

## **Illinois Libraries PlinkIt!** **An Interactive Website at Every Library**

### **Project Description:**

Although the world wide web has existed since 1995, a large percentage of small and medium-sized public and school libraries do not have a web presence. Other libraries, which do have websites, have static pages, which are coded with html (hypertext markup language) and are not kept up to date. In the world of Library 2.0, open source solutions, and free web tools, it is imperative that all Illinois libraries create a local, attractive, interactive, web presence with services, materials, and programs to reach out in to the community they serve.

The Illinois PlinkIt project involving the four regional systems of Rolling Prairie, Shawnee, Alliance and Lewis and Clark during year 1 will enable libraries in Illinois to develop and maintain a web presence and to participate in interactive Web/Library 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis, and Flickr on the project website. PlinkIt! will cost \$80,000 in Phase 1 with an optional \$10,000 to add 40 additional workshops. Phase 2 involving the remaining systems for 2007/08 will be requested at an additional \$80,000 or \$90,000. PlinkIt speaks to small rural libraries (which represent over 80% of ALS, RPLS, ShLS, and LCLS membership). Over 40% of Illinois public and school libraries do not have a web presence and 80% of existing library sites are not dynamic or interactive. This project will help libraries with 1 or 2 staff members who have little or no access to web development tools, access time and cost effective tools to move into the www. Illinois libraries will have access to an excellent tool which will enable them to easily create and maintain a dynamic intuitive website. The PlinkIt tool may even be of interest to medium sized libraries that still have static html pages. PlinkIt will offer them many more interactive options as a content management system.

This project will provide new options for libraries of all sizes to provide additional web services and increased functionality on their websites. Many libraries have expressed a need for training on how to create a website. PlinkIt will provide a simple easy-to-use template for libraries without web pages and additional tools for libraries, which have static websites and want to migrate to PlinkIt.

The Illinois System Directors' Organization (ILSDO) proposes to work with three other states in an established consortium to bring Illinois libraries into the twenty-first century and assist them developing interactive, initiative websites with vital content about their library, their services, materials, and programs.

## Background:

The Oregon State Library has developed a tool for libraries called PlinkIt – Public Library Interface Kit. (<http://www.plinkit.org>). They have invested two years creating this webkit tool based on Plone, which is an open source content management system. PlinkIt is the web-authoring environment that public library partners in Oregon use to create smart, new web sites for their patrons. Public library web sites are created and edited right through the web, using built-in text editors and other powerful features that make a tough job simple and give patrons a clean, intuitive, web site.

Oregon has shared this solution with the Colorado State Library and the Texas State Library. Illinois libraries can become members and also have input as to the future development of the product. The PlinkIt Consortium would sign a memorandum of agreement (attachment A). Each state will pay \$25,000 to the consortium for the first year. This covers the cost of the software development and maintenance. A technical writer will also be hired to create an administrative manual. BCR (Bibliographic Center for Research) in Colorado will serve as the fiscal agent for the multi-state project. In the consortium, there will be a governance group with a voting representative from each state. The Illinois representative will be the Project Coordinator.

## Commitment

ALS, RPLS, ShLS, and LCLS are committed to making this project work. In supporting PlinkIt they have committed the following resources; system and members staff time and expertise, and facilities. RPLS Director Bev Obert is the Project Director and will be the financial agent. ALS Director Kitty Pope and Director of Innovation Lori Bell are responsible for project development, project management and public relations. System liaisons include: Doris McKay at RPLS; Lori Bell at ALS; LCLS is in the process of hiring someone who will serve as project liaison; and ShLS will appoint an appropriate staff member. Project PlinkIt is a great co-operative adventure that requires teamwork and a shared vision.

To make the project time and cost effective, every library that participates must also sign a memorandum of agreement that within 45 days of training they will have a library website up and running. Oregon has this requirement so that staff does not have to do additional training and to ensure library follow through on the project. (See attachment B) As each library website is made public, a link to their site will appear on the project website. This places a high expectation on each participating library, but with the investment of \$80,000 dollars the taxpayers deserve some collateral to insure success!

## Technology

Each state in the project can decide how they want to host the PlinkIt software. In Oregon, there are only 130 public libraries and they are concentrating on public libraries, so they host the software at the State Library. Texas has ten regional systems which each host PlinkIt on their servers. In Colorado, the software is hosted at the State Library. In Illinois, for the first year, we propose loading and hosting the PlinkIt software on a server at Alliance Library System which will host and maintain the software for participating systems and libraries. Grant funds will be used to assist with additional staffing costs associated with hosting the software and serving on the consortia technical team. ALS will provide in-kind hardware and space for the hosting of PlinkIt and the library websites resulting from the project. During Phase 1, we will also investigate other options for hosting and identify challenges during the first year. Grant funds are not requested for hardware. More technical details are included in attachment C.

## Project Partners:

Project partners include: ALS, RPLS, ShLS, and LCLS as founding organizations plus the other five Illinois library systems. Other partners include: the Oregon State Library, the Texas State Library, and the Colorado State Library. The Illinois State Library, by virtue of funding the grant, will also become a partner.

## How Project Meets Illinois State Library Goals:

“Illinois Libraries PlinkIt!” directly supports Illinois State Library goals:

- Goal 2 – to employ technology as a means for libraries to deliver information and services to patrons
  - Libraries will use new, improved, and enhanced websites using Web 2.0 tools to develop and provide new services and access to Illinois residents.

## **Target Audience Needs and Outcome**

Target Audience: 12,763,371 residents of Illinois

The target audience for “Illinois Libraries PlinkIt!” is all the citizens of Illinois. Every library needs to have a local presence on the Internet. By assisting libraries create, improve and enhance their websites, more libraries will have web presences with valuable information about the library and the community. Sites will provide hours of service, links to a library catalogs, electronic resources such as First Search creation of community information portals, online library

newsletter. Sites will utilize interactive tools such as blogs, RSS feeds, and instant messaging.

- According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 73% of adults in the United States use the Internet and “note big improvements in their ability to shop and the way they pursue hobbies and personal interests online.” To remain relevant, libraries need to not only establish but to vastly improve their web presences. Through this project, they will do just that.
- According to the Pew and American Life Project, 60 million Americans say that the Internet helped them make big decisions or negotiate their way through major episodes in their lives. The library remains a relevant place to obtain information to help citizens make decisions, but libraries are not open 24/7. In a 24/7 world, a dynamic website provides information access 24/7.

### Outcomes for Citizens of Illinois

- Citizens will use the library website as a first stop on the Internet for local information and links to other relevant information.
- Citizens will become increasingly technology savvy users.
- Residents who are not currently library users may use the library more through web-based outreach.

### Target Audience: Staff of Illinois libraries

Another primary target audience is staff of Illinois’ multitype libraries. Librarians will develop and use the PlinkIt product for creation of a dynamic and interactive library web page. The smaller and more rural libraries do not have the financial resources to develop their community website. Although library systems have provided training on website creation, more training and easier tools are critical. In the commercial world, this training is expensive. Over 40% of Illinois public and school libraries do not have a web presence and 80% of existing library sites are not dynamic or interactive.

Library systems have helped libraries access the resources that they can use to create a web presence. Some library systems have a network and templates in place for use by their members. However, this is not universal over the entire state. In fact in Central Illinois, over 40% of public and school libraries do not have a web presence and 80% of existing library sites are not dynamic or interactive. Library staff may learn how to do a web page but because they do not do it enough to be proficient thus updating the page and it soon becomes a burden to maintain and the site falls into old info oblivion.

### Outcomes for Illinois Librarians:

- Illinois libraries will have access to a comprehensive tool which will enable them to easily create and maintain a dynamic intuitive website.
- A minimum of 10-15 libraries in each of the rural systems will use PlinkIt and other Library 2.0 tools such as blogging, RSS, and instant messaging to create their websites and make them more interactive.
- Library staff receive desired training on creating websites which is difficult for Illinois library systems to maintain
- Librarians will gain more confidence in using technology to improve services

### Project Outcomes: Phase 1

- A minimum of 10-15 libraries for each of four systems will participate in training and create or improve their library website using PlinkIt and other Library 2.0 tools
- A project website will link to each library creating a showcase of participating websites
- Illinois librarians will work with librarians in Colorado, Oregon, and Texas in a collaborative and innovative project
- The project will be evaluated throughout the year and in quarterly reports to see how successful it was and how it could be improved in year 2
- Libraries will agree to have their website up within 45 days.
- Library systems are able to offer more much needed training on website creation and interactive web tools that are available

### Implementation Plan: Phase 1

During this first year, four systems (ALS, RPLS, LCLS, and ShLS) will participate in the PlinkIt project. The first year experience will be evaluated and in year two the other five systems will be brought into the project. Participating libraries in four systems will be trained to use Plinkit, a content management system that makes it easy for libraries to create and maintain websites. During training sessions, libraries will also be introduced to innovative ways to promote the website and its usage. Trainers will discuss blogs, RSS, and how these can be integrated into a library website. Participants will be encouraged to use these additional free tools on their websites. A project website chronicling the project with links to documentation, training, and library websites will be created. In addition, the website will make used as a laboratory to demonstrate Library 2.0 tools that libraries can experience and use.

In Illinois, Rolling Prairie Library System (RPLS) will serve as the administrative and fiscal agent and Alliance Library System (ALS) will serve in an administrative and management role. In Phase 1 four systems (RPLS, ALS, ShLS, and LCLS) will participate in the project. The remaining five systems will participate in year two. Each system will assign a liaison to the project to serve as part of the implementation team for their member libraries and to serve as system contact for the Project Coordinator. All system staff time will be an in-kind contribution to the project.

A Project Coordinator will serve as the Illinois consortia representative to the governance and project coordinator groups. The Project Coordinator will report directly to the Executive Directors of the Rolling Prairie Library System and Alliance Library System. The Project Coordinator will also revise Oregon training documents for Illinois, develop a training program, and train a contract trainer for each of the participating systems. The Coordinator will develop an Illinois project website which contains information about the project, links to the other states, training and support documents, links to library websites created with PlinkIt, and other appropriate links.

There is a governance group with a voting representative from each state. The Illinois Project Coordinator will serve on this committee. There is also a group for statewide project coordinators. There is a technical group for staff maintaining the software. The Illinois representative will be staff at the system hosting the software. There is also a user advisory group with 2 representatives per state. This group will meet online at least twice per year. Oregon State Library also hosts a listserv for all participating libraries to share information and ideas.

In October, the Project Coordinator will develop training for the trainers, establish the project website, and communicate with coordinators in the other states. Each of the participating systems will hire a part-time trainer who will be responsible for training libraries in their system. During November and December, the trainers will be hired and trained on the PlinkIt system and on Elluminate, a web conferencing system that can be used for support and additional training, by the Project Coordinator. Alliance Library System will provide an in-kind contribution to the project for the use of the Elluminate software. During February-May, each system will offer small group in-person training sessions around their systems. Although one-on-one training is ideal, it is not realistic with time and staffing constraints. Illinois will also develop its own user group. Interested libraries will meet online via OPAL (Online Programming for All Libraries) – an easy to use web conferencing system once per month with the Project Coordinator and trainers to discuss ideas, developments, and problems. The Project Coordinator will also show trainers how to use Elluminate software (web conferencing software with audio, desktop sharing, and many other features) to provide support, refresher training, and follow-up.

The Project Coordinator will also work with Sandy Albrow, a graphic designer and webmaster at the Alliance Library System to develop press releases, posters, and other promotional materials for libraries to publicize their new website. The promotional materials will reflect the new, exciting interactive websites of participating libraries. Grant funds are requested to design materials and to duplicate these materials for participating libraries.

Timeline:

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Who is Responsible</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Measurable Outcome</b>
Sign memorandum of agreement	ALS/RPLS	October – receipt of grant	Memorandum signed and sent to Oregon State Library
Hire Project Coordinator	ALS	October	Contract implemented
Develop contract to host software	ALS/RPLS	October	Contract implemented
Software loaded on server	Hosting system	October/November	Software loaded, tested
System project implementation team/liaisons selected	ALS, RPLS, ShLS, LCLS	October	Project liaisons are identified
ALS Graphic Designer begins working on promotional materials	ALS	October-December	Promotional materials are created based on Oregon materials
Training development	Project Coordinator	October/November	Training materials developed
Website development	Project Coordinator	October/November	Website available on Internet
Hire trainers	Each participating system	October/November	Trainers are hired
Provide training on PlinkIt to trainers	Project Coordinator	January	Training sessions held
First Quarterly report	Project Coordinator	December 31, 2006	Report submitted
PlinkIt training for participating libraries	Trainers	February-May	Small group in-person training sessions are held
Creation of Illinois PlinkIt user group	Project Coordinator,	January	Group is created; librarians are invited

	System liaisons		
Distribute promotional materials	ALS	January-February	Promotional materials distributed
Follow up sessions on Elluminate	Project Coordinator, trainers	February-June	Follow up sessions are held as needed
Planning begins for year 2	ILSDO and system staff	February	Planning/implementation group appointed
Online meeting of Illinois users group	Project Coordinator, system liaisons, participants	February	Meeting is held
Online meeting of Illinois users group	Project Coordinator, system liaisons, participants	March	Meeting is held
Second quarterly report	Project Coordinator	March	Report submitted
Online meeting of users group	Project Coordinator, system liaisons, participants	April	Meeting held
Online meeting of users group	Project Coordinator, system liaisons, participants	May	Meeting held
Participating libraries complete websites	Library participants	June	Websites are created and linked to project website
Project evaluation	Project Coordinator, system staff, trainers, participants	June	Focus groups, surveys, and other methods are used to evaluate project for final report
Letters sent to legislators	System staff, librarians, patrons	July	Letters sent
Final report submitted	Project Coordinator, ILSDO	July	Final report submitted

### **Management plan:**

- Bev Obert, Executive Director of the Rolling Prairie Library System, will serve as the Project Director. She has over twenty years of experience in public libraries and library systems in administration and as a consultant. She has written and managed a large number of grants. Rolling Prairie Library System is capable of administering the grant and has the financial resources until reimbursement can be made.
- Kitty Pope, Executive Director of the Alliance Library System, will serve as the Project Manager. She has over twenty years of experience in library systems in North American and the Middle East. She has written and managed a large number of grants. Lori Bell, Director of Innovation at ALS will also serve as Project Manager ensuring that the project is completed in a timely manner and that reports and plans for Phase 2 are developed, implemented and evaluated.
- Doris McKay, Consultant/Webmaster of Rolling Prairie Library System, will serve as the RPLS representative to the project. She has numerous years of library, project management, and training experience.
- Lewis and Clark and Shawnee Library Systems will appoint an appropriate liaison for the project.
- A Project Coordinator will be hired for the project. Qualifications include ten years of skilled project management, excellent written and communications skills, and knowledge of libraries.
- Each system will contract with a trainer with experience in technology training, web page creation, and knowledge of libraries.
- Ted Matheny, ALS Communications Manager, will oversee and manage the software required for the project. He has served as Network Manager and managed ALS internal technology for 15 years.
- Sandy Albrow, ALS Webmaster and Graphic Artist, will be responsible for creating and editing promotional materials for the project. She has extensive training and experience in graphic design and web programming.

Alliance, Rolling Prairie, Shawnee, and Lewis and Clark Library Systems are ready, willing and capable of administering and implementing PlinkIt. The systems have read the assurances and will comply. No hardware will be purchased through this grant, so CIPA is not an issue.

Anticipated problems might include libraries reluctant to learn new software and to have a site up in 45 days. These libraries will be given extra assistance through online assistance and documentation. Scheduling training may be a challenge since many small libraries are not open very many hours. We have received so many requests for a website creation tool such as this one that we think the advantages of the project will outweigh any disadvantages as perceived by libraries.

### **Project Communication Plan:**

The PlinkIt project will use a variety of ways to communicate with participants and to publicize the project throughout the state.

- Participating Illinois librarians can join a project listserv hosted by the Oregon State Library to share ideas and discuss the project.
- Systems will communicate with their members via email, workshop announcements, newsletters, and site visits
- A participant user group will be created in Illinois, which will meet online once a month to share ideas, troubleshooting, etc.
- A project website will be created to chronicle the project, link to participating libraries websites, and to contain support and training documentation. This will showcase the work the libraries have done
- ALS has a graphic designer who will design brochures, posters, press releases, and other attractive promotional items for participating libraries. She will also make use of Oregon tools already created.
- Examples of interactive web tools will be used on the project website to serve as an example for participants and how these can be used on their websites.
- Participating librarians will provide a workshop for participating systems sharing the experience and workshops for systems participating in year two.
- A letter will be sent to thank legislators at the conclusion of the grant.

### **Project Sustainability**

System staff will continue to work with participating libraries after the grant period ends. Participating libraries must agree to maintain their website for a minimum of two years. System staff is continually working to assist libraries in obtaining content for the web, group buys, and collaborative projects. They will continue to do this on behalf of members to help them bring more and more services to the web such as “AskAwayIllinois,” “MyMediaMall,” and “Listen Illinois.” The system hosting the software will agree to host the software and library websites for a minimum of two years. When the project ends, the point person at each system will continue to work together and participate in consortia activities.

One of the concerns will be sustainability for the cost of web hosting. During the project, we will investigate the most cost-effective and efficient way to provide web hosting for member libraries. After the two-year project, libraries will be responsible for their own hosting costs. The PlinkIt project will provide libraries and systems with information about the best way to provide hosting.

**Budget (s) AND Explanation(s)**

**LSTA BUDGET CHART**

<b>BUDGET CATEGORY</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Library Materials	Books, non-print, software	0
Capital Outlay	Equipment valued over \$500	0
Professional Contracts	Hiring an individual on contract	\$40,312.00
Contractual Services	Hiring an agency on contract	\$33,500.00
Personnel	Salaries and benefits for additional staff	0
Travel and CE for staff	Agency staff travel and meeting registrations	\$4,075.00
CE and meetings for others	Travel, registrations and honorariums for others	0
Public relations	Advertising done by outside firm	0
Supplies, postage and printing	Supplies and equipment valued under \$500	\$2,113.00
Phones and Telecommunications	Phone charges and rental	0
Equipment Rental, Repair, and Maintenance	Rental, repair, insurance and maintenance of equipment	0
	<b>TOTAL LSTA AMOUNT REQUESTED (in whole dollars only)</b>	<b>\$80,000.00</b>

<b>WITH AN ADDITIONAL \$10,000 IN REVENUE to provide 10 additional workshops per system</b>		
Personnel		
4 System Trainers (37.5 hrs x 2 additional weeks x \$14.50)		\$8,700
Travel System Trainers \$100 X 4 systems		400
Promotional Material \$175 x 4 systems		700
Printing 100 Training manuals/information packages		<u>200</u>
	<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$10,000</u></b>
	<b>Total Grant Requested</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>

## **LSTA Budget Explanation**

### **Professional Contracts**

1. A Project Coordinator will be hired for 9 months of the grant to work an average of ten hours per week at \$50 per hour - \$18,562
2. Four Contract trainers will be hired (one for each system). We anticipate they will work 10 weeks 37.5 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour – 21,750.00

### **Contractual Services**

3. PlinkIt Consortium fee for one year - \$25,000
4. Web hosting for participating libraries - \$6,250
5. URL registration for participating libraries - \$2,250.00

### **Travel and CE**

1. Gas for system cars, lodging if needed

### **Supplies, postage and printing**

1. Printing of training manuals
2. Printing of PR materials

## LOCAL BUDGET CONTRIBUTION

BUDGET CATEGORY	EXPLANATION	AMOUNT
Library Materials	Books, non-print, software	0
Capital Outlay	Equipment valued over \$500	0
Professional Contracts	Hiring an individual on contract	0
Contractual Services	Hiring an agency on contract	0
Personnel	Salaries and benefits for additional staff	\$37,200.00
Travel and CE for staff	Agency staff travel and meeting registrations	\$2,400.00
CE and meetings for others	Travel, registrations and honorariums for others	0
Public relations	Advertising done by outside firm	\$2,000.00
Supplies, postage and printing	Supplies and equipment valued under \$500	\$4,000.00
Phones and Telecommunications	Phone charges and rental	\$4,000.00
Equipment Rental, Repair, and Maintenance	Rental, repair, insurance and maintenance of equipment	
	TOTAL LSTA AMOUNT REQUESTED (in whole dollars only)	\$49,600.00

## **LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

1. Capital outlay – The hosting system will provide a computer server for the PlinkIt software.
2. Personnel – an estimated cost of in-kind staff contributions of Bev Obert, Kitty Pope, Lori Bell, Ted Matheny, Sandy Albrow, and staff liaisons from other participating systems
3. Travel and CE – Trainers may use system cars.
4. Public Relations – System staff will design a poster and other materials for participating libraries.
5. Supplies and postage – An estimated amount for supplies related to the project
6. Telephone – An estimated amount for telephone at each system related to the project.