



**LSTA Five-Year State Plan
for
Idaho Commission for Libraries
Fiscal Years 2023-2027**

INTRODUCTION

The work of the Idaho Commission for Libraries focuses on library development for the more than 850 publicly funded libraries in Idaho. Commission staff work with the directors, staff, and trustees of public, school, academic, and special libraries to address the ever-evolving information needs of Idahoans. Unless otherwise specified, the LSTA Five-Year State Plan applies to all types of libraries.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to best serve their communities.

VISION STATEMENT

Libraries are the catalyst that keep students learning, adults earning, and improve the health and well-being of Idahoans.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Completed in March 2022, the independent evaluation of Idaho's implementation of the 2018-2022 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Program, prepared by Fast Forward Libraries and led by Amanda E. Standerfer, delivered meaningful information for developing the State Plan. The evaluation concluded that the Commission had partly achieved or achieved every goal in the previous plan. To conduct the evaluation, the consultants utilized a variety of engagement strategies with Commission staff and members of the Idaho library community, including surveys, personal interviews, email exchanges, and focus groups. The consultants also provided the Commission with recommendations based on their evaluation. These recommendations, along with the raw feedback gathered through the engagement strategies, were considered for the new plan.

Regular and frequent interactions with members of the Idaho library community provide the Commission with its best and most direct indicators about the information and library service needs of Idahoans. The Commission's library development staff are continually engaging with library directors, staff, and governing boards in a variety of ways, including one-on-one communication, in-person and virtual meetings and training, formal and informal listening and discussion sessions, library site visits, and regional and statewide conferences. This input and feedback from the library community is included in all ongoing analysis and planning.

The Commission coordinates and facilitates several advisory groups, which provided further feedback for this plan, particularly in their areas of expertise and interest. These groups, led by the Commission, include the Talking Book Service Advisory Committee, the Special Projects Library Action Team (SPLAT), and the Statewide Teen Advisory Board (STAB). In addition, library development staff host regular Libraries in Idaho Talking Trends (LIT) virtual gatherings for a variety of audiences, such as academic library staff, and topics, such as collection development and marketing. These conversations generate new ideas and provide ongoing guidance to the work of Commission staff.

Program leads at the Commission continually solicit and review feedback to improve their programs and ensure intended outcomes are being met. All LSTA-funded programs also necessitate an annual evaluation and review, which program leaders compile and use to make any needed adjustments in the interest of continuous improvement. The results of these informal and formal reviews of the Commission's programs are incorporated in the development of the plan.

In addition to feedback from its customers, a constant scan of external data reveals the need for improvement in many areas in which libraries intersect with their communities. Examples of relevant data and the ICfL's response include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Idaho has the fifth slowest internet speed in the nation. The ICfL has dedicated staff to assist libraries in bridging this gap within Idaho communities.
<https://www.highspeedinternet.com/resources/fastest-slowest-internet>
- Idaho Hispanic residents make up 13% of the state's population and 18% of K-12 public school students. The ICfL is focused on helping libraries connect with the local Latinx population.
<https://icha.idaho.gov/docs/Hispanic%20Profile%20Data%20Book%202021%20-%20FINAL%20V3.pdf>
- In Idaho, approximately 72% of staff working in public libraries have no formal library information service education. The ICfL provides a range of professional development opportunities to scale the gap in knowledge.
<https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-statistics/>
- Idaho has failed to meet most 2020 Academic Achievement targets set forth by the State Department of Education. Targets include math and English proficiency, high school graduation rates, third grade reading proficiency, and post-secondary degree/certificate attainment. The ICfL's staff recognize the significant role librarians and library access make in the academic achievement of all Idaho students and support quality educational opportunities through the agency's many services.
<https://reportcard.idahoednews.org/>
- Idaho has a significant shortage of health care professionals. The ICfL has brokered partnerships with the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health and rural public libraries to offer telehealth access and has dedicated staff to pursue additional partnerships.
<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/providers/rural-health-and-underserved-areas/rural-health-and-underserved-areas>

Developed through these components of the needs assessment, the State Plan sustains and builds upon existing successful initiatives, while also addressing newly identified areas of needed support for Idaho libraries and their communities.

GOALS, PROJECTS, AND ACTIVITIES

The following goals, programs, and activities build on the capacity-building work the Commission is known for and are based on extensive and ongoing needs assessment and continuous improvement processes. Goals, programs, and activities are listed in priority order.

Goal 1. Build the institutional capacity of libraries to best serve their communities.

- Project 1: Improve the library workforce.
 - Activity 1.1: Develop continuing education programs and support for library staff and trustees.
 - Activity 1.2: Provide consulting services for public library staff. (Maintenance of Effort for LSTA funded with state funds, also known as MOE.)
 - Activity 1.3: Facilitate leadership and development opportunities relating to library trends for library staff and trustees via SPLAT and related initiatives.
- Project 2: Improve library's physical and technology infrastructure.
 - Activity 2.1: Provide technology consulting, including E-rate and Idaho Education Opportunity Resource Act (EOR) support.
 - Activity 2.2: Provide ongoing assistance with the e-Branch in a Box project for libraries' website hosting, development, and maintenance.
 - Activity 2.3: Provide consulting services regarding long-term building needs for library staff. (MOE)
- Project 3: Improve library operations.
 - Activity 3.1: Support ShareIdaho resource sharing.
 - Activity 3.2: Collect and share Idaho library statistics.

Key outcomes for Goal 1 include:

- 80% of library staff and trustees participating in continuing education programs will indicate they have made changes in library procedures or services as a result of training activities annually.
- 70% of the members of SPLAT will indicate their leadership skills and engagement with library trends improved as a result of their participation in this group annually.
- The number of libraries with improved broadband speeds will increase annually.
- The number of libraries with an active website will be maintained or increase annually.
- The number of libraries participating in ShareIdaho will be maintained or increase annually.
- Idaho library statistics will be published and at least one continuing education activity will focus on using statistics annually.

Goal 2. Strengthen the role of libraries and library staff as community educators and community connectors.

- Project 1: Improve users' formal education.
 - Activity 1.1: Provide consulting and training opportunities to school library staff. (MOE)
 - Activity 1.2: Utilize state funds via mini-grants to support student learning. (MOE)
- Project 2: Improve users' general knowledge and skills.
 - Activity 2.1: Support turnkey Read to Me early literacy and learning programs.
 - Activity 2.2: Support summer learning in libraries and related enrichment activities.
 - Activity 2.3: Support library services to teens and turnkey programs.
 - Activity 2.4: Support outreach services for those who face barriers getting to libraries.
 - Activity 2.5: Support turnkey adult programs, such as Let's Talk About It.

Key outcomes for Goal 2 include:

- The number of school libraries reporting positive changes to their procedures and services as a result of consulting and training offered by the ICfL will increase annually.
- The number of libraries and attendees participating in library early literacy and learning programs will be maintained or increase annually.
- The number of youth participating in library summer learning programs will increase annually.
- The number of libraries and attendees participating in teen programs will increase annually.
- The number of libraries and youth participating in library outreach programs will be maintained or increase annually.
- The number of libraries and attendees participating in adult programs will increase annually.

Goal 3. Ensure equitable access to information and reading materials through direct service to Idahoans.

- Project 1: Improve users' ability to discover information resources.
 - Activity 1.1: Develop promotional efforts to publicize the Idaho Talking Book Service, the LiLI Databases, the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance (IDEA), and other information resources.
- Project 2: Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources.
 - Activity 2.1: Improve access to the Idaho Talking Book Service for those unable to read standard print.
 - Activity 2.2: Support the LiLI Databases and training efforts.
 - Activity 2.3: Support the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance (IDEA) and foster more connections to the IDEA collection by public libraries, school libraries, and Idahoans without public library service.

Key outcomes for Goal 3 include:

- The level of awareness and knowledge among Idahoans of the ICfL's information resources available to the public will increase annually.

- The number of Idahoans registered for the Idaho Talking Book Service and the number of titles checked out through the Idaho Talking Book Service will increase annually.
- The use of LiLI Databases will increase annually.
- The use of the IDEA collection, the number of Idahoans without public library service using the collection, and the number of public and school libraries connected to the collection will increase annually.

COORDINATION EFFORTS

Coordination efforts between the goals, the IMLS focal areas, and the corresponding intents are illustrated in *Appendices A-C*.

The Commission works with several other Idaho state agencies and offices to further support the goals, projects, and activities of the State Plan. In the area of early childhood education, state agencies that partner with the ICfL to assist with providing professional development opportunities for library staff and support for additional library services include: the Idaho State Department of Education, the Idaho State Board of Education, the Idaho STEM Action Center, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho Public Television, the Idaho Children’s Trust Fund, and the Idaho Lottery Commission. ICfL staff regularly serve on task forces and committees with these partner agencies to coordinate efforts and resources in this area, as well as leverage additional funding to supplement work on related projects and activities. For workforce development and adult education, key state agencies the ICfL partners with on these statewide efforts include: the Idaho Workforce Development Council, the Idaho Department of Labor, and the Idaho Division of Career & Technical Education. In addition to operational coordination with these agencies, ICfL staff serve as a voting member of the One-Stop Committee within the Idaho Workforce Development Council. The Commission also works closely with the Idaho Broadband Office within the Idaho Department of Commerce to coordinate efforts to improve digital access and develop digital literacy skills as part of the Federal Digital Equity Act Programs administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

TIMELINE

The State Plan is intended to support the Idaho library community over the next five years and is supported with annual project plans. Each goal area and project will be addressed each year. All funded projects will be reviewed each year and progress evaluated in each of the goal areas and programs based on the evaluation plan.

EVALUATION PLAN

The Commission will continue to employ a variety of strategies to evaluate the success of the projects established in the plan:

- Evaluate all projects that include public and library staff instruction, content creation or acquisition, and planning and evaluation using outcome-based assessment questions included in the IMLS State Program Report.

- Monitor all activities of Commission-directed programs and sub-grant projects. Commission projects are evaluated by using an appropriate method chosen by the project lead. Sub-grant projects are evaluated through interim and final narrative and financial reports.
- Conduct surveys or assessments as needed.
- Incorporate outcome-based and/or independent evaluation into appropriate projects.
- Conduct an external evaluation at the end of the State Plan as directed by legislation and IMLS guidelines.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The Commission continuously engages with the Idaho library community in every aspect of its work to build the capacity of libraries to better serve their communities. As detailed in the Needs Assessment section, Commission staff work directly with library directors, staff, and governing boards through numerous means and regularly rely on the input of the library community to influence the development, implementation, and evaluation of the State Plan.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

The Commission will make the State Plan publicly available on its website.

<https://libraries.idaho.gov/about/strategic-plan/>

Commission staff will communicate the results, products, processes, and benefits derived from the plan with the Idaho library community using newsletters, email Listservs, website posts, webinars, trainings, and presentations.

MONITORING

The Commission will continue to comply with all reporting requirements related to the State Program Report. Commission staff continuously monitor the performance of all goals, projects, and activities using appropriate evaluation and measurement strategies.

ASSURANCES

The following required certifications and assurances are included with the State Plan:

- Program Assurances for 2023 Grant Award
- Assurances of Non-Construction Programs
- State Legal Officer's Certification of Authorized Certifying Official

Appendix A: Crosswalk for Goal 1

Goal Description	Focal Area	Intent/Program	Activities	Key Outcomes
<p>Goal 1: Build the institutional capacity of Idaho libraries to better serve their communities.</p>	<p>Institutional Capacity</p>	<p>1 – Improve the library workforce.</p>	<p>1.1 – Develop continuing education programs and support for library staff and trustees. 1.2 – Provide consulting services for public library staff. (MOE) 1.3 – Facilitate leadership and development opportunities relating to library trends for library staff and trustees via SPLAT and related initiatives.</p>	<p>– 80% of library staff and trustees participating in CE programs will indicate they have made changes in library procedures or services. – 70% of the members of SPLAT will indicate their leadership skills and engagement with library trends improved annually.</p>
		<p>2 – Improve library’s physical and technology infrastructure.</p>	<p>2.1 – Provide technology consulting, including E-rate and EOR support. 2.2 – Provide ongoing assistance with the e-Branch in a Box project for libraries’ website hosting, development, and maintenance. 2.3 – Provide consulting services regarding long-term building needs for library staff.</p>	<p>– The number of libraries with improved broadband speeds will increase annually. – The number of libraries with an active website will be maintained or increase annually.</p>
		<p>3 – Improve library operations.</p>	<p>3.1 – Support ShareIdaho resource sharing. 3.2 – Collect and share Idaho library statistics.</p>	<p>– The number of libraries participating in ShareIdaho will be maintained or increase annually. – Idaho library statistics will be published and at least one CE activity will focus on using statistics annually.</p>

Appendix B: Crosswalk for Goal 2

Goal Description	Focal Area	Intent/Program	Activities	Key Outcomes
<p>Goal 2: Strengthen the role of libraries and library staff as community educators and community connectors.</p>	<p>Lifelong Learning</p>	<p>1 – Improve users’ formal education.</p>	<p>1.1 – Provide consulting and training opportunities to school library staff. (MOE) 1.2 – Utilize state funds via mini-grants to support student learning. (MOE)</p>	<p>– The number of school libraries reporting positive changes to their procedures and services as a result of consulting and training offered by the ICfL will increase annually.</p>
		<p>2 – Improve users’ general knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>2.1 – Support turnkey Read to Me early literacy and learning programs. 2.2 – Support summer learning in libraries and related enrichment activities. 2.3 – Support library services to teens and turnkey programs. 2.4 – Support outreach services for those who face barriers getting to libraries. 2.5 – Support turnkey adult programs, such as Let’s Talk About It.</p>	<p>– The number of libraries and attendees participating in library early literacy and learning programs will be maintained or increase annually. – The number of youth participating in library summer learning programs will increase annually. – The number of libraries and attendees participating in teen programs will increase annually. – The number of libraries and youth participating in library outreach programs will be maintained or increase annually. – The number of libraries and attendees participating in adult programs will increase annually.</p>

Appendix C: Crosswalk for Goal 3

Goal Description	Focal Area	Intent/Program	Activities	Key Outcomes
<p>Goal 3: Ensure equitable access to information and reading materials through direct service to Idahoans.</p>	<p>Information Access</p>	<p>1 – Improve users’ ability to discover information resources.</p>	<p>1.1 – Develop promotional efforts to publicize the Idaho Talking Book Service, the LiLI Databases, the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance (IDEA), and other information resources.</p>	<p>– The level of awareness and knowledge among Idahoans of the ICfL’s information resources available to the public will increase annually.</p>
		<p>2 – Improve users’ ability to obtain and/or use information resources.</p>	<p>2.1 – Improve access to the Idaho Talking Book Services for those unable to read standard print. 2.2 – Support the LiLI Databases and training efforts. 2.3 – Support the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance (IDEA) and foster more connections to the IDEA collection by public libraries, school libraries, and Idahoans without public library service.</p>	<p>– The number of Idahoans registered for the Idaho Talking Book Service and the number of titles checked out through the Idaho Talking Book Service will increase annually. – The use of LiLI Databases will increase annually. – The use of the IDEA collection, the number of Idahoans without public library service using the collection, and the number of public and school libraries connected to the collection will increase annually.</p>