

2026 LORI Mini-Grants

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Introduction

The Office of Library and Information Services is making Library of Rhode Island (LORI) Mini Grants available in amounts from \$2,500 to \$7,500 to eligible libraries, library consortia and library-serving organizations to execute projects that support the advancement of library services in Rhode Island. Libraries or organizations are encouraged to submit proposals that expand access to library materials and services, expand learning opportunities or literacy, expand use of library services or the role of the library in the community, or create more inclusive or accessible library services to all members of the community.

The application period is open through March 16, 2026. Projects must be completed in their entirety between contract execution and August 31, 2026.

Background

The Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS) is the Rhode Island state library agency and is supported by funds from the State of Rhode Island and the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Support from the IMLS includes an annual grant from the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) under the IMLS Grants to States Program. LORI Grants are offered as subgrants of the OLIS LSTA grant and are offered to support the overall purposes of LSTA.

Purpose

OLIS' 2026 LORI Mini Grant Program supports the advancement of library services by distributing LSTA subgrants to libraries, consortia, and library-serving organizations in Rhode Island. The objective of the LORI Grant program is to strengthen, improve and expand library services and library programs statewide.

Priorities

[LSTA purposes](#) provide the foundation for the 2022-2027 OLIS Five Year State Plan for the expenditure of LSTA funds. The three goals of the OLIS plan are:



1. **Access:** Facilitate access to library materials and information resources in physical and digital formats for all Rhode Islanders.
2. **Learning:** Support the continuing education of librarians, library staff and trustees and the development of statewide programming for the public.
3. **Engagement:** Empower libraries to be incubators for economic, educational and cultural development, civic discourse, and healthy communities.

To advance the achievement of these goals, Rhode Island libraries, library consortia and related organizations may submit applications to the LORI Mini Grant Program for grants in the amount of \$2,500 to \$7,500. Proposals should address one of the OLIS priorities.

For this round of grants, OLIS will be accepting applications that address the OLIS Priorities listed below. OLIS Priorities marked with the * represent the highest priority for OLIS in this grant cycle.

Access

- **Resource Sharing:** improve or increase access to library services, materials, or programs, through partnerships with other libraries or non-profit partners or through assessment of current services and identification of service gaps.
- **Digitization, Preservation, and Disaster Preparedness*:** expand access to library and cultural heritage materials through digitization of significant collections not yet available in digital format.

Learning

- **Continuing Education:** develop or expand professional development or continuing education for library staff.
- **Reading and Literacy:** develop or expand literacy, learning, or reading programs.
- **Statewide Programs:** develop or expand public programs and/or services across multiple libraries on topics such as information, health, financial or civic literacy, or other topics of interest with the goal of easy replication/adoption by new libraries/systems.

Engagement

- **Community Outreach & Engagement*:** build library collections, services or programs to target a specific community need or for specific populations within your community that are underrepresented in current library service.
- **Community Connectors*:** expand opportunities for adult learners, especially those seeking to develop workforce skills, to establish a small business, or to improve digital literacy skills; provide opportunities for civic engagement by facilitating community



conversations or programming that foster connections and build understanding within the community; connect organizations within the local community to community members through library services, resources or programs.

In keeping with the purposes of LSTA, capital expenditures (i.e. construction) are not eligible expenses under the LORI Grant Program.

Application Instructions

All applications must be completed through the State of Rhode Island's Euna Grants Portal. Visit the [State of RI Resources for Applicants](#) for additional application user guides and training.

Application Link

Visit the [OLIS website](#) to learn more about this grant program or apply directly at the [State of RI 2026 LORI Project Grants application page](#). You will need to create a free Euna account to access the application, or sign into your existing account if you have already created one.

Helpful tip: always select the "Portal Login" option when logging into Euna!

The LORI Project Grants have 4 total forms you must fill out to successfully complete your application:

- Core Information
- State of Rhode Island: Streamlined Application
- LORI Project Grant Application
- Budget

There is no need to open or fill out the "Goals" form, as there are no OLIS-defined goals for this grant program.

Core Information

- Organization Name (enter the LIBRARY name here, even if using an external fiscal agent; enter the SAM.gov UEI for the fiscal agent, however, even if different from the library)
- Organization Address, Phone, etc.
- Proposal contacts (it is possible this might be the same person for all 4 required fields):
 - Authorized Representative – the library director or whoever has signing authority for contracts and financial documentation



- Business/Finance Representative – the library director or, if applicable, an additional contact for fiscal management of the award
- Project Representative – grant project manager
- Team Member – an additional staff person who you would like to have access to/contribute to the proposal

State of RI: Streamlined Application

In this section of the grant application, you will answer a few more basic questions about the library.

- Entity Legal Name – the name of the fiscal agent (the organization that will receive the funds, whether that is the library itself or an external fiscal agent such as the municipality, friends' group or foundation).
- Primary Place of Performance Street Address (library or fiscal agent address)
- Project Title and Summary – same as included in the LORI Project Grant Application (see below)
- Required Certifications:
 - GMS User Certification – certifying that you are authorized to submit an application on behalf of the library.
 - Authorized Representative is the person with signing authority, aka the library director or similar (may be the same as the GMS User Certification)

LORI Project Grant Application

This section of the application includes the questions on which the proposal will be scored. Ensure that you include all the indicated components under each question to achieve maximum points for each section.

Proposal Name

Enter the proposal name.

OLIS Priority

Select the OLIS priority to which the proposal project best aligns (see above). Not sure? [Make an appointment to discuss your proposal with OLIS staff.](#)

Proposal Abstract



The proposal abstract is a brief statement that summarizes the proposed project and should be suitable for dissemination to the public. Use the third person (i.e. “The Everytown Library will provide...” rather than “We will...”) for this, and the whole application. The proposal abstract will be included on the OLIS website if the library is awarded a grant; visit the [2024 LORI Project Grants announcement](#) for examples.

Project Purpose

Enter a detailed description of the community need and target beneficiaries this project will address. Explain how this proposal relates to the library’s long-range (strategic) plan and supports the selected OLIS priority. The community need may be broad, but the proposal should demonstrate how this need is relevant and specific to the proposed community/audience.

If the project is not targeted to a specific, demonstrable community need or connected to an OLIS priority or the library’s long-range plan, it is unlikely to be successful.

Scope of Work

The Scope of Work will include detailed descriptions of the proposed activities the library will execute, and how they relate to the overarching goal of the project. If you indicated a beneficiary in the project purpose, describe how these activities specifically target the indicated population. All activities should align to the overall project purpose and have measurable outputs and outcomes. Procurement/purchasing activities alone do not constitute an approvable scope of work. Examples of activities include hosting public programs; providing reference services, appointments or other drop-in style interactions; circulating materials; digitizing content; organizing or auditing collections; and creating content such as websites, learning resources, circulating kits or other creative outputs.

Goals, Objectives, and Evaluation Plan

Describe the proposal’s goals and objectives. What is your aim in doing this project, and what will you do to achieve that aim? Include anticipated outputs and outcomes. What outputs will you count (program attendance, circulation, website sessions, drop-in sessions, etc.)? What outcomes – or changes to behavior, attitude, skills, knowledge or awareness – do you hope participants/your community/your library will see because of your project activities? How will you measure those outcomes (ex. surveys, interviews, assessments)? Finally, include a plan to measure and evaluate the project’s impact. How will you interpret the outputs you have collected and outcomes you have measured to determine if your project is successful?



Project Timeline

Provide the proposal timeline, including key milestones and activities. This project window is very short, so be realistic about what the library can achieve in this time and consider building in extra time at the end of the project for unanticipated delays. Project period must end by August 31, 2026.

Budget

Supplies/Materials

Includes all projected costs for supplies, materials or devices that will be purchased specifically for project use. Include software only if a single expenditure results in a perpetual license for the product; otherwise, software is a service.

Equipment

Electronic or other single items with a useful life of more than one year, costing over \$10,000.00. Any equipment purchase requires prior approval by OLIS.

Services

Includes cost of services provided by a contractor or a vendor. A contracted service differs from a consultant: a consultant is paid for expertise; a service is a one-time or ongoing provision of goods or services.

Consultant Fees

Includes all projected expenses related to acquiring the services of a consultant for a specific activity within the project. Costs may include fees, travel expenses and accommodation, and support services obtained directly from the consultant. Describe the expertise of the consultant along with their expected actions/contributions to the project. If a consultant will be paid with grant funds, the applicant should have a written agreement with the consultant defining scope of work and payment.

Travel

Includes all transportation, accommodation, etc. for project-related activities. Expenses must be directly related to the project activities and must be incurred by staff working on the project. It cannot include project staff or consultants commuting from home to the grantee's main facility. Mileage should be calculated at the federal rate in place at the time of travel. *Also includes shipping fees.



Other Operational Expenses

Other operational expenses include costs which are frequently referred to as overhead expenses (for example, rent and utilities) and general and administrative expenses (for example, officers' salaries, accounting department costs and personnel department costs). These are also known as "indirect costs." Libraries may elect to use up to 10% (or their existing federally negotiated rate) of their requested funds on indirect costs.

Please note that you cannot enter budget costs at the total level. You must click each budget category to expand it and update the worksheet under each relevant category. Virtually all your costs should be Direct Costs, and you are not required to fill out the Units/Unit Cost/Extended Cost or GL Code information in your worksheet; simply enter details in the Title/Description/Cost fields.

Important Dates

- Application period: February 2026 – March 16, 2026
- [Informational Webinar](#): February 24, 2026
- Notification of award: April 1, 2026
- Project period begins: Contract execution, no later than May 1, 2026
- Final date to request drawdown of grant funds: August 31, 2026
- Project conclusion: August 31, 2026
- Deadline for final grant report: September 30, 2026

Questions

For any LORI Grant application or budget questions, please contact Nicolette Baffoni (Nicolette.baffoni@olis.ri.gov) or [schedule an appointment](#).



Appendix I: Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions for terms used in the LORI Grant Program application. For additional help, see the [Grants.gov online glossary](#)

Activities: Actions through which the objectives and goals of a grant are accomplished, and deliverables are created.

Allowable Costs: Determination of costs allowable under a federal award or subgrant is made in accordance with the government-wide cost principles in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in [2 CFR Part 200](#). Refer to the [IMLS Tip Sheet for Allowable Costs](#), or contact OLIS if you have questions about allowable costs.

Anecdotal reports: Can be obtained through interviews with or open-ended surveys completed by project participants. An anecdote is a brief description of a participant's response, not necessarily based on objective information.

Authorized User: The person with the legal authority to sign documents, including grant agreements, on behalf of the Entity; in most cases, the library director.

Cash Match: Includes direct costs committed by the applicant or partner organization and sponsoring organizations, to the extent that such costs are committed as part of the grant funded project. It does not include overhead costs or in-kind contributions and is generally a local investment of funds into a project. A cash match includes a recipient's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the recipient by third parties. Funds used for a cash match cannot be included as contributions for any other award or grant; are not from another federal award (unless authorized); and are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives.

When cash match is used for personnel costs/the services of an employee, these services must be valued at the employee's regular rate of pay plus an amount of fringe benefits that is reasonable, necessary, allocable, and otherwise allowable and provided these services employ the same skill(s) for which the employee is normally paid. (See also 2 CFR 200.36)

Consultant Fees: Includes all projected expenses related to acquiring the services of a consultant for a specific activity within the project. Costs may include fees, travel expenses and accommodation, and support services obtained directly from the consultant. Describe the expertise of the consultant along with their expected actions/contributions to the project. If a consultant will be paid with grant funds, the applicant should have a written agreement with the consultant defining scope of work and payment.



Data sources: Tools, documents and locations for information that will demonstrate what happened to your target audience; sources of information about conditions being measured. (For example, pre-post test scores, surveys, focus groups, attendance records, program records, assessment reports, records from other organizations, observations, etc.)

Devices: Electronic items such as computers, tablets, hotspots, electronic pens, printers, scanners, etc. A single item that costs \$5,000 or more is considered equipment; see definition below.

Equipment: Electronic or other items with a useful life of more than one year. Purchase of a single piece of equipment over \$5,000.00 requires prior approval by OLIS.

Goals: Goals are broad but clear statements that articulate the desired result of our efforts. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable (achievable), relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Activities are specific and concrete actions that constitute the plan to achieve the goal.

Other Operational Expenses: Include allowable costs. Contact OLIS with questions.

Outcomes: changes to an audience's skills, attitudes, knowledge, behaviors, status, or life conditions brought about by participation in a project activity. Outcomes may be immediate, intermediate, or long-term. Outcomes rarely include institutional benefits.

Outputs: the amount of something produced, i.e. how much is done. Outputs are measurable or countable.

What are the differences between outputs and outcomes? Outputs are measures of the volume of a program's activity: products created or delivered, number of people served, activities and services carried out. Outputs are almost always numbers: the number of loans, the number of ILLs, the number of attendees, the number of publications, or the number of times a workshop was presented. Outcomes are the "people" component- what happened because of the activities and outputs.

Some examples of Outputs:

- 20 individuals completed training
- 4 workshops were held

Some examples of Outcomes:

- Through Connected Learning, youth can confidently use maker space tools to create tangible content based on their own designs.
- Library staff have the skills to creatively engage patrons in library programming.

Anecdotal reports may be used to support Outcomes.



Personnel Costs: When used for “Cash Match,” include all projected salaries, wages and fringe benefits paid to staff who are directly contributing to this project. Include position titles and number of FTEs, but not personal names.

When included in the Grant Request category in the budget, do not include funds used to pay current library staff, except in the case of part-time staff who will be working additional hours and solely on the grant project. The personnel costs category is valid only for staff being paid through the library’s regular payroll process. Any other project staff should be listed as a consultant.

Program: Activities and services leading toward independent outcomes. Programs generally have a definite beginning and end. However, they are designed to change attitudes, behaviors, knowledge; or to increase skills and abilities based on assumed need.

Project purpose: Relates to the organization's mission statement (or long-range plan) and defines the audience, outcomes, and services. The project purpose is driven by the needs statement.

Services: Includes subscriptions, training, or registration fees. Also includes cost of services provided by a contractor or a vendor. A contracted service differs from a consultant: a consultant is paid for expertise; a service is a one time or ongoing provision of goods or services.

Supplies/Materials: Includes all projected costs for materials or devices that will be purchased specifically for project use. Include software only if a single expenditure results in a perpetual license for the product; otherwise, software is a service.

Travel: Includes all transportation, accommodations, meals, etc. Expenses must be directly related to the project activities and must be incurred by staff working on the project. Project the number of travelers expected. It cannot include project staff or consultant commuting from home to the grantee’s main facility. Mileage should be calculated at the federal rate in place at the time of travel.

Unique Entity Identifier (SAM) or UEI: A non-federal entity is required to have a UEI to apply for, receive, and report on a federal award. The Unique Entity ID is a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov. A UEI may be obtained from www.sam.gov.

