

# **Overview of Grant Program**

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## **Introduction**

The Global Libraries program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (the “Foundation”) works to give all people, regardless of age, race, income, or geographic location, free access to digital information. To ensure equitable access to digital information, the Foundation recognizes the need for libraries to provide and sustain current computing hardware platforms for public access.

The "Public Access Computer Hardware Upgrade Grant Program" focuses on leveling the playing field for libraries in disadvantaged communities by providing opportunities to replace public access computers to meet the needs of the communities that the libraries serve.

## **Program Summary**

The "Public Access Computer Hardware Upgrade Grant Program" (the "Program") is structured to assist libraries in meeting their communities' public access computing hardware and software needs. To meet this goal, the Foundation will provide grants to participating State Library Associations ("SLAs"), which will then make grants to eligible libraries (defined below) within their respective library systems in accordance with criteria established by the Foundation to accomplish the charitable purposes of the grant.

The aim of this grant program is to sustain public access computing to maximize the number of library patrons and staff who will benefit from that access. The Foundation encourages SLAs to leverage these grant funds in combination with other funding and through utilizing resources such as TechSoup Stock's donated software program to maximize the impact of the grant funding.

Grant funds must be allocated by the SLAs to eligible libraries in accordance with the following priorities (individually, a "Program Priority" and collectively, the "Priorities"):

**Priority 1 - Moving Towards Public Access Computer (PAC) Equity**

**Priority 2 - Sustaining Public Access Computer Equity in the Future**

**Priority 3 - Meeting Public Access Computer Demand in High-need Communities**

**Priority 4 - Meeting Statewide or Community Training Needs**

Each SLA will work with eligible libraries within its state to collect a baseline of information related to the public access computers in those buildings. The Foundation, working with WebJunction, has developed a web-accessible area in TechAtlas (a suite of online technology planning tools for public libraries – <http://webjunction.techatlas.org>) for use by the SLAs and eligible libraries in connection with the Program. WebJunction (<http://www.webjunction.org>) is an online community supporting public access computing where library staff meet to share ideas, solve problems, and take online courses. This collection of information, including an inventory of public access computer hardware and software, will be facilitated through TechAtlas.

Each Priority 1 and Priority 2 Eligible Library will be required to complete a TechAtlas technology inventory of their PACs. As the inventories are completed, the SLAs will run reports to monitor progress of their libraries. Once all of the inventories are complete, the SLA will provide a report from TechAtlas, listing all of the Eligible Libraries and their PAC computer inventories.

***Instructions for completing these technology inventories will be sent separately to the directors of the systems along with the credentials needed to access the TechAtlas system.***

## ***Program Priorities and Definitions***

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### ***Definition of “Public Access Computers”***

The Foundation defines a Public Access Computer (a “PAC”) as follows:

- A) The computer is available for access by the public at no cost and without intervention by staff;
- B) The computer provides access to external information resources (*e.g.*, the Internet and bibliographic databases); *and*
- C) The computer can access personal productivity or reference software (*e.g.*, word processing, presentation, spreadsheet, electronic encyclopedia software, or other educational software).

### ***Detailed Description of Program Priorities and Eligibility Requirements***

The SLAs must disburse grant funds to a public library<sup>1</sup> to meet the following purposes and according to the eligibility requirements defined within each Priority:

#### ***Priority 1: Moving Toward Public Access Computer Equity***

##### **Description:**

Applicants must replace PACs that (a) are not upgradeable, (b) are still in active service, and (c) were purchased or obtained with funds from Foundation grants through the year 2000, with current public access computing hardware and software.

Within this Priority, funds must be disbursed as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> A “public library” must be: (1) recognized by the SLA as a public library, (2) open to public use acting as a public library (not as an administrative outlet), and serve an area of greater than 10% poverty; and (3) qualified as a Federal, State or local government unit, or a political subdivision thereof, as provided by sections 170(b)(1)(A)(v) and 170(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), or exempt from Federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. A public library that meets the eligibility criteria set forth in this application will be referred to as an “Eligible Library.”

- a. Highest replacement priority goes to the oldest computers *still used as PACs*.
- b. In the case where the public access computer's source of funds for purchase or age cannot be determined, then the least sustainable computers must be replaced. To determine overall sustainability of the PAC, consider the following factors: (1) available technical support for the computer (including vendor support of the hardware or software, including the operating system), and (2) capability of the computer to meet public access computing needs of the library's users.
- c. Funding should be allocated to meet the demand on an individual library basis for PACs. Where demand exceeds available funding, then allocate funds to maximize benefits to the largest number of libraries in the most equitable distribution possible within the discretion of the SLA.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Within this Priority, eligible libraries are defined as follows:

- a. Received a grant from the Foundation as a part of the Statewide Partnership, Opportunity or Urban grant programs in years 1997 through 2000;
- b. Serves a library service area of less than 300,000, according to NCES 2002 statistics;
- c. Submits a timely and complete grant application to its SLA, and meets these eligibility criteria as determined by the SLA; and
- d. Agrees to expend all grant funds and place the new PACs in service by December 31, 2006.

### ***Priority 2: Sustaining Public Access Computer Equity in the Future***

#### **Description:**

Funds remaining after implementing Priority 1 (*Moving Toward Public Access Computer Equity*) may be allocated to Eligible Libraries that (a) previously replaced all or a portion of their PAC hardware and software purchased or obtained up through the year 2000.

Within this Priority, funds must be disbursed as follows:

- a. Highest replacement priority goes to libraries that replaced the originally granted PACs the *earliest*.
- b. If the time of replacement of a computer cannot be determined, then the least sustainable computers must be replaced. To determine overall sustainability of the computer for public access, consider the following factors: (1) available technical support for the computer (including vendor support of the hardware or software, including the operating system), and (2) capability of the computer to meet public access computing needs of the library's users.
- c. Funding should be allocated to meet the demand on an individual library basis for PACs. Where demand exceeds available funding, then allocate funds to maximize benefits to the largest number of libraries in the most equitable distribution possible within the SLAs discretion.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Within this Priority, eligible libraries are defined as follows:

- a. Received a grant from the Foundation as a part of the Statewide Partnership, Opportunity or Urban grant programs in years 1997 through 2000;
- b. Serves a library service area of less than 300,000, according to NCES 2002 statistics;
- c. Submits a timely and complete grant application to its SLA, and meets these eligibility criteria as determined by the SLA;
- d. Agrees to use Priority 2 funds solely to purchase new public access computing hardware and software to replace, or add to, their current stock of older PACs; and
- e. Agrees to expend all grant funds during years 2006 through 2008, according to the needs and demands of each Eligible Library based upon the information collected through TechAtlas and the SLAs discretion regarding how grant funds should be allocated.

Libraries that are eligible to receive funds under the Program for Priority 1 and 2 are listed in the accompanying "SLA PAC Grant Planning" spreadsheet on the "Priority 1&2 Eligible Libraries" worksheet. Under Program Priorities 1 and 2, the SLA will determine

the procedures pursuant to which Eligible Libraries may apply and whether a library meets the relevant eligibility criteria established by the Foundation. The Foundation requires only that these libraries complete a TechAtlas technology inventory to be eligible. It is within the SLA's discretion to require additional application steps.

After fully funding the first two Priorities, if there are grant funds remaining the SLA, in its sole discretion, may allocate such funds to libraries that serve communities with high need and high demand for PACs or that would serve the state's training needs by providing a computer lab. An SLA need *not* expend funds under Priority 3 before funding Priority 4; however, an SLA *must* allocate the remaining funds to maximize public access computing benefits within its state.

### ***Priority 3: Meeting Public Access Computer Demand in High-need Communities***

#### **Description:**

Any funds remaining after implementing Priority 1 (*Moving Toward Public Access Computer Equity*) and Priority 2 (*Sustaining Public Access Computer Equity in the Future*) may be used to meet the needs of Eligible Libraries serving communities with high needs and high demands for public access computing services. Within this Priority, funds must be disbursed as follows:

- a. Highest funding priority goes to libraries that serve areas of high poverty.
- b. Funding should be allocated by the SLA to meet the demand on an individual library basis for PACs. Where demand exceeds available funding, then allocate funds to maximize benefits to the largest number of libraries in the most equitable distribution possible.

#### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Within this Priority, eligible libraries are defined as follows:

- a) Meets the definition of a public library as defined by the state library agency or legislature in the state;
- b) Be part of a library system that serves a library service area of less than 300,000, according to NCES 2002 statistics;
- c) Submit a timely and complete grant application to their SLA, and meet these eligibility criteria as determined by the SLA;

- d) Agree to use Priority 3 funds solely to purchase new public access computing hardware and software to replace, or add to, their current stock of PACs in accordance with the funding plan set forth in their grant applications; and
- e) Agree to expend all grant funds during years 2006 through 2008, according to the needs and demands of the libraries based upon the information collected through TechAtlas or the SLA's discretion regarding how grant funds should be allocated.

#### ***Priority 4: Meeting Statewide or Community Training***

##### **Description:**

Any funds remaining after implementing Priority 1 (*Moving Toward Public Access Computer Equity*) and Priority 2 (*Sustaining Public Access Computer Equity in the Future*) may be allocated to Eligible Libraries to help them meet the training needs of the state or of a community. To create new, or upgrade existing computer labs, libraries may use these funds to purchase new public access computing hardware and software to replace, or add to, their current stock of existing PACs.

Within this Priority, funds must be disbursed as follows:

- a. Highest priority goes to libraries that will establish a computer lab in which the equipment (1) will be available to library staff, state library staff and the public, for training opportunities; and (2) when not in use for training opportunities, will be available for public access computing services.
- b. Factors used to determine allocation under this priority include the following: (1) availability of other such facilities in the geographic region, (2) ability and willingness of the library to support and make available both training (for staff and the public) and public access computing services, and (3) ability of the library to maximize the training opportunities in their community to meet the information access needs of that community.
- c. Funding should be allocated to best meet the training demands on a statewide or community-wide basis. Where demand exceeds available funding, then allocate funds to maximize benefits to the largest number of libraries in the most equitable distribution possible.

##### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Within this Priority, eligible libraries are defined as follows:

- a. Be part of a library system that serves a library service area of less than 300,000, according to NCES 2002 statistics;
- b. Submit a timely and complete application to their SLA, and meet these eligibility criteria as determined by the SLA;
- c. Agree to use Priority 4 funds solely to purchase new public access computing hardware and software to replace, or add to, their current stock of PACs in accordance with the funding plan set forth in their grant applications; and
- d. Agree to expend all grant funds during years 2006 through 2008, according to the needs and demands of the Eligible Libraries based upon the information collected through TechAtlas or the SLA's discretion regarding how grant funds should be allocated.

In allocating funds for Priorities 3 and 4, the SLA, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether an Eligible Library will receive funding and how grant funds may be expended. However, such determination must be made in accordance with the charitable purposes of the Program and the Priorities stated in this grant application.

This Program is not an open or competitive program. Applicants must be invited to submit an application.

### **Determining the amount for which your state can apply**

The amount of funds the SLA can apply for is determined by first taking the total number of PACs, including server units, received from the Foundation through the Statewide Partnership Program by libraries in your state. The number of PACs is then multiplied by \$1,500 to arrive at the amount of *possible* grant funding. The value of \$1,500 per Public Access Computer (PAC) has been determined to be a fair replacement cost for a PAC; the library's needs may require a lower or higher per unit cost.

Before being able to determine the *actual* amount of grant funding that the SLA will apply for, it must first determine the participation rate of Eligible Libraries in both the Statewide Partnership Program and the Public Access Computer Hardware Upgrade program. The difference in the rate of participation between the two programs determines the actual grant funding for which the SLA can apply.

For example, in the Statewide Partnership Program **State A's** libraries received 100 PACs. Multiplying this number by \$1,500 results in \$150,000 of *possible* grant funding for the SLA.

In the Statewide Partnership Program **State A** had 100 libraries receive grants. Of these 100 libraries, 95 participate by completing the TechAtlas technology inventory. This results in a participation rate of 95%.

To finalize the *actual* grant amount **State A** can apply for, it would multiply the participation rate of 95% by the *possible* amount of grant funding of \$150,000 resulting in \$142,500.