Copycat Grants

This list is meant to spark ideas and provide broad project proposals/formulas that libraries might consider when applying for grants. The applying library is still responsible for taking these ideas and writing a proposal that explains how the project will serve the library's unique community and how the project will be developed to serve those needs.

To discuss potential project ideas or learn more about the projects below, contact Nicolette Baffoni (Nicolette.baffoni@olis.ri.gov) or schedule an appointment.

Collection Development Projects

Purpose

Identify gaps in the library collection and purchase materials to update that collection. Collection development projects might focus on materials for a specific audience and engage the audience in the process of selecting materials. Examples include updating youth non-fiction with modern, high interest titles, expanding an existing collection for home school families, and working with students to find high interest materials. The project should focus on a targeted part of the collection and include the rationale for focusing on this area and anticipated outcomes. Collection Development Projects are not meant to replace regular collection development budgets.

Activities

Activities could include performing an analysis or audit of the collection, conducting a community survey, consulting with community members, purchasing materials, and promoting the collection to the intended audience.

OLIS Goal

Access

Purchases May Include:

Books, eBooks, audiobooks, playaways, circulating learning supplies (microscopes, telescopes), and other collection materials.

Previous Projects:

Exeter Public Library, Ashaway Public Library, Park View Middle School Library

Mobile Library Services

Purpose

Identify underserved populations in your community and bring the library to them. Past projects have targeted housing authorities, public parks, community events, and summer camps as locations for mobile library stops. Libraries have partnered with Community Action Programs to provide social service information, food kits, and other support services at mobile library stops.

Activities

Activities in a mobile library include scheduling various visits where the library can issue library cards, circulate materials, provide information about additional library services like programming and homebound delivery, provide internet and computer access, sign up children for summer reading programs, and provide story times or other programs. Acquiring a dedicated vehicle can make this process easier but is not necessary.

OLIS Goal

Depending on project specifics a mobile library project might fall under Access (simply expanding access to library resources), Learning (focusing on specific learning programs and resources at summer meals sites) or Engagement (bringing together community partners to provide extra support for underserved communities)

Potential Partners

Parks and recreation, housing authorities, summer meal sites, local community action programs (CAPS), senior centers

Purchases May Include

Van rental (or purchase), book bike, pop-up library shelves, tables, mobile Wifi booster, materials to promote the mobile library, dedicated mobile book collections, additional staff, and bins, straps, crates and other organizational materials.

Previous Projects

Warwick Public Library, Community Libraries of Providence, Woonsocket Public Library, and Coventry Public Library

Library of Things + Programs

Support an identified community need through a holistic approach by creating a special collection or library of things and offering complementary programming to support and highlight the new collection. Examples include business kits with printers, laptops, Wi-Fi hotspots, and other tools for entrepreneurs paired with small business workshops; health and wellness kits offered alongside health and wellness programs; or tabletop role playing games and materials along with Dungeons and Dragons programming to build community and promote collaborative game play. This grant concept can also work with books or technology, rather than a library of things.

Activities

Like a straightforward collection development project, activities could include performing an analysis or audit of an existing collection, conducting a community survey, consulting with community members, identifying and purchasing materials, and promoting the collection to the intended audience. Other activities include hosting virtual or in-person webinars or drop-in sessions.

OLIS Goal(s)

Learning, Engagement

Potential Partners

Community organizations already addressing the identified community need. That could be a local health organization, the RI Department of Health or a Health Equity Zone for a wellness project, or small business organizations like the Small Business Administration (SBA), Center for Women Entrepreneurs, or RI Secretary of State Business Services Division for a small business project.

Purchases May Include

Things for the library of things/kits, packaging materials for things/kits, presenter fees, program supplies, promotional materials

Previous Projects

North Providence Union Free Library, Providence Public Library, West Warwick Public Library, North Scituate Library

Community Connectors

Purpose

Expand the library's role as a community hub by partnering with other community-serving organizations, providing space and resources to meet a variety of needs, and promoting community through cultural or civic exchange. Examples include hosting a social worker, Community Action Program (CAP) or similar organization to aid patrons in applying for services, providing privacy pods & technology for telehealth, educational, and social service needs, offering digital navigator services, and hosting a broad selection of cultural arts programming by and for Spanish speakers.

Activities

Activities can include hosting tabling events and drop-in sessions, purchasing privacy pods and dedicated technology for project needs, hosting public programs, providing training and instruction in the use of new resources

OLIS Goal(s)

Engagement

Potential Partners

Community Action Programs, social services organizations, community health organizations, other town or city departments, cultural organizations, or local artists, dancers, and musicians

Purchases May Include

Tables, chairs, privacy pods, signage, cabinets, laptops and other technology, consultant fees, presenter fees

Previous Projects

West Warwick Public Library, Community Libraries of Providence, Providence Public Library

Writing Workshops and Publishing

Purpose

Build teens (or another targeted audience) writing skills and increase their knowledge of careers in publishing, with the goal of creating a published anthology of their writing by the end of the project.

Activities

Activities include hosting series of writing workshops during which participants will craft original writing, with additional workshops provided by authors and publishing professionals. Publish the final works in an anthology in print and digital formats and make available to the RI library community. Host a book premiere celebration with readings from the finished anthology by the program participants.

OLIS Goal(s)

Learning, Engagement

Potential Partners

Cultural organizations, community groups, schools

Purchases May Include

Writing instruction services, writing instruction materials, author or publishing professional workshop fees, printing costs for physical anthology, book cover designer fees, hosting services for electronic content

Previous Projects

West Warwick Public Library