



Public Library Innovation Program-- Fact Sheet

What:

The Public Library Innovation Program (PLIP) fosters the development of innovative services to improve people's lives through the use of technology. This three-year grant program will help public libraries in developing and transitioning countries become centers of community life.

In two rounds of Calls for Proposals, successful applicants will implement one year projects. Grants of up to \$30,000 USD will be awarded in Round 1 of the Public Library Innovation Program. In Round 2, 10 grants of up to \$15,000 USD will be awarded for replication of successful grant projects in Round 1. In Round 3, 15 Innovation Awards of \$1,000 USD will be presented.

Why:

Technology has transformed public libraries throughout the world, providing access to critical education materials and communication services. Yet in many developing and transitioning countries where the need is great, public libraries are under resourced. Funding authorities may see libraries or similar organizations as valued assets but are often unaware of the dynamic role they could be playing in their communities. Libraries will be more likely to attract funding if they can demonstrate that they will implement activities proven to improve the lives of the community in which they are located.

How:

With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Public Library Innovation Program will encourage public libraries to reach out to their communities, partnering with their local government, business and other organizations to assess local needs and develop new services. In two rounds of Calls for Proposals, successful applicants will implement one-year projects. The first Call is designed to gather as many great ideas as possible. The second Call will test the replicability of the top 10 ideas from the first Call. Participating project teams will come together for training and to share their experience. In addition, public libraries in any developing and transition country will be invited to take part in a special Innovation Award that recognizes outstanding achievements. All the outcomes will be widely disseminated in key publications and conferences throughout the world.

Who:

The program is implemented by eIFL.net--Electronic Information for Libraries--an independent, not-for-profit organization established in 2003. eIFL.net brings access to knowledge to library users in developing and transitioning countries by building capacity, supporting advocacy and giving a hand in introducing new services for the user as well as helping acquiring affordable access to e-resources. In the past mostly academic, research

and national libraries could improve services to their users by being part of eIFL.net. The Public Library Innovation Program will expand eIFL.net's work, offering opportunities for public libraries to develop new and innovative services with and for their communities.

When:

Round 1: 10 grants of up to \$30,000 USD

Call for proposals: November 16, 2009

Deadline: February 28, 2010

Grants awarded: April 2010

Round 2: 10 grants of up to \$15,000 USD

Call for proposals: April 2011

Deadline: May 31, 2011

Grants awarded: July 2011

Round 3: 15 Innovation Awards of \$1,000 USD

Call for applications: January 2012

Deadline: February 28, 2012

Awards presented: April 2012

Where:

The first round of grants will be open to applicants from the following countries where either eIFL.net has a presence or the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Libraries initiative supports projects: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, People's Republic of China, Colombia, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Poland, Guatemala, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The second call for proposals and the Innovation Awards will be open to all developing and transitioning countries.

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