



## Library Development

### Staying Connected Grant Program

---

#### Staying Connected Grant Program

Grant Application, September 1, 2003

##### *Summary Statements*

**Hardware Upgrades/Replacement:** The New York State Library requests a total of \$85,200 to replace or upgrade public-access computers in three library systems identified by the Gates Foundation and accepted by the New York State Library.

**Training Support:** The New York State Library requests \$137,440 to expand and enhance technology training for library staff, including programs designed to prepare staff to train library users in locating, evaluating, and using digital information.

### Hardware Upgrades/Replacement

#### *Needs of New York's Libraries*

*Current Needs:* The three libraries/library systems identified for this grant category are Brooklyn Public Library, Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, and The New York Public Library. The current needs of these libraries include upgraded hardware and software, upgraded bandwidth, and ongoing staff training. (The training and bandwidth needs are being addressed in other grant categories.) Most public-access computers are three to five years old, and do not have sufficient memory to upgrade to the latest Microsoft operating system. After the equipment upgrades, libraries will need the latest versions of software programs.

*Problems Confronting Libraries:* The major problems that inhibit the libraries' ability to sustain public-access computing are inadequate funding, inadequate technical support staff, lack of technical training opportunities for staff, and an

insufficient number of computers dedicated to public access.

### ***Plans for Implementing the Staying Connected Grant***

*Plans to Support Equipment for Public Access:* The libraries' plans for providing long-term sustainability of upgrading computers include research on funding possibilities for a plan to upgrade/replace computers on a scheduled, systematic basis. One of the libraries will use Citrix to maximize the life investment in hardware and make it easier for staff to upgrade software.

*Who Will Perform the Upgrades:* Two of the libraries will use internal staff to replace/upgrade computers, provide the immediate technical support and connectivity, and perform other services to make the new or upgraded computers operational. One library will contract for the equipment installation.

### ***Outcomes of Implementing the Staying Connected Grant***

*Replacement/Upgrade Outcomes:* By replacing outdated and inadequate equipment, the libraries will provide the public in the selected branches in low-income communities with the opportunity for faster, more powerful access to information. Equipment improvement, combined with expanded training and connectivity opportunities afforded by the other grant categories, will make available improved and expanded access to online resources, including digital image archives, online finding aids, and the resources available through the Internet. Through computer upgrades and new workstations, the libraries will be better able to fulfill the ever-increasing demand for public-access computing in disadvantaged urban areas, where the need for public access is greatest.

*How to Determine if Outcomes Are Achieved:* The library systems will be able to determine if the outcomes have been achieved by creating statistical reports that measure computer usage and computer application usage before the new computers are installed and comparing those statistics with post-installation statistics. At the same time, the training component of the Staying Connected Grant Program will enhance staff technology skills and promote formal and informal training of library users, including those who are not skilled English speakers and readers.

## **Training Support**

### ***Needs of New York's Libraries***

*Current Needs:* A primary function of the state's 23 public library systems is to provide professional development and training for member library staff and trustees. In their final reports to the State Library on the 2002-03 Gates Library Training Program Grant, the systems identified their plans and needs for future training. The following needs were common to all or nearly all the systems:

- Expanding the statewide corps of peer trainers
- Creation of online interactive tutorials and development of information literacy tutorials; building intranet resources to address training needs online
- Ongoing technology training sessions (basic through advanced); training in online reference resources, applications (productivity) software, and Internet search engines
- Training in troubleshooting computers and networks, computer maintenance, installing hardware, virus protection and firewalls
- Development of more and varied teaching modules for both staff and the public

*Problems Confronting Libraries:* New York's cultural and geographic diversity contribute to much of its richness and attraction. However, this diversity can also inhibit the state's ability to sustain public-access computing. The communities served by the state's public libraries range from congested urban neighborhoods with large numbers of non-English-speaking residents to small rural hamlets separated by great distances. Communities at both these extremes often experience significant levels of poverty. Many urban libraries and branches in disadvantaged neighborhoods are poorly funded at the local level. Rural communities may have small libraries with inadequate staffs and collections, or even no library at all. The state's 23 library systems, particularly those in rural areas, face many obstacles in providing technology training that can effectively address the wide variety of staff skills in member libraries.

### **Plans for Implementing the Staying Connected Grant**

*Plans to Support Training:* The State Library will develop a set of outcome-based evaluation (OBE) tools, a core OBE training curriculum, and intensive regional workshops for public library system staff. In the library systems that choose Option A (below), system staff will in turn work with member libraries to articulate a strategy to sustain public-access computing in the libraries. In addition, many of the library systems expressed the need to continue and expand on the training done during the initial Gates Library Training Program, following the same two-phase model, which includes an OBE component. Others felt they should adapt that approach to fill regional needs. To provide flexibility, the Gates Staying Connected Team agreed to offer three options to the library systems:

**Option A:** Library system staff will work with member libraries to develop a strategy for sustaining public-access computing, including computer upgrades/replacement, technology education, and training of staff and the public. This option will provide member libraries selected by the library systems with the OBE tools and techniques to develop and deliver effective training programs based on specific and measurable outcomes.

**Option B:** Continuation of the plan used during the initial Library Training Program Grant period. This strategy is based on training sessions that occurred in two phases: (1) "Train the Trainer" prepared a statewide corps of expert trainers; (2) "Train the Library Staff" used the statewide corps to train librarians, library managers, and staff in all regions of the state, enabling them to train the public. (See the attached information sheet for the content and subjects covered in the two phases.) The library systems will expand the training to create additional expert trainers to train library staff, or they may provide the current expert trainers with intensive, expanded training that they in turn will apply to training staff in member libraries. (Systems that choose this option will need to demonstrate some level of training of staff in member libraries.)

**Option C:** Focus on the second phase of the plan used in the initial Library Training Program Grant (phase 2, above) by having the expert trainers continue training staff in system member libraries and branches, reaching those who did not receive training earlier. (See attached information sheet for content and subjects covered in phase 2.) The initial training program trained 2,200 staff members in 777 libraries and branches. The goal of the Staying Connected Program training will be to ensure that at least one person from each of the 1,104 library buildings receives either "Basic Skills" or "Beyond Basic Skills" training, depending on current skill level. Trainers will use the tools and programs developed for the initial training program. The library systems may also enhance the delivery of training by adding options (e.g., online tutorials, distance learning, intranet resources, WebJunction Learning Center components), including the purchase of equipment and software to enable access to these materials.

Library systems will be able to choose one option or a combination of options.

*Who Will Provide Training:* In consultation with library systems in the nine regions where the sessions will occur, the State Library will arrange regional training sessions in outcome-based evaluation (OBE) to be conducted by an expert trainer on contract to the State Library. In addition, other training providers will depend on the option(s) that the library systems choose:

- Member libraries will either select themselves or be selected by their library system to participate in OBE training. System trainers will instruct the members in techniques for articulating a strategy to sustain public-access computing. Such a strategy will encompass the upgrading or replacement of computers and development of indicators and outcomes for technology education and training for library staff and users.
- Library system staff will either contract with technology training experts or provide the training themselves to the "expert trainers."
- Expert trainers who were trained during the initial training grant and the new expert trainers who receive training through the Staying Connected Program grant will train library staff.

***How Libraries Will Be Informed of the Training Opportunities:*** The State Library will publicize the regional training sessions through a number of channels: NYLINE (e-mail communications system); the State Library website ([www.nysl.nysed.gov](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov)); listservs of library organizations; the public library systems and Public Library System Directors Organization (PULISDO); and the New York Library Association (NYLA) Conference, website, and communications.

At the local level, the public library systems will publicize upcoming Staying Connected training sessions, encouraging all individual libraries and branches to send staff. Vehicles for publicity may include the following: announcements at system and member library events; fliers and mailings; e-mail and listservs; system websites. System staff and the corps of trainers within the systems will also encourage attendance through word of mouth, networking, and other professional contacts.

## **Outcomes of Implementing the Staying Connected Grant**

*Training Outcomes:* Again, some specific details of the outcomes will vary depending on the option(s) selected by the library system. Overall, the success of the Staying Connected training component will depend on the extent to which library staff are able to learn new skills and the extent to which they are able to make resources available to the public and provide effective public training.

System staff who receive in-depth OBE training will learn valuable techniques and a systematic method of determining if a technology training program has achieved its goals. They will understand how to use an organized process of developing an outcome-based technology training program that helps them articulate and establish clear program benefits (outcomes), identify ways to measure those benefits (indicators), and clarify the target audience, so that programs achieve the intended results. By focusing on training system staff in OBE, the State Library can effectively disseminate the training to staff in all system member libraries throughout the state.

Those who receive "Train the Trainer" sessions (which include a basic OBE component) will interact effectively with those they are training; tailor training as needed for library staff; understand and communicate the importance of ongoing training; be proficient with computers, networking, and software applications; and be able to plan and evaluate training programs.

Staff trained by the expert trainers will appreciate the importance of ongoing training; understand their responsibility to train library users in information literacy skills; interact effectively with the public; tailor public training as needed for individuals with disabilities, etc.; and have at least a basic proficiency with computers, networking, and software applications.

*How to Determine if Outcomes Are Achieved:* The public library systems will provide to the State Library reports answering specific questions about their training activities, including a detailed description of the training delivery process, summary results of training evaluations, descriptions of training outcomes, and future needs/plans. The systems may choose to conduct their own pre-training and post-training evaluations of staff.

Increasing numbers of private foundations and federal grant programs are requiring OBE to demonstrate good use of their resources. Understanding that OBE contributes to better-quality projects, the State Library is also encouraging and helping the library community in New York State to learn OBE skills and use them in project development and evaluation. Because the "Train the Trainer" sessions in the initial training grant included OBE, the current corps of expert trainers have already been using these skills. The Staying Connected training sessions will broaden the expertise of system and library staff in applying these skills to their own technology training programs and peer training sessions.

### ***Funding Schedule***

		2003
<b>Matching Funds</b>		\$111,320
<i>Sources:</i>	<b>Federal</b>	
	<b>Local</b>	

	2003
<b>Grant funds allocated to</b>	\$222,640
<i>Hardware Upgrades/Replacement</i>	\$85,200

<i>Training Support</i>	\$137,440
-------------------------	-----------

Grant Administrative Contact:

[Linda Todd](#)

New York State Library

Cultural Education Center

Room 10B41

Albany, NY 12230

Phone: (518) 486-4858

Fax: (518) 486-5254

---

Return to the [Gates Initiative page](#)

---

Last reviewed on September 4, 2003; last modified November 17, 2004 -- cmf/asm

For questions or comments contact [Linda Todd](#)

URL: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/gateslib/appl0818.htm>