

# Grant Opportunity: Measuring Impact through *Project Outcome*

---

## Summary

The Northeast Kansas Library System (NEKLS) is offering member libraries a grant of \$500 to assist with their active use of *Project Outcome* as a means to measure outcomes and better understand the impact of library programs and services on individuals served.

## Why measure outcomes?

The distinction between “outputs” and “outcomes” is important to understand. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) offers the following definitions:

**Output** = A measure of quantity (e.g. number or percent) or of quality (e.g. produced to a specified standard) of activities, products, or services.

**Outcome** = A gain or change in an individual’s knowledge, skill, attitude, behavior, status, or life condition related to the purpose of a project.

Each January, Kansas public libraries gather data about the library and its usage and complete the annual Kansas Public Library Survey / State Report. This data represents outputs. ***So why are outcomes so important?***

“As the need for services like early literacy, computer training, and workforce development has grown, the vital role libraries play in communities has also expanded. You know your programs and services have an impact, but most libraries have not traditionally measured the difference they make in the lives of patrons. While you may be experienced at measuring **outputs** like circulation and computer usage, stakeholders want to know what difference library programs and services are making in the community, and you need a new way to confirm it.” (Source: Project Outcome, a program managed by the Public Library Association)

## What is Project Outcome?

Project Outcome is a **FREE** toolkit designed to help public libraries understand and share the impact of essential library programs and services by providing simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Project Outcome also provides libraries with the resources and training support needed to apply their results and confidently advocate for their library’s future.

The Project Outcome toolkit provides libraries with **FREE** access to quick and simple patron surveys, an easy-to-use survey management tool to collect their outcomes, custom reports and interactive data dashboards for analyzing the data, and various resources to help move libraries from implementing surveys to taking action using the results. Libraries are encouraged to use their data to support and promote future action – from allocating resources more efficiently, to advocating new resources more

effectively, to providing support for future library funding, branch activity reports, and strategic planning. For the first time, public libraries, whether they are new to outcome measurement or advanced in data collection, have free access to standardized outcome surveys and data analysis tools they can use to effect change within their communities and beyond.

The Project Outcome surveys helps libraries measure outcomes and assess their impact in seven key library service areas:

- Civic / Community Engagement
- Digital Learning
- Economic Development
- Education / Lifelong Learning
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Job Skills
- Summer Reading

## How to sign-up for Project Outcome

Visit <https://www.projectoutcome.org/> and sign up!

## Grant details

Any public library can use the Project Outcome tool for free. So why a grant? Quite simply, an incentive . . . we want you to try Project Outcome even if you are not completely sold on the value of measuring outcomes.

NEKLS Commitment	Library's Commitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grant of \$500</li><li>• Assist libraries with using Project Outcome suite of tools</li><li>• Assist libraries with interpreting data</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign up for Project Outcome</li><li>• Participate in free online training offered through Project Outcome</li><li>• Measure outcomes of <u>FIVE</u> library programs, at least <u>TWO</u> of which are summer reading programs, using Project Outcome.</li></ul>

NEKLS will award one grant per library through the **Measuring Impact through Project Outcome** grant program for 2018. **The deadline to apply is Friday, May 18, 2018.**

Interested libraries should complete a **grant application** and submit it to Mike McDonald at: [mmcdonald@nekls.org](mailto:mmcdonald@nekls.org)

Questions? Please contact Mike McDonald at [mmcdonald@nekls.org](mailto:mmcdonald@nekls.org) or 785-838-4090.