

LSTA FY 2007

Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders: Developing a Statewide Toolkit

Submitted by Sharon Ball, NSLS

Project Director: Jan Hayes, NSLS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In a recent survey conducted by the Illinois Library System Directors Organization (ILSDO) when asked about their awareness of latest technology, most librarians responded that they were aware of the technology but it was not integrated into current library services. The Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders project motivates libraries to go beyond this casual acquaintance with technology, finding ways to explore and incorporate technology possibilities.

To assist libraries in this effort, ILSDO, comprised of nine multi-type regional library systems, is developing the Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders project, assisting libraries in the assessment and planning of their preparedness for a 21st century population. On behalf of the Illinois regional library systems, the North Suburban Library System (NSLS) is asking for \$80,000 to fund a statewide research study in order to identify and share the best practices of academic, public, and school libraries which have embraced and integrated new technologies into their library services.

Using the “Becoming Successfully Networked Public Libraries” study conducted by Florida State University’s Information Use Management and Policy Institute (FSU/II) as the model for this project, a team of researchers will be hired to examine issues covering the integration and implementation of the latest technology in Illinois library services.

This project will focus on three primary areas of technology, including:

- Services offered within the library
- Services offered externally via a Web site
- The infrastructure needed to support both

This study will identify best practices in a sample of Illinois academic, public, and school libraries which are effectively employing the latest technologies. (Due to confidentiality issues faced by special libraries, this study will be open to the three library types mentioned above.) The areas of interest for this project include:

- Utilizing available technology
- Identifying measures most helpful in the management of technology resources and services
- Identifying strategies to advocate for continued technology support
- Identifying successful ongoing efforts to acquire sustainable funding for technology services
- Noting the interaction between libraries and external partners, including regional library systems and the Illinois State Library
- Identifying how successful libraries handle key issues
- Planning of next steps

The study will identify and share best practices, inspiring other libraries to initiate similar programs and services. An e-learning presentation will be scheduled in June 2007 to disseminate all findings and strategies, inspiring emulation statewide.

Through the use of interviews, focus groups, and visits to member libraries, the research collected and examined from the Libraries as 21st Century Leaders project will culminate in an online toolkit of guidelines, shared best practices, and evaluation tools, as well as professional development activities to help all library types. The toolkit will be available online at a dedicated Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders Web site.

Participating system liaisons will be working in partnership with study team members Joe Ryan (Senior Research Associate) and Charles R. McClure (Francis Eppes Professor and Director), Information Use Management and Policy Institute, Florida State University.

Few tools are currently available to assist libraries in identifying where they are in the process of becoming technology leaders, where they are in relation to their peers, and what the next steps are. This statewide study will create these tools.

This project addresses LSTA Goal #2. "To employ technology as a means for libraries to deliver information and services to patrons."

TARGET AUDIENCE NEEDS AND OUTCOMES

Librarians (the target population) from school, public, and academic libraries will be invited by their regional library system to participate in the study. The resulting research will provide a toolkit of materials, adaptable to any library situation. Upon the completion of the study, the toolkit of materials will be available online at the ILSDO, State Library or Web Junction Web site, whichever is more appropriate. The study will also serve as a resource for all regional library systems in the development of professional development opportunities. It will also serve as a databank for library planners seeking to improve services.

Compelling statistics for the necessity of Illinois libraries to become technology leaders can be found in the OCLC study, "*Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources.*"

Overall, the level of awareness of electronic library resources among U.S. respondents varies with age. U.S. 18- to 24-year-olds are more aware of the library's electronic information sources compared to U.S. respondents 25 and older. Seventy-five percent of U.S. 18- to 24-year-olds indicate the library has an online catalog, as compared to 55 percent of U.S. respondents age 25-64. Eighty-one percent of U.S. 18-24-year-olds indicate the library has a Web site as compared to 57 percent of U.S. respondents age 25-64.

Library decision makers need to keep in mind that adequately serving the needs of this growing techno-savvy population is essential for survival.

The FSU/II study team has successfully developed ways to recognize best technology practices in libraries. By utilizing focus groups, interviews, and site visits, best practices can be identified throughout Illinois. By establishing a dedicated Web site for the purpose of housing the toolkit, librarians globally can have access to all study materials 24/7.

The following outcomes are anticipated at the completion of this project:

- Best practices will inspire other libraries to become technology leaders.
- The Illinois State Library and the regional library systems will encourage and support libraries which recognize their role in advancement of library technologies.
- Individual libraries will take a proactive and leadership stance in deploying successful technology services and resources.
- There will be increased awareness by libraries statewide as to what constitutes a 21st Century Technology Leader and how to become one or a better one.
- Librarians throughout the state and beyond will have access to toolkit materials conveniently via Web site.
- The Illinois State Library will have a statewide view for future technology planning.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Throughout this grant project, the study team, NSLS project director, and regional library system liaisons will have ongoing and regular communications to manage and coordinate project activities. The study team will provide the NSLS project director with written brief monthly status reports on project activities.

October – November 2006

Activity:

- Study team and NSLS project director will complete detailed project tasking.
- Study team will review current literature and work related to library technology applications and infrastructure use.
- NSLS project director, with assistance from study team, will recruit liaisons at each of the regional systems to assist in study activities, logistics, meetings, etc.
- Study team, with NSLS project director and system liaison, will identify and obtain regional reports and other data sources to inform study activities.
- The study team will hold a kick-off meeting with system directors and liaisons.
Responsible: NSLS project director will coordinate meeting.

November 2006 – February 2007

Activities:

- Study team will develop criteria to select libraries for case site visits.
- Study team, NSLS project director, and system liaisons will consider candidate libraries for site visits.
- Libraries will be invited to participate in study.
Responsible: NSLS Project Director in cooperation with system liaisons.

- Study team will develop data collection instruments (focus group and interview scripts, observation forms, list of items/material to obtain from case sites, etc.) Responsible: Study team in cooperation with system liaisons.
- Study team will conduct site visits at each regional system, including visits to designated academic, public, and school libraries. (Two day site visits to each system will be scheduled. One day for general information presentation, focus groups, and interviews; one day for library visits.)

March - April 2007

Activities:

- The study team will analyze the data from site visits and other data provided by individual libraries and regional systems.
- The study team will conduct follow-up phone interviews as appropriate.
- The study team will produce draft final report for review by NSLS project director and others as appropriate.
- The study team in cooperation with NSLS project director will interview and hire Web developer, Web content manager, and usability expert (one to three individuals).

May - June 2007

Activities:

- Study team will produce final report.
- Study team and NSLS project director will determine content for a “toolkit.”
- Study team will provide a statewide e-learning event to disseminate study findings and strategies to becoming technology leaders.
Responsible: NSLS handles logistics for conducting the event.

June - July 2007

Activity:

- NSLS project director in cooperation with system liaisons will refine toolkit and work with Web developer, Web content manager and usability expert to make it available online via a project Web site.
- User and use statistics of the Web site will be maintained by host organization (organization to be determined).

All output measures, including member participation and Web site statistics, will be kept by the system liaisons and Web host organization.

System staff liaisons will work closely with the study team to provide all resources, including personnel.

Timeline—

October – November 2006	Preliminary work in place, assisting in the facilitation of study activities.
November 2006 – February 2007	General information sessions, focus groups, interviews, and site visits

	accomplished, providing necessary data for final report and toolkit.
May – April 2007	Analysis of data culminating in a draft final report.
May – June 2007	Final report and toolkit content completed, preparing for dissemination of information.
June – July 2007	Activities completed

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The North Suburban Library System is very capable of successfully managing this project and has received LSTA grant funding for numerous projects.

Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders project is modeled after the highly successful project “Becoming Successfully Networked Public Libraries: A Qualitative Study” funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the American Library Association. For this grant project, the study team will make all necessary changes in procedure to expand the focus of this grant to include school, public, and academic libraries. Other than this modification, no problems or challenges are anticipated.

Acting as the fiscal agent for this project, NSLS has the ability to subsidize a reimbursable grant and all grant activities.

Staff or project personnel includes:

Jan Hayes, NSLS Assistant Director, will act as Project Director, overseeing all grant project activities.

Sharon Ball, NSLS Grants Coordinator, will assist Project Director in the preparation of all reports.

Charles McClure (bio follows) will conduct all related study activities as study team member.

Charles R. McClure imscrm@attglobal.net is the Francis Eppes professor of Information Studies and Director of the Information Institute at the College of Information, Florida State University <http://www.ii.fsu.edu/>. He is also the President of Information Management Consultant Services. McClure has consulted with a range of public libraries related to planning, evaluation, and technology application/deployment – most recently the Detroit Public Library, Lancaster Library System (PA), and Forsyth County (Winston-Salem, NC). He has published some 45 monographs and over 250 professional papers and articles. He has won numerous awards for his research and is a frequent speaker at various library conferences and meetings. Currently he is the Co-Principal Investigator on the study, *The 2006 National Survey of Public Libraries and the Internet* (which includes the study *Successfully Networked Public Libraries*), funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; *Improved Decision Making for Public Libraries*,

funded by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS); and *Assessment of the Florida Electronic Library*, funded by the State Library of Florida. McClure has a proven track record in managing large studies and completing those studies successfully, in a timely fashion, and in-budget. Additional background about McClure can be found at: <http://www.ii.fsu.edu/~cmclure/>.

Joe Ryan (bio follows) will conduct all related project activities as study team member. **Joe Ryan** jjryan@earthlink.net is President of Ryan Information Management (RIM) 1049 Ackerman Avenue, Syracuse, NY, 13210, Phone: (315) 475-3630. Ryan is also a Senior Research Associate with the Florida State University Information Institute. RIM is a publisher, consultant, and researcher to libraries of all types. RIM's mission is to advance the library profession through systematic research. This has often meant working with new technologies, unresolved issues, strategic planning, new and different audiences, and interesting evaluation problems and techniques. Current projects include conducting site visits in five states for case studies *On Becoming a Successfully Public Library* as part of *Public Libraries & the Internet 2006* funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the American Library Association; *Improving Marketing of the Florida Electronic Library to the K-12 community*; and developing Web-based *Valuing Public Libraries* modules as part of the Evaluation Decision Making System (EDMS), funded by the U.S. Museum of Library and Information Services (IMLS) Please see Ryan's curriculum vitae <http://web.syr.edu/~jryan/vitae/vitae.htm> for a detailed listing of activities, publications, and research reports.

Regional System liaisons will assume the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a single point of contact with the NSLS Project Director and study team when working with the libraries in that system.
- Help identify 21st century leading libraries within their system.
- Arrange for participants to be involved in meetings, focus groups, interviews, and on-site visits.
- Arrange for meeting rooms and set-ups for these meetings.
- Provide the study team with various reports and documents related to the project from both the system and member libraries.
- Coordinate all grant project activities between their respective members and the study team.

Web developer, Web content manager, and usability expert—one to three individuals to be hired during the grant project.

On behalf of the North Suburban Library System, Proposal Writer Sharon Ball has read the Assurances. NSLS will comply with Federal laws, Illinois statutes, and contractual obligations related to federally funded grants.

Compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is not applicable.

COMMUNICATION/MARKETING PLAN

All study results and activities will be shared online via a dedicated Web site hosted by ILSDO, the Illinois State Library, or Web Junction, depending on suitability. A statewide presentation to disseminate all findings and shared strategies will be scheduled during June 07. The most efficient e-learning software will be used to maximize participation in this presentation. All regional library systems will disseminate information about the Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders project using their currently available communications tools, including paper and electronic newsletters, maillists, communities of practices, and Web site.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Since the Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders final study will provide vital information for future planning on the behalf of regional library systems and the Illinois State Library, these agencies have pledged their continued support to this project. The results of this project will become a sound foundation for continued expansion and development of technology usage in libraries in Illinois.

LSTA BUDGET EXPLANATION

Professional Contracts:

Charles R. McClure and Joe Ryan, Co-Principal Investigators \$48,000.
60 days @ \$800 per day

Research Assistant \$ 8,000
50 days @ \$20/hr or \$160/day

Web Developer and Designer, Content Developer, and
Usability Expert (approximation based on conversations
With Web developers—could cover one to three individuals) \$10,200

Total for this line item \$66,200

CE and Meetings for Others:

McClure and Ryan travel to October Kick-Off Session \$ 1,600
Two trips @ \$800 each

McClure and Ryan travel to conduct site visits \$10,000
Four trips @ \$2,500 each
(Each trip will be several days in length to accommodate
focus groups, interviews, and site visits)

McClure and Ryan travel to June e-learning event \$ 1,600
Two trips @ \$800 each

Total for this line item \$13,500

Supplies, Postage, and Printing:

Miscellaneous supplies and postage for study team \$ 300

Total for this line item \$ 300

Phones and Telecommunications:

Long Distance Telephone \$ 300

Total for this line item \$ 300

Total LSTA BUDGET \$80,000

LOCAL CONTRIBUTION BUDGET EXPLANATION

Personnel (NSLS staff):

Jan Hayes, Project Director \$ 3,145.20
60 hours @ \$52.42 per hour

Sharon Ball, Grant Report Preparer \$ 370.00
10 hours @ \$37.00 per hour

Total for this line item: \$ 3,515.20

Travel and CE for staff:

Jan Hayes attending Springfield meeting \$ 250.00

Total for this line item: \$ 250.00

Supplies, Postage, and Printing:

Miscellaneous supplies \$ 300.00

Total for this line item: \$ 300.00

Phones and Telecommunication:

Telephone charges \$ 500.00

Total for this line item: \$ 500.00

Total NSLS LOCAL CONTRIBUTION \$ 4,565.20

*These figures represent NSLS contribution only. Participating regional library systems will be contributing staff liaison time.