
- Art supplies
- Writing or journaling supplies (e.g. notebooks, journals, pens, markers)
- STEM activity supplies (e.g., supplies for experimentation and tinkering)
- Other themed supplies (e.g. gardening materials, bird watching supplies, cooking tools and cookbook club materials, role playing game materials)

Services

Educational Presenters

- Educational presentations should: strengthen reading skills, improve critical thinking and/or knowledge on a topic, or build skills
- Learning outcomes must be made clear in the application
- Performers providing entertainment are not allowable

Other Services

- Printing or laminating service
- Month-to-month subscriptions or add-ons to a current subscription for the duration of the Summer Reading Program
- Activities conducted or services offered by vendors, businesses, or sole proprietors

Non-Allowable Expenses

The following items are not allowable expenses:

- Supplies and services reimbursed under other state or federal programs
- Prizes, giveaways, and incentives
- Performers/performances
- Food or drink
- Software/app subscriptions, except for month-to-month subscriptions or add-ons to a current subscription for the duration of the Summer Reading Program
- Other expenses that do not align with the goals of [OLIS' Five-Year Plan](#)

Contact

For questions about the request form or about allowable expenses contact:

- Danielle Margarida, danielle.margarida@olis.ri.gov
- Emily Goodman, emily.goodman@olis.ri.gov
- Nicolette Baffoni, nicolette.baffoni@olis.ri.gov

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a “Summer Reading Program?”

Libraries must offer a Summer Reading Program for their community to be eligible for a mini-grant. A Summer Reading Program (SRP) is an extended reading/learning challenge or tracking opportunity that encourages youth and adults to reach reading/learning goals during the summer months. Libraries must offer a youth SRP to be eligible for funds to support youth activities and must offer an adult SRP to be eligible for funds to support adult activities.

How long should it take to fill out the request form?

It should take no more than a half-hour to fill out the grant request form. OLIS encourages you to spend your grant funds on supplies, materials, educational presenters, and expenses that would otherwise have been included in your plan for your summer reading program (assuming they fall within the allowable expenses). You do not need to think of an entirely new project.

How much should I write?

Please keep your Purpose & Outcomes responses brief but clear. OLIS needs to know what you will do with the supplies and services you will purchase and how those activities will result in changes to knowledge, skills, behavior, or attitude for participants. This can be accomplished in a few sentences at most.

Is the Summer Reading Program Mini-Grant program competitive?

This grant program is not competitive, funding has been earmarked for every public library. The program will reimburse pre-approved expenditures for programming at libraries this summer. Please be sure to request the maximum amount your library is eligible for as you may not request the additional funds after your request has been approved. Please note that another library will not get more funding if your library does not submit a request.

Why are there restrictions on allowable grant expenditures?

The SRP-Mini-Grant program uses federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Grants to States Program. These federal funds have specific regulations that OLIS must follow to remain in compliance. The non-allowable grant expenditures for the SRP Mini-Grant program are per the regulations of the IMLS Grants to States program.

Why can't these grant funds be used for entertainment/performances?

OLIS grant programs are designed to support our five-year plan for the expenditure of LSTA funds in compliance with regulations from the IMLS. This grant program supports our goal to provide statewide learning opportunities, and so focuses on hands-on, experiential learning. There is still a lot of latitude within this grant program to provide fun and engaging experiences for your communities. If entertainment/performances are part of your summer reading plan, we recommend using grant funds toward other program expenses to free up programming funds for performances.

When can I begin making purchases?

Do not begin making purchases until you have a signed agreement from OLIS. Those agreements will be sent to library directors through DocuSign and returned via the eCivis Grants Management Portal in late March/early April.

Why can't there be separate youth and adult mini-grants?

Facilitating two mini-grant programs for public libraries would generate an amount of paperwork that is not commensurate with the grant award amounts. The state's new eCivis grant management system (GMS) will allow for libraries to designate team members for each grant project. Library directors may add both their youth services and adult services staff to their grant in the GMS so that multiple staff members may collaborate on forms and reports.