

Opportunity: Literacy Exploration Grants

Grant Program Goal: To improve literacy in four areas: Literacy; Information & Digital Literacy; Financial Literacy; and Health Literacy.

Outcomes:

- ✓ Libraries will increase their capacity to provide programming/services to patrons in one of these four areas.
- ✓ Participating patrons will achieve growth in literacy skills.
- ✓ Increased public awareness of the importance of literacy and the library as a trusted community resource.
- ✓ Grantees will define specific outcomes for their individual projects.

Eligibility: Grant is open to NEKLS member academic, public and school libraries.

Grant Amount: Maximum award is \$3,000; up to \$40,000 in funds will be awarded.

Application Due Date: **September 8, 2023**

Awarded funds will be spent by March 1, 2024.

Criteria:

- ✓ Proposed project must address one of the four literacies,
- ✓ Partnerships with other libraries or other organization types encouraged,
- ✓ Up to one-third of the total \$\$ grant amount may be used to acquire materials for the circulating collection provided these titles are central to supporting the grant project.

Application: <https://forms.gle/m9P6Ekn8TTf5s8Ee7>

Applicants will provide the following:

- ✓ A statement of the needs to be addressed and the targeted population to be served (*use application form*),
- ✓ A description of how the planned project will address the identified need (*use application form*),
- ✓ Identify at least one indicator or measure that you will track and analyze in order to understand the effectiveness of services provided (*use application form*),
- ✓ Budget (*send via email to Megan Mentzer at mmentzer@nekls.org*)
- ✓ A timeline for project activities (*send via email to Megan Mentzer at mmentzer@nekls.org*).

Reporting: Recipient libraries will complete a brief grant report providing a description of the project, how staff was involved in carrying out the project activities, and the impact it had on project participants. ***NEKLS will provide recipients with a link for reporting at a later date.***

Questions? Contact Robin Hastings at rhastings@nekls.org or 785-838-4090.

Literacy

Literacy, with an emphasis on reading and writing, is defined as the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential. (National Assessment of Adult Literacy)

Information & Digital Literacy

Information literacy requires an awareness to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. (ALA's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy)

Closely related is digital literacy, the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. (ALA's Digital Literacy Task Force)

Financial Literacy

The National Financial Educators Council defines financial literacy as “possessing the skills and knowledge on financial matters to confidently take effective action that best fulfills an individual's personal, family and global community goals.”

Health Literacy

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines health literacy as the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 9 out of 10 Americans have limited health literacy skills and struggle with understanding health-related information. This can impact one's ability to manage their health, take medications appropriately and engage in shared health care decision-making. Limited health literacy is linked to worsened health status, more emergency room visits, more hospitalizations and higher mortality rates.