



Public Library Innovation Grants

Guidelines and Resources

CONTENTS

- Background 1
- Program Goals 1
- Funds Available 1
- Eligibility Requirements 2
- Application Scoring 2
- Completing Your Application 2
- Grant Timeline 3
- Appendix A:
Public Library Innovations 3
- Appendix B:
Eligible Project Expenses 4
- Appendix C:
Documenting In-Kind 4
- Appendix D:
Completing the Budget 4

BACKGROUND

The Public Library Innovation Grant program is administered by ICMA (International City/County Management Association) and is made possible by ICMA's partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2006, ICMA began working with the Gates Foundation on the Local Government and Public Libraries Initiative. As a result, a 26-member ICMA advisory committee reviewed a variety of ways the partnership between communities and libraries could be strengthened. The committee identified areas where public libraries could play a larger role in delivering services, including access to technology, public safety and disaster preparedness, sustainability, health, immigration, civic engagement, and economic development. As part of our commitment to create excellence in local government, ICMA is dedicated to fostering innovative solutions to local government challenges. The Public Library Innovation Grants Program will fall under ICMA's overall goal of promoting sustainable communities.

About ICMA

ICMA is the premier local government leadership and management organization. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advocating professional management of local government worldwide. ICMA provides member support; publications, data, and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 9,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals throughout the world.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants are:

- Enable public librarians to join their local government manager in developing and implementing solutions to specific community challenges.
- Build the capacity of the participating local government and library leaders to collaboratively launch and support change and innovation in their public library systems.
- Increase ICMA members' understanding and support of the 21st century library and their leadership role in promoting the public library system.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

The ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants will begin with one round of funding in 2008–2009. ICMA will award grants between \$20,000 and \$60,000 from a total fund of \$500,000 in 2009. Grants are awarded for distinct projects that can be completed within 18 months. Communities will not be required to match the value of the grant with cash, time, or other contributions. Commitments to leverage grant funding to obtain private investment or increase volunteer participation will be considered in the selection process. See Appendix D for more information on in-kind contributions.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following U.S. organizations are eligible to apply for ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants:

- County governments
- City or township governments
- Special district governments
- Public libraries or parent organizations, with the endorsement and commitment of a local government partner
- Tribal libraries with the endorsement and commitment of tribal government partner.

The following groups are not eligible to apply directly:

- Public schools
- Individuals or single businesses
- Religious organizations, state or federal government agencies, political groups, universities, hospitals, newspapers, and fraternal organizations
- Non-profit organizations

Non-eligible groups may participate as partners or contributors to the projects of eligible applicants.

APPLICATION SCORING

A committee made up of local government leaders and public library leaders will review grant applications. Applications will be rated on a set of six (6) criteria. Applications will be given points for how well criteria are met. The maximum possible points in each area are indicated below, with the highest score achievable for the total application being 100 points.

1. **Community Objective (25 points)**

Project addresses a recognized community need with a viable, innovative solution. Project description defines community need and clearly defines project goals. Proposed project will result in products, services, or benefits that will have a lasting positive impact on the community.

2. **Leadership/Commitment (20 points)**

Project demonstrates new alignments or partnerships among the manager's office and city and county departments and the public library to meet community objectives. Application indicates commitment from the manager, public librarian, and any key department directors to participate on the local team that will lead and implement the project as well as participate in the grant meetings and in the leadership/professional development series. (April 19–21, 2009, November 20–22, 2009, and August 5–7, 2010).

3. **Use of Technology (10 points)**

Application describes technology that will be used within the project and clearly explains how this will help support project goals.

4. **Budget (15 points)**

Proposed budget is realistic, well planned, and accurate. Cost estimates are researched and reflect market prices. The budget narrative explains proposed expenses and identifies your organizations capacity to implement the project.

5. **Evaluation Plan (15 points)**

Application includes a description of anticipated project results and a plan for evaluating and documenting performance.

6. **Sustainability (15 points)**

Description of how the project will continue beyond the grant period, including a project timeline, in addition to financial, organizational, and programmatic indicators of the projects long-term viability and sustainability. This should include a plan to leverage additional resources.

COMPLETING GRANT APPLICATION

Application package should include the Application Form, the Budget Spreadsheet, and attachments, if applicable.

You may include other materials to help reviewers better understand your proposal and strengthen your application. Some examples of useful attachments are:

- Community demographics
- Community support letters
- Volunteer pledge sheets
- Information on current related programs
- List of existing equipment
- Costs quotes on hardware, software, or other items showing budget research
- Brochures, flyers, or promotional materials for related programs.

Application forms are available at www.icma.org/publiclibrarygrants. Complete applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST January 9, 2009.

Applications can be submitted by e-mail or in hard copy format. We request that you e-mail as much of your application as possible. Applications can be mailed to:

Molly Donelan, ICMA Public Library Innovations Grants Manager
ICMA
777 North Capitol St, NE
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
publiclibrarygrants@icma.org

All applications must be easy to photocopy. Do not staple or bind hard copy applications.

Questions?

Please contact Molly Donelan at 202-962-3645 or mdonelan@icma.org if you have any questions about the grant program.

GRANT TIMELINE

Please note key dates for 2008–2009 Public Library Innovation Grants. Travel to all three Grantee Meetings is required.

ICMA Releases Grant Application	November 3, 2008
Application Deadline	January 9, 2009
Grant Review Panel meets and evaluates applications. Awards are announced.	February 2009
Project Implementation	February 2009 to August 2010
Grantee Kick-off Event (required) Location: TBD	April 23–24, 2009
Second Grantee Meeting (required) Location: TBD	November 19–20, 2009
Third Grantee Meeting and grant closeout (required) Location: TBD	August 2010
Final Report due to ICMA	August 2010

ICMA will fund travel for two participants from each grantee team. These expenses do not need to be included in grant budget.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC LIBRARY INNOVATIONS

ICMA encourages applicants to design projects that integrate the public library into the strategic plans of the local government to address a community need. ICMA will offer grants for programs in a variety of program areas to communities that have demonstrated leadership or are proposing high risk/reward projects.

Some possible program areas include:

- Creating a sustainable community
- Workforce development
- Emergency management and public safety
- Health and active living
- Immigration and language
- Education
- Youth and teen services
- Civic engagement, community building

Here are some resources from ICMA's Local Government Public Library Partnership Program.

Local Government Managers and Public Libraries: Partners for a Better Community. ICMA Management Perspective, October 2007
[http://icma.org/documents/Final_Mgmt_Prsvptv_Libraries_\(gates\).pdf](http://icma.org/documents/Final_Mgmt_Prsvptv_Libraries_(gates).pdf)

Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development. Urban Libraries Council, 2007.
http://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/making_cities_stronger.pdf

APPENDIX B: ELIGIBLE PROJECT EXPENSES

The ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants Program will cover most project-related expenses. Here are some examples of items covered by the Grants:

- Staff costs
- Printing and marketing costs
- Project supplies
- Computer hardware and software as needed by the project
- Multimedia tools
- Assistive and adaptive equipment

The ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants will not pay for:

- Construction costs
- General administrative expenses
- Equipment used by staff only
- Expenses incurred before the grant agreement is signed

APPENDIX C: DOCUMENTING IN-KIND

ICMA encourages applicants to consider ways to leverage grant funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the project. If your community plans to contribute in-kind to this project, consider attaching additional materials to your application package.

These could include:

- A written fundraising plan to secure additional project funds
- Pledge letters or e-mails from individuals and organizations promising to donate time, materials, or money to the project.

APPENDIX D: COMPLETING THE BUDGET

All applications must include a detailed budget on how grant funds will be spent. Please see Appendix B for a list of eligible expenses.

In the Budget Narrative section 15.B. applicants should explain all budget items. Include a brief and clear description of budget line items that explains to the review committee how you intend to spend funds. Budget items should be realistic, researched, and reflect market prices. When personnel are included in the budget please note the rate and the number of hours.



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities