



Connecticut State Library

Federal Library Funding in Connecticut

Federal funds are provided through the Institute of Museum of Library Services (IMLS) in support of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Program.

Federal funds granted through the [Institute of Museum and Library Services Library Services and Technology Act \(LSTA\) Grants to States Program](#) support much of the statutorily mandated statewide library infrastructure, support, and services that enable information and education access to the people of Connecticut. In 2024, CT received \$2,164,184 through the LSTA Grants to States program.

Federal funds do not directly support public libraries who are funded locally by their municipalities.

[LSTA Grants to States](#) funding allows for the following:

Accessibility

Adult Services | Accessibility

In 2024, DLD launched [Towards Inclusive Accessibility in Libraries \(TIAL\)](#): Expanding Possibilities for All Ages and Abilities. DLD is partnered with the CT Age Well Collaborative, a statewide, cross-sector initiative of Connecticut Community Care focused on fostering aging, dementia and disability-inclusive communities. They are delegated by the CT Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity, as a part of the state's livable communities initiative in the Connecticut General Statutes. DLD are partnering with CT Age Well to co-create library staff training to support aging, disability, and dementia inclusivity. Current workshops also include accessibility and the library and welcoming the deaf and hard of hearing

community while a creative aging initiative planning is underway as are trainings on accessible documents and assistive technology.

Connecticut Library for Accessible Books (CTLAB)

The [Connecticut Library for Accessible Books \(CTLAB\)](#) provides free reading materials to Connecticut residents who are blind or print disabled as a network library of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) which provides access to the collection, equipment, operating procedures, and the network infrastructure. At the close of FY2024, CTLAB circulated 164,232 audio and braille books to over 5,000 active readers. Staff conducted 27 outreach sessions, reaching over 650 individuals. Nine CT public libraries now serve as hub libraries, helping to expand CTLAB's impact.

Veterans and Military Families

The CT State Library [Service to Veterans & Military Families](#) seeks to provide libraries with resources to support the veterans and military members in their community with robust materials covering benefits, education, employment, finance, health, history, housing, legal, support, cultural competencies, print and digital books and more. The CT State Library served as a partner with the [Libraries and Veterans National Forum](#) to develop the [Libraries and Veterans Toolkit](#) that libraries and other organizations that serve military members and veterans in their community can use to get ideas for programming for this often forgotten segment of our communities.

Digital Connectivity

E-Rate and Internet Connectivity

[E-Rate](#) provides funds for schools and libraries to improve their broadband access. In FY2024, 76 CT libraries saved a total of \$497,221.

Regional Digital Navigation

The CT State Library was awarded an [IMLS Grant \(LG-254838-OLS-23\)](#) through the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program in the amount of \$249,948 to administer a regional digital navigator sharing plan to assist CT residents with technology questions and tasks in partnership with seven participating CT public libraries, including Bridgeport Public Library, Derby Neck Public Library, Hamden Public Library, Howard Whittemore Memorial Library (Naugatuck), New Haven Free Public Library, West Haven Public Library, and Woodbridge Town Library. The project team will

design and implement a replicable model for regional sharing of digital navigation services to underserved residents. The plan is engaging 2,000 residents in need, distributing 400 computers, and creating a toolkit for replication of such a regional library collaboration model. The implementation of this model is expected to inform those responsible for Digital Equity Act projects across the United States with ways to introduce centralization and efficiencies into the smaller navigation project models.

Division of Library Development Resources

Early Literacy

Early literacy services include consulting services and continuing education for children and school librarians. In February 2024, DLD announced a new initiative, [CT Ready to Read](#), which equips public library staff with the education and tools needed to promote and develop early literacy skills and reading readiness in their communities. Through research-backed learning models, workshops, and resources, library staff are provided the opportunity to learn to model for, and work with parents, caregivers, and children. To date, workshops included "Every Child Ready to Read" and "Re-Imagining School Readiness."

Middletown Library Service Center (MLSC)

The [Middletown Library Service Center \(MLSC\)](#) collection provides circulating library materials in print, audio, and digital formats to supplement collections and support libraries of all types across Connecticut. The MLSC collection provides support for libraries facing budget and physical space limitations. Through the work of the Division of Library Development (DLD) consultants, the Division has learned that many libraries, especially school libraries, could not function without access to the CT State Library's supplemental circulating collections.

Professional Consultants

The [CT State Library Division of Library Development \(DLD\)](#) professional staff are consulted by libraries across the state within their areas of specialty, which include youth and adult services, statistics, E-Rate, digital inclusion, library management, and partnerships.

Professional Development

Designed in response to libraries' communities' needs, [professional development and continuing education](#) offerings include trainings on database resources, leadership, management, communications and presentation skills, capital projects, budgeting, customer service, children and teen services, readers advisory, inclusive and accessible library services and more. LSTA funds provided \$133,530 for 106 professional development webinars attended by over 1,300 library workers.

Summer Reading and Enrichment

Across the state, 83 CT public libraries ran 8,827 summer reading programs and activities with 229,470 kids, teens, and families participating as part of [Summer with the Library](#).

LSTA sub-grants totaling \$56,000 were given to 18 libraries to improve summer reading and family engagement, including [Summer Enrichment Grants](#) totaling \$21,210.98 that were awarded to 13 public libraries across the state through a competitive grant process.

Visiting, Collections, and Equipment

The MLSC is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. During business hours, visitors may browse the collection, pick up requested items, or drop off materials checked out to your library.

The [MLSC circulating collections](#) supports and supplements the collections of academic, public, school, and special libraries throughout Connecticut. The collection includes books, book discussion sets, book props, puppets, large print books, STEM Kits, and a professional collection.

The [MLSC Equipment Catalog](#) enables library staff to browse for and reserve book discussion sets, book bundles, Civics kits, puppets, Storytime kits, StoryWalk kits and STEM kits.

Statewide Digital Resources

State Archives | National Digital Newspaper Program

The [CT State Library's CT Digital Newspaper Project](#) is the recipient of a federal grant that supports work in the State Archives on the National Digital Newspaper Program to digitize historic newspapers from across Connecticut.

Statewide Digital Library

The statewide library catalog, [findIT CT](#), allows patrons and libraries to discover items from libraries across Connecticut with a single search. CT was the first state to use the open-source system, Fulfillment, which this year enabled 25,537,522 bibliographic records to be discoverable to the public across the holdings from 334 libraries.

Statewide eBook and eAudio Platform

As part of the [eGO CT](#) program, the CT State Library collection of over 40,000 eBooks and audiobooks is accessed through the [Palace Project](#) application used and shared with patrons by 178 CT public libraries, 17 academic sites, and 156 schools with the [eGO CT Community Share](#) program. With Palace, public library users have access to multiple collections of digital content including individual public libraries, regional library systems, the Palace Academic Bookshelf, the CT State Library's collection, the Palace Marketplace collection, and Axis 360 collection.

Statewide Resource Sharing

Connecticut's statewide interlibrary loan service, [requestIT CT](#), operates as a module in findIT CT, Connecticut's statewide library catalog. Both services use Fulfillment, an opensource software. There are currently 131 libraries that participate in the program and last year (FY23) 13,541 items were shared through Fulfillment.

Workforce Development

The [Workforce Solutions](#) platform available through researchIT CT includes Job & Career Accelerator as well as four additional learning modules that effectively support workforce development within libraries in all Connecticut municipalities.

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