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# **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) Grant Information and Guidelines**

Public Law Number 116-136

Developed by  
**Division for Libraries and Technology**

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



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CARES Act grant-funded projects are made possible in part by  
the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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# Introduction

On March 27, 2020, the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \(CARES Act\)](#) became Public Law Number 116-136. The CARES Act includes a provision that appropriated an additional \$50 million for the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, including grants to states, territories and tribes to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services.

On April 13, 2020, [IMLS released details regarding how it would distribute the first \\$30 million of the total \\$50 million allocated to the agency](#). Using a population-based distribution method similar to the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States program (excluding a base amount, maintenance of effort redistribution, and state matching requirements), [IMLS awarded the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\) \\$526,106](#) on April 21, 2020. This funding is available to Wisconsin through September 30, 2021, the end of the 2020 federal fiscal year. On May 8, 2020, [IMLS announced \\$15 million of the remaining \\$20 million of the federal appropriation through the CARES Act would directly aid museums, libraries, and library organizations](#) through competitive grants. This document focuses on the \$526,106 awarded to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and subaward opportunities through that award.

The CARES Act program is administered at the federal level by [IMLS](#). IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The [Institute's mission](#) is to advance, support, and empower America’s museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. IMLS administers its program according to the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) based formula [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#).

## CARES Act Grant Timeline

Event	Date
Earliest date expenditures may be charged back to grant	April 21, 2020
Grant application deadline to the Division for Libraries and Technology (Grants will not be submitted to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction until all system/library applications are received.)	June 30, 2020
Notifications of Federal Grant Subaward sent to library systems	August 31, 2020
Final day expenditures may be charged to the grant	June 30, 2021
Claims due to Department of Public Instruction	August 15, 2021
Final project evaluations due to Department of Public Instruction	August 15, 2021

## CARES Act Grant Contact

Please submit applications and general questions to [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) to be routed to the appropriate staff contact within the Division for Libraries and Technology.

# CARES Act Grant Details

## Allowable Costs

The intent of the CARES Act appropriation for the Institute of Museum and Library Services is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus by expanding digital network access, purchasing internet accessible devices (provided those devices comply with Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirements), and providing technical support services to address digital inclusion efforts and related technical support. To support these efforts the Division for Libraries and Technology is allowing the use of CARES Act funding to purchase the following categories of items and services:

- **Expanding digital network access**
  - Increasing internet bandwidth
  - Upgrading wireless internet access points
  - Improving wireless internet availability inside the library or outdoors adjacent to the library
  - Providing mobile wireless internet access on bookmobiles or other outreach vehicles
  - Installing alternate community wireless internet access points (e.g., local museum, village hall, public park)
  - Purchasing and installing cabling and infrastructure costs (e.g., cabling, switches, access points, weather-proofing)
  - Purchasing and installing cabling to support social distancing of wired workstations
  - Paying for installation of equipment to support internet access
  - Marketing wireless internet improvements (e.g., permanent signs, sandwich boards, banners)
    - Marketing costs must promote specific CARES Act improvements to library products or services and **not** simply advertise general library services. For example, if a library increases outdoor Wi-Fi access using CARES Act funding, it is appropriate to purchase a sign to display in the parking lot advertising the library as a community wireless access point.
  - Web-conferencing software and web cameras for virtual programming, staff interaction and collaboration, staff and patron interaction, and visibility of library meetings
  - Remote access software and necessary peripherals to facilitate staff and patron interactions
- **Purchasing internet accessible devices**

**IMPORTANT:** CARES Act funds used to purchase Internet-accessible devices (e.g., computers, tablets, or smartphones) or to pay for costs associated with accessing the internet by library patrons and/or staff (e.g., hotspot data plans), must comply with the [Children’s Internet Protection Act \(CIPA\)](#). CIPA mandates the use of Internet filters in libraries. This includes the purchase of computers for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, job resource centers, or for any other endeavor. If the devices or internet access you wish to procure are not CIPA compliant, consider utilizing local funds to purchase those devices/access.
- **Providing technical support services**
  - Virtual/phone reference
  - Staff development
  - Unemployment and job seeking resources for patrons and/or staff
  - Health information related to the pandemic
  - Community and government information

The list above is intended to provide an outline and generate ideas for allowable CARES Act expenditures. Libraries and systems are encouraged to consult their technology plans to align expenditures with identified community/regional needs. Consider the immediate responses to COVID-related needs, as well as the longevity of the improvements when expending federal funds. For example, funds used to improve internet bandwidth

and outdoor access may reach more users and have longer lasting effects than purchasing acrylic barriers designed to provide social distance for users during the pandemic. Libraries considering using CARES Act funds for any expenditures that are outside of these parameters, but are necessary, reasonable, and permissible under the CARES Act, should contact their system and/or [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) to confirm allowability.

Public libraries **and** public library systems should determine whether to address needs individually at each library or if providing similar services to each library in the system is in the best interest of the public libraries. Ultimately, each library may determine how to utilize the CARES Act funding generated by that library and that determination, if it differs from the library system, will take precedence if the library's determination is necessary, reasonable, and allowable under the CARES Act.

## **Eligible Entities and Distribution**

The Department of Public Instruction's Division for Libraries and Technology will distribute CARES Act funds to public library systems. A public library system or a consortium of library systems must apply for these funds on behalf of their member libraries. Public library systems, as the subrecipient agencies, will then determine whether they will subgrant these funds to member libraries (reimbursing members for qualifying expenditures), purchase supplies and/or services on behalf of their member libraries, or employ a combination of distribution methods.

For fiscal relationships, allocating funds to member libraries requires documentation of accountability in the CARES Act application and final evaluation. Library system staff, as subgrant administrators, need to provide information to member libraries about their responsibility in agreeing to accept funds. IMLS requires that each recipient of funds describe the impact of the federal funds on its community. Each library or organization that receives and expends CARES Act money must report the use of the CARES Act funds and the outcomes of the project to the original recipient of the grant award.

## **Allocation Details**

Wisconsin public libraries and public library systems will use the funds to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices (provided the library complies with CIPA), and/or provide technical support services to citizens to address digital inclusion efforts and related technical support. The Institute of Museum and Library Services advised states and territories to utilize poverty, unemployment, and broadband availability data to prioritize efforts. The Division for Libraries and Technology utilized metrics published in the [IMLS Indicators Workbook: Economic Status and Broadband Availability and Adoption](#) and the [Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Initial and Weekly Claims Filed](#).

Poverty, unemployment, and broadband availability data are available consistently at the county level. Each library within a county generates a uniform allocation based on that county’s percentage in the following metrics:

**Poverty:** The poverty metric comprises 25% of each library’s allocation. Metric: Poverty rate (%) (Percent below poverty level). Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates accessed via data.census.gov.

**Unemployment:** The unemployment metric comprises 25% of each library’s allocation. Metric: formula to determine the percentage of unemployment utilizing the sum of initial unemployment insurance claims in a county since January 1, 2020, divided by the county’s voting age population estimate from 2019. Sources: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development 2020 Unemployment Insurance Claims Initial Claims by Wisconsin County; Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center January 1, 2019, County Final Population Estimates

**Broadband Availability:** The broadband availability metric comprises 50% of each library’s allocation. Metric: “Percent with no home internet.” Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates accessed via data.census.gov.

## Allocation Amounts

The [Wisconsin Libraries CARES Act Distribution spreadsheet](#) details the allocation amounts generated by each Wisconsin public library, the sums and averages by county, and the sums and averages by system.

System	Total CARES Act Distribution	AVERAGE of Member Library CARES Act Distributions
Arrowhead Library System	\$10,200	\$1,457.17
Bridges Library System	\$23,014	\$958.91
IFLS Library System	\$70,139	\$1,323.39
Kenosha County Library System	\$2,361	\$1,180.35
Lakeshores Library System	\$19,207	\$1,280.50
Manitowoc-Calumet Library System	\$7,229	\$1,204.78
Milwaukee County Federated Library System	\$23,641	\$1,576.04
Monarch Library System	\$36,383	\$1,212.76
Nicolet Federated Library System	\$21,837	\$1,455.82
Northern Waters Library Service	\$39,571	\$1,465.59
Outagamie Waupaca Library System	\$19,791	\$1,236.92
South Central Library System	\$62,142	\$1,172.49
Southwest Wisconsin Library System	\$41,080	\$1,467.14
Winding Rivers Library System	\$56,224	\$1,653.64
Winnefox Library System	\$44,741	\$1,491.37
Wisconsin Valley Library Service	\$48,546	\$1,941.86
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$526,106</b>	<b>\$1,384.49</b>

# CARES Act Grant Requirements

## Acknowledge IMLS for Project Funding

CARES Act grant award subrecipients (including all public libraries and public library systems) are required to acknowledge IMLS as the funding agency. All products and informational materials, regardless of format or method of distribution that are supported by a CARES Act grant, including websites and databases created totally or in part, must include a logo and an acknowledgement. More information is available on the [DPI LSTA FAQ page](#) (because of the overlap with other IMLS grant requirements) and the [IMLS Acknowledgement Requirements page](#). The IMLS acknowledgement must be included on everything that is purchased and distributed using CARES Act funding. Any flyers, promotional materials, webpages, signs, etc. must include an IMLS acknowledgement and IMLS logo where appropriate.



## Additional Materials

The Department of Public Instruction and IMLS are eager to see and share details regarding your projects in order to demonstrate the value of public libraries in their communities and to inform the public how their investment in public libraries was utilized. Send additional materials that help provide context to the project or the project's outcome such as images, promotional materials, feedback received, survey results, staff and patron stories about the project, news articles, press releases, websites, etc. to [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov). If shared with the Division for Libraries and Technology, additional materials may be shared publicly (e.g., social media, newsletters) and with the Institute of Museum and Library Services unless otherwise indicated. Be sure to include the library's name/location with any materials sent.

## Budget and Activity Changes

DPI notifies grant subrecipients if the submitted budget within the application requires a change before the federal grant subaward is issued. If the grant subaward does not include any special conditions, the budget is approved as stated in the original application. DPI will provide a signed copy of the approved grant application and the approved budget summary will be provided to the applicant agency along with the notification of federal grant subaward.

During the project performance period, changes to an approved grant budget must be approved by DPI. Changes to the budget details can be made directly to the CARES Act application and emailed to the DPI project coordinator at [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov).

## End-of-Project Grant Evaluation

Each recipient of CARES Act funds (public library systems) must complete an evaluation of the project. Evaluations are due to DPI by emailing [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) within 45 days after the conclusion of the project. Grant recipients will answer the following prompts:

- **Describe any important findings or outcomes from the project.** This is a brief description of any findings or outcomes not reported elsewhere. What changes happened as a direct or indirect result of this project? What are the results for the targeted population or region? Discuss whether people are using or reusing the new services provided through your project, whether knowledge has been gained and shared with others, and whether your users value what you are providing them.



- **Describe any significant lessons learned from outputs, outcomes, or other results of the project that might help others implement a similar project.** Provide a response that informs anyone who would want to adopt any facet of this project of the aspects of implementing this project that were successful, the pitfalls to avoid, and things to try differently.
- **Describe any continued efforts that will occur in future years based on the foundation of this project.** Given the outcomes and findings that resulted from this project, how will this impact the future program planning in the agency? If this program will continue, how will it impact planning for this project?

## Grant Payment – Claim for Reimbursement

Disbursement of grant funds is done on a reimbursement basis. This means the grant recipient makes purchases using local funds and then submits a [program fiscal report \(PI-1086\)](#) (also referred to as a claim for reimbursement) then CARES Act funds are directly deposited to a bank account established by the grantee following approval of the form by DPI. DPI recommends that grant subrecipients submit [program fiscal reports \(PI-1086\)](#) at least quarterly during the grant period and to copy the LSTA program coordinator, [michael.dennison@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:michael.dennison@dpi.wi.gov), on PI-1086 submissions. Direct all questions regarding financial claims to DPI’s CARES Act accountant, Mark Rudman, at [mark.rudman@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:mark.rudman@dpi.wi.gov) or (608) 267-9187. Recipients must complete grant activities and encumber expenses by the end date on the notification of federal grant subaward. The grantee maintains all receipts for purchases.

## Indirect Cost Rate

An indirect cost is an organization’s incurred cost that cannot be readily isolated or identified with just one project or activity. These types of costs are often referred to as “overhead costs.” Typical examples of indirect costs are general telephone service, postage, office supplies, office space expenses, and administrative or financial operations for an entire organization.

Indirect costs must be budgeted within the specific dollar amount awarded in the CARES Act grant. The awarded agency cannot budget indirect costs in excess of the grant award amount. Applicant agencies can choose to budget indirect costs using a current indirect cost rate already negotiated with a federal agency, using the *de minimis* rate not to exceed 10% of modified total direct costs, or not include any indirect costs. Contact [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) to request more information.

## Partnerships and Collaboration

When issuing the CARES Act grant announcement, IMLS Director Crosby Kemper stated, “The urgent expansion of broadband access and digital services enables people to connect to the health, community, government, and job information so critical today, and to the other programs and services that play an enhanced role in the current health emergency. While we are distributing these funds through State Library Administrative Agencies, we urge museums and related organizations to partner with libraries in this vital endeavor.” When appropriate, libraries are encouraged to collaborate with museums, tribal partners, and related organizations in their community and region.

# CARES ACT Grant Application and Instructions

## [Use the CARES Act Grant Application PI-2440-CARES to apply for a CARES Act grant](#)

When submitting the completed application, please submit the original, completed Microsoft Word document to [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) by the application deadline. Applicants must also submit a signed, scanned PDF copy of the completed application, or an authorized system staff member or director may email the following statement to [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) along with the completed grant application attached:

“I, Your Name, Title of the Library System Name, certify that the information contained in the attached application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge, that the necessary assurances of compliance with applicable state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations will be met; and, that the indicated agency designated in this application is authorized to administer this grant. I am authorized by the Library System Board to approve these certifications on behalf of the Library System Name. I further certify that the assurances listed in the attached application have been satisfied and that all facts, figures, and representations in this application are correct to the best of my knowledge.”

Public library systems and public libraries are the primary and intended recipients CARES Act funds. Public library systems and public libraries must be in compliance with [Public Library Services Funding Framework](#). CARES Act funds will not be awarded if these requirements are not met. For a complete review of statutory requirements, see [Wis. Stats. § 43](#).

The following fields are found in the CARES Act application:

### **GRANT INFORMATION**

**Grant Title** – the name of the CARES Act project is pre-filled. It is not necessary to rename the grant project.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Applicant Agency** – the name of the public library or public library system that is applying as the fiscal agent for the grant project.

**Collaborating Systems** – if the applicant is applying on behalf of a consortium of public library systems, provide the public library systems that are participating in the consortium.

**Project Administrator Name** – the name of the Applicant Agency staff or board person who will be the primary person responsible for grant communication in the agency.

**Project Administrator E-Mail** – the e-mail address for the Project Administrator that will be the primary method of official DPI communication.

**Project Administrator Phone** – the telephone number for the Project Administrator that will be a method of DPI communication.

**Applicant Agency Business Manager Name** – the name of the Applicant Agency staff member who may be a bookkeeper, office manager, or business manager who is responsible for tracking federal revenues and claiming funds from DPI.

**Applicant Agency Business Manager E-Mail** – the e-mail address for the Business Manager. This person will be copied on communication from DPI regarding grant award and claims reimbursement.

**Applicant Agency Business Manager Phone** – the telephone number for the Business Manager. This person may be contacted by DPI regarding grant award and claims reimbursement.

**Total CARES Act Funds Requested** – the amount of CARES Act dollars requested by the applicant agency and any collaborating partners necessary and reasonable to perform the activities described in the grant application. See the CARES Act Allocations for the maximum amounts by system.

## **ASSURANCES AND ASSURANCES SIGNATURE**

Agencies applying for federal CARES ACT funding must provide assurance that 1) the application is complete and accurate; 2) the agency is aware of and will comply with all applicable state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations; and 3) the agency is authorized to administer the grant.

**Applicant Agency** – the name of the public library or public library system that is applying as the fiscal agent for the grant project. Repeated from General Information section.

**Name of Authorized Representative of Applicant Agency** – the name of the duly appointed representative who is authorized by the Library Board to certify the assurance on behalf of the Applicant Agency.

**Title of Authorized Representative** – the position title for the staff or board member who signs as the Authorized Representative.

**Signature and Date signed** – the Authorized Representative must either sign and date the completed application form or email the statement written at the start of this section to [LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryReport@dpi.wi.gov) **with the completed Word document attached**.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Abstract** – Provide a succinct paragraph of the project, including its purpose and intended outcome based on targeted population(s) and identifiable need. It is a summary of the project. Write for a general audience by avoiding jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations. Also avoid highly technical activity details, numerical lists and bullets.

The abstract will be used throughout the grant process, such as reference point on the mid-project and end-of-project evaluations. In addition, abstracts are posted on the IMLS and DPI websites for publicity purposes and idea generation by future grant applicants. See Abstracts in the FAQ for an example of an abstract and links to other models.

**Disbursement** – Provide a description of how the library system plans to distribute funds/products/services to member libraries either through coordinate system purchasing, subgranting funds on a reimbursement basis to member libraries, or using a combination of methods to address specific community needs.

**Outcomes** – Provide a description of the intended outcomes for the CARES Act project.

## **CARES ACT BUDGET DETAILS and SUMMARY**

The budget details section requires the applicant agency to list all the budget line item purchases the applicant agency requests to make using CARES Act funds in any of the CARES Act categories. The totals from the budget details section will automatically calculate in the budget summary section. Each budget section is described

below. Depending on factors such as the number of libraries in your system or the variety of services/materials purchased, the Budget Details section may not provide sufficient space to detail out budget line items. If you require more space, please complete the [CARES Act Budget Details workbook](#) and submit with the application.

All budget items must conform to the CARES Act allowable costs and be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to the grant. DPI may approve a project proposal while requesting that the applicant agency make budget revisions to appropriately and allowably administer the project. The budget and project proposal are approved when the DPI grant program coordinator signs the budget summary page. Federal funds received by public libraries must be deposited with the library's municipality per [Wis. Stats. s. 43.58\(2\)](#). Federal audit requirements must be met.

**Matching Funds** are not a requirement of the CARES Act and not requested from the applicant agency.

**Salaries/Wages/Benefits** – All salaries, wages, and fringe benefits paid to Applicant Agency staff directly contributing to the project. Staff members with the title of “Consultant” who are paid from and contributing to this project should be budgeted here and not in the Consultant Fees section.

**Consultant Fees** – all expenses related to acquiring the expert services of a third-party consultant for a specific activity within the project can be included in this category. Costs may include fees, travel, accommodation, and support services hired directly by the consultant. Do not include costs incurred by an Applicant Agency staff member or the staff of a public library or system who have the title of “Consultant.”

**Travel** – travel costs must be related to the project activities and must be incurred by the Applicant Agency staff working on the project. The costs include airfare, ground transportation, accommodation (lodging), meals, etc. For airfare, economy class must be used at all times. Select the type of travel expenditure and describe the travel selections in the text box next to the selection. Do not include travel expenses by a third party. Reported expenses must be related to the project activities.

**Supplies/Materials** – costs for supplies and materials including computing devices (if the acquisition cost per unit is less than \$5,000) purchased specifically for the project. List the consumable items and quantities of supplies and materials necessary to carry out the project such as print books, e-books, audiobooks, DVDs and/or technology such as computers, laptops, tablets, printers, STEM kits, etc.

**Equipment** – **Equipment purchases require prior approval from DPI and IMLS.** The Applicant Agency may request to purchase equipment by completing the [LSTA \(Also used for CARES Act\) Equipment Approval Request form](#). Equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.

**Services** – costs of project activities to be undertaken by a third-party contractor or vendor, including a formal partner. Databases should be described here and names of contractors included.

**Other Operational Expenses (Indirect)** – this includes allowable indirect costs incurred by the grantee. The applicant must also make a checkbox selection to inform DPI of the applicant’s decision to recover indirect costs.

**Rate** – provide the indirect rate the applicant chooses to recover if negotiated.

Other summary fields automatically calculate as budget details are entered.

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGES**

Provide a narrative description of changes to an approved budget. Include a description of why the budget change was necessary and how it will improve the project. A budget revision must be made if the CARES Act Budget Category lines on the CARES Act Budget Summary page will vary 10% or more from the approved amount when filing a program fiscal report (claim for reimbursement).

## **PROJECT OUTCOMES - EVALUATION**

The responses to the Project Outcomes – Evaluation section are due to DPI following the completion of the project. DPI recommends filling in the responses throughout the course of the project. These responses may be requested throughout the project and will be submitted to DPI following the conclusion of the project as an end-of-project report.

# **Application Review and Notification**

CARES Act application proposals are reviewed by Division for Libraries and Technology staff. Division staff will either recommend proposals to the Division Administrator for approval, or send proposals back for more information. The Division Administrator will make recommendations to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The State Superintendent reviews recommendations from the Division Administrator, and makes a final determination regarding all grant applications. Division for Libraries and Technology staff notify all applicants if their projects will be funded.