



CT State Library

Office of the State Librarian

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, Bonding Subcommittee
State Librarian Deborah Schander
Connecticut State Library
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Construction Grants to Public Libraries

Per CGS §11-24c, the State Library provides grants to public libraries for construction projects that create or improve usable space. These grants allow public libraries to not only improve aging infrastructure, general deterioration, and meet ADA compliance needs but also respond to increasing need for flexible collaboration spaces to meet community use. All Connecticut public libraries are eligible for these grants and preference is given to libraries in distressed municipalities and to principal public libraries. Grants can provide up to ½ the total cost of a project (capped at \$1 million), and libraries must raise the remaining funds through referendum, fundraising, donations, municipal capital projects, or other methods. Depending on the type of grant given, libraries have either one or three years after State Library Board approval to secure this funding. There is one statutory grant cycle per fiscal year, with applications due by September 1.

Currently, approximately \$9.9 million has been authorized for use under this program but has not been allocated to public libraries. Seven projects (totaling nearly \$2.7 million) have been approved by the State Library Board and are obtaining local funding; allocated funding must remain intact for these communities as they work to raise funds. In addition, and due in large part to COVID-19, libraries which had planned to submit projects during the 2020 grant cycle now intend to submit those projects in the 2021 grant cycle (FY22). The State Library anticipates 3-6 applications for FY22 and 4-6 applications in FY23, including at least four \$1 million grant projects.

Proposed Shared Library Preservation Facility

The State Library requested \$10.264 million for a new shared library preservation facility. While not included in the Governor's proposal, this facility would allow the State Library, the University of Connecticut Libraries, and the libraries of the Connecticut State University System to:

- 1) Consolidate resources, significantly reduce duplication of holdings, and provide a centralized facility that preserves the state's long-term investment in valuable but less frequently used materials, and
- 2) Repurpose existing library spaces and transform them into engaging environments for research, scholarship, study, and learning.

Should funding be available, we would be most pleased to move forward with this transformative project.