CLOSING A CONSTRUCTION PROJECT FAQ

Terminology

**Amendment to Scope Form** - A form that a library is required to submit to the State Library if any element of their project must change from the original project or budget narrative. The State Library Division of Library Development provides this form.

**Award Amount** - The State Aid for Library Construction Program funding that is allocated by the library system to the library for a specific project number. Libraries often refer to this as the “grant amount”. As Construction Aid is formula aid, and is not a competitive grant program, the State Library does not use the term “grant”.

**Encumbrance** - The date that a library or library system paid a specific expense for a project, signed a contract to complete the work, or issued a purchase order. Note: This date may affect whether the expense can be claimed as part of award funds or must be reported as match funds. Encumbered expenses may not be included in the Budget - Final Expenses report until the library or library system has paid for this work, as a check number or journal voucher entry number must be included. Your project cannot close until all work included in your application for aid has been paid for.

**Expenditure** - An expense included as part of the approved project, whether it is covered by Construction Aid (award) or match funds.

**Match Amount** - The amount of funding that a library will pay for the part of the project that is not covered by the Construction Aid award. (See Program Guidelines [http://nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/instructions.htm](http://nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/instructions.htm) for an explanation of “match.”) Depending on the circumstances of the library, the content of the project application, the size and specifics of the project and the State funds available to the library system, the required “match” for a library’s project could range from 10% to 99.9%. This is not necessarily an exact “dollar for dollar” amount equal to the award amount.

**Portal** - Term used to reference the New York State Library’s online system where the construction applications, attachments and final reports are submitted.

**Project** - For State Aid for Library Construction, the term “project” means the specific items that will be completed as part of one specific State Library approved application for State Aid (i.e. 0386-19-1234, Construction of a Children’s Room) and not an overall bigger undertaking that is not being funded in full specifically with the award amount and required match (i.e. Building a New Library).
**Project Number** - The number used by the State Library to identify a specific project. As some libraries have multi-year “phased” projects or separate projects for the same library being funded in different years, the project number differentiates between the various projects in the same building. The elements of a project number are 0386 (SED construction program code) – ## (fiscal year of the project) – #### (specific library’s project). So, 0386-19-1234 is a construction project that began in the fiscal year 2018/2019 for a specific project at a specific library building (main library or branch) or library system building.

**HOW DO I GET STARTED IN CLOSING MY PROJECT?**

1. **I’ve finished the project. What do I do next?**
   - Great news! First, read through this FAQ as it contains important information you will need to know in order to close out your construction project and receive the final payment of 10% of the project award.
   - Then, review your project and budget narratives in the approved online application and check that each aspect of the project was completed.
   - When reading through your narratives, create a bulleted list of all activities that were going to be completed as part of the submitted project application. Please use the same language that was used in the original application (heating system vs. HVAC vs. heat pumps vs. heat recovery units).
   - If you have not done so already, you will need to take a photo of each completed activity on the bulleted list (i.e. install a generator; replace the HVAC system; install electric car chargers in the parking lot; replace the library roof). More information about photos and how to submit them can be found below.
   - Once you have reviewed this FAQ and your narratives, go into the online portal and click on Budget-Final Expenses. In that section, there is information on what documentation is needed to close the project. Once that documentation has been collected, return to the portal to input that information in the Budget- Final Expenses.
   - Note that ALL project Budget - Final Expenses must be reported in the online portal. More information about Budget Final Expenses is below. These expenses will include ALL expenditures for the project, including the award funds and the match funds. If the final Total Project Costs exceed the amount in the approved project application, all costs for the project must still be included.
   - The total award funds listed in the construction award must be equal to the total award spent.
   - All award and match funds should be fully expended, and all project activities completed prior to the submission of the final report. More information about completing and submitting the final report is also below.
   - Please wait to submit the final report while construction is still in progress, even if all funds have been expended, as photos should document each completed project activity.
2. How do I access my account to get into the portal?
   • Each person who works on a construction project through the portal needs a unique log-in. If you do not have a log-in, please fill out the form at the website address below and staff from the State Library will set up an account for you.
     https://eservices.nysed.gov/ldgrants/ldgext/diRegistration.do
   • If you have an account but have forgotten your password, please email the State Library at the following email address: LIBDEVGRANTS@NYSED.GOV You will receive a link to reset the password, but you must log into the account within 24 hours or the link expires.

PHOTOS – WHAT IS NEEDED? HOW SHOULD I ORGANIZE AND SUBMIT?

3. Do I have to include photos of the finished project? Where do I upload them? How should I upload them?
   • Yes, photos documenting completion of all project activities are required in order to close out your project. Review your project and budget narratives in the approved online application. If an item is part of your project, take a photo of it.
   • Ideally, photos should have been taken as the project was proceeding as some items are more difficult to show later in the process, such as a septic system upgrade or underground oil tank.
   • In order to streamline the final review process, the State Library is requesting that libraries upload one Word or PDF document with all post-project photos to the online portal. Please provide a short, one sentence description or caption for each photo. Clear photo captions will help to reduce the number of follow-up questions from the State Library.
   • While one document including all photos is the preferred method of submission, if this is not possible, then individual photos may be uploaded with a descriptive file name that indicates what the photo shows (i.e., New Generator 1.jpg as opposed to Scan0001.jpg).
   • You may include multiple items in one photo. For example, if you are adding 9 windows, then you may either upload photos of each of the nine windows and label them, or if possible, upload one photo depicting all 9 windows.
   • All photos must have a clear description of which project component is included in the photo, either in the file name of the individual photo or underneath the photo in the Word or pdf document.
   • Please upload photos that are large enough to see all necessary details.
   • Please check the photos once they are uploaded to make sure that they are right-side up.

4. What do we need to do if we don’t have a photo of the work?
   • If a photo was not taken at the time that the work was done and the completed work is no longer visible (i.e. septic system, underground oil tank, etc.), then include a copy of the detailed invoice to show that the work was completed in the attachments section of the portal.
If the library has any questions about the photo requirement, please email the State Library at ldconstruction@nysed.gov

5. Why does the State Library require visual documentation to close the project?
   - The State Library is required by the State Education Department and the State of New York to verify that all project activities as described in the approved project application (and, if applicable, the approved Amendment to Scope) have been completed within the statutory timelines. As State Library staff are unable to travel to every facility that receives State Aid for Library Construction funds to monitor project progress, completion and project records, the pre- and post-project photos submitted to the State Library serve as visual evidence that all approved project activities have been successfully completed.

PROJECT AMENDMENTS

6. We were not able to complete all elements of the project. What can we do now?
   - We came under budget. What do we have to do now?
     - If anything in the project and/or budget narrative changes or cannot be completed, the library must request an Amendment to Scope. Depending on the expenses for project activities that came in under budget or were removed from the scope, additional eligible activities may need to be added to the project.
       o For example, the bids for one element of the project were more expensive than expected so it couldn’t be done OR the project came in under budget and more activities must be added to the project.
     - A request for an Amendment to Scope must be submitted to the State Library BEFORE the work is done with bids or invoices from the contractor or vendor and pre-project photos if the work was not included in the original application. If work that differs from your original narratives was completed before an Amendment was requested, some elements of your project may no longer be eligible for funding and additional eligible activities may need to be added to meet your total project cost.
     - The library may have completed an Amendment to Scope during the project timeframe, but if additional elements of the project have changed, more than one Amendment to Scope may be required.
     - If a different vendor/contractor was used from the one who submitted the original bid during the application process, check to see if the exact same work was done by the new vendor. If not, an Amendment to Scope will be necessary.

DEADLINES FOR PROJECT COMPLETION

7. What can be done if a contractor does not complete work before the project closing deadline? Can the State Library extend the deadline?
   - The deadline of three years*** is set in statute (Education Law 273-a) and cannot be extended.
If all the work in the project cannot be completed within that timeframe, an Amendment to Scope Form must be completed after discussion with State Library staff.  


**FINAL BUDGET EXPENSES – REPORTING AWARD AND MATCH FUNDS**

8. **We only have one invoice from our vendor. How do we split the cost between award funds and match funds?**
   - In the Budget - Final Expenses section, a separate line should be included for each item (purchased/contracted services, supplies and materials and equipment). If you have one invoice from your vendor for the whole project, two separate lines must be included with the total award funds listed on one line and total match funds listed on another line. As the check number must be included on each line, State Library staff will be able to see how the costs were divided for the project.
   - The same check number may be listed on a maximum of two lines (one for award and one for match funds).
   - **NOTE:** Equipment expenses may only include items that cost $5000 or more for EACH item, and not as a grand total. For example, one computer, one printer and one computer table costing $5000 total should not be reported as equipment as each individual item would not cost $5000. Instead, these items should be listed under supplies and materials. Both equipment and supplies/materials are items purchased by the library directly, and not by the vendor or contractor(s).

9. **How do I know what to list as award funds or match funds?**
   - If there were any notes in the approved project application that DASNY mentioned must specifically be listed as match funds, this is a good place to start. In some cases, the library added a note about that as part of the project narrative (i.e., Asbestos testing and Asbestos abatement may only be paid for with match funds).
   - If there are no notes from DASNY, the award and match funds can be divided between the check numbers/journal voucher entry numbers as makes the most sense.
   - Some items that MUST be included as match funds are: landscaping, all work done between January 1-June 30 of the calendar year that the project was submitted to the State Library. This is not an exhaustive list, but just a few examples.

**SUBMITTING MY FINAL REPORT**

10. **What items are part of the final report? In what order do we submit them?**
    - All required items are listed in the “Final Report Checklist” for that specific project number. The order in which they are submitted online does not matter, as long as all items are uploaded prior to clicking “Submit Final Report”.

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Photos of all elements of the project are uploaded to the portal.

All Budget - Final Expenses are added to the portal.
- When adding these expenditures, add one line at a time, click on the save button and then add another row.
- Dates should be listed in the mm/dd/yyyy format.

Upload Certificate of Occupancy (CO) if applicable, in the Attachments section of the portal.
- The library indicated if a CO is required in the original project application. Please check the approved online application to see if you need to upload a copy of the CO before submitting the final report.
- If the library originally anticipated the requirement of a CO, but it was later determined by the municipality that it would not be needed (or was listed in the application incorrectly), a letter with an explanation on the library’s letterhead must be provided in the attachment section and listed as the CO.

Library then clicks on “Submit Final Report”
- If that button is “greyed out” and cannot be clicked, it usually means that some of the information above has not been included.

11. What happens when we submit our “Final Report”?

Once the library clicks on “Submit Final Report”, the State Library is notified that a report is ready to be reviewed. Please do not submit FS-10-F forms until requested by the State Library.

State Library staff review the budget, photos (invoices, if included) and certificate of occupancy, and compare them to the project and budget narratives and photos on the original application to see if all work was carried out and documented, or if an Amendment to Scope is needed.

State Library staff will contact the Project Manager if anything additional is needed before the Final Report can be approved.

Once the Final Report is approved, the library will be asked to submit three copies of the FS-10-F form by mail, with original signatures on each set in blue ink, signed by the Chief Administrative Officer (usually the Library Director or President of the Board of Trustees). No scanned copies or digital signatures will be accepted.

All pages of the FS-10-F must be present and printed single-sided to be accepted. The FS-10-F form is different from the FS-10 form used at the beginning of the application process. Please pay special attention to which form you are submitting.

State Library staff will review the FS-10-Fs and, once these are approved, the project is approved for payment of the final 10% of the award amount.

PROJECT RECORDS RETENTION AND AUDIT INFORMATION

12. What documentation do I need to keep for the project after it is completed?
• In addition to submitting Project Final Expenses and post-project photos, every approved applicant is required by State Law to keep all documentation related to a State Aid for Library Construction project in the event of an audit. This includes copies of all financial documents including, but not limited to, contracts, change orders, purchase orders, invoices and checks. Libraries must keep all project documentation for six years after the project is closed and the final report is approved by the State Library.

• The State Library does not require libraries to upload all invoices and other documents related to specific project expenditures to the online portal. However, all State-funded programs, including State Aid for Library Construction, are subject to detailed audit by the State Education Department and/or the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). If a project is audited by OSC, the library or library system will be required to submit to the State Library within 72 hours copies of all invoices and possibly other project documentation.

• Check with your local municipality or county for their records retention policy as well.

DO YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT CLOSING YOUR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT?
• If YES, please email your questions to the State Library at ldconstruction@nysed.gov.