

Evaluation of the State Library's LSTA Five Year Plan

Overview of Project

The mission of the South Dakota State Library is to provide leadership for innovation and excellence in libraries and services to state government.

One funding source that assists the State Library in its mission to South Dakotans is the federal Library Services and Technology Act specified under Public Law 108-81 (2003). The State Library submits a five-year plan to the IMLS to define how the federal LSTA funds may be dispersed to the library community in South Dakota. IMLS acceptance of the plan empowers the state to utilize the funds to meet goals listed in the plan. The five-year plan is entitled South Dakota Libraries for the 21st Century: An LSTA Five Year Plan 2007-2013

(<http://library.sd.gov/SDSL/publications/DOC/PLN-LSTA5yr-20072013.pdf>). An annual report of project activities is submitted to IMLS as required by the federal program.

Several statewide programs operated with partial or full support of LSTA funds are designed to improve and enhance access to information and resources for all South Dakota residents. These programs include:

- Statewide Electronic Resources program
- Statewide Braille and Talking Book program
- Statewide Digital Services program
- Statewide Interlibrary loan and courier service program
- Statewide Public Library Summer Reading program
- Statewide Library Training Institute program
- Statewide Continuing Education program

Scope of Work

By March 31, 2012 the South Dakota State Library must submit an evaluation of the five year plan to IMLS. The evaluation will include the LSTA-funded statewide programs listed above.

The results of the evaluation are expected to:

- Determine the progress the State Library has made toward the three goals of the five year plan
- Demonstrate the impact of LSTA funding on the clients and staff of libraries within the state
- Provide a communication tool for South Dakota's library community
- Become a part of the next five-year LSTA state plan

In order to provide information on program successes or lack of success, the State Library staff will combine information gathered from:

- Project data available from the State Library
- On-site information and/or data collected statewide from the project directors, related staff and end-users

The State Librarian, the Assistant State Librarian for Development Services, and the Assistant State Librarian for Access Services will serve as the committee to review the evaluation progress and reports.

The evaluator will have expertise with evaluation and possess the ability to conduct an assessment of current process and practices within the South Dakota library and information environment, survey development, data analysis, and action planning.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will focus on several statewide programs functioning in the state and address issues within the three goals of the LSTA State Plan. These three goals were developed to be in alignment with the federal LSTA purposes. The LSTA funded statewide programs to be included are:

- Statewide electronic resources program
- Statewide Braille and Talking Book program
- Statewide Digital Services program
- Statewide Interlibrary loan and courier service program
- Statewide Public Library Summer Reading program
- Statewide Library Training Institute program
- Statewide Continuing Education program

Significant questions to be addressed for each identified project consist of, but are not limited to, the following:

Retrospective Questions

- a) Did the activities undertaken through the state's LSTA plan achieve results related to priorities identified in the Act?
- b) To what extent were these results due to choices made in the selection of strategies
- c) To what extent did these results relate to subsequent implementation?
- d) To what extent did programs and services benefit targeted individuals and groups?

Process Questions

- a) Were modifications made to the SLAA's plan? If so, please specify (if any were made), informed by outcome-based data?
- b) If modifications were made to the SLAA's plan how were performance metrics used in guiding these decisions?
- c) How have performance metrics been used to guide policy and managerial decisions affecting SLAA's LSTA supported programs and services?
- d) What have been important challenges to using outcome-based data to guide policy and managerial decisions over the past five years?

Prospective Questions

- a) How will lessons learned about improving the use of outcome-based inform the state's next five year plan?
- b) What key lessons has the SLAA learned about using outcome based evaluation that other States could benefit from knowing? Include what worked and what should be changed.

Evaluation Methodology

- a) Identify how the SLAA implemented the selection of an independent evaluation
- b) Explain who was involved in conducting the various stages of the evaluation. What stakeholders contributed to providing and interpreting evaluation data?
- c) Describe the types of statistical and qualitative methods used in conducting the evaluation. Include administrative information as well.
- d) Document any tradeoffs made in the selection and implementation of the selected evaluation methods.
- e) Discuss strategies used for disseminating and communicating the key findings and recommendations.
- f) Assess the validity and reliability of the data used for conducting this evaluation study.

Timeline

The evaluation of the LSTA Five Year Plan is due to IMLS by March 31, 2012. To make sure that the evaluation is completed in a timely manner staff will use the following timeline.

July – September

- a) Data will be gathered from completed reports and evaluations
- b) Needed surveys/interviews will be identified, created, and conducted

October

- a) Collected data will be organized for the evaluator

November – December

- a) Evaluator will evaluate the 5-Year Plan

January

- a) State Library staff will write preliminary report for IMLS
- b) State Library Board will review the preliminary report at their January meeting

February – March

- a) Needed revisions will be made to the preliminary report
- b) Final report will be submitted to IMLS by March 31

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