
COSLA is an independent organization of the chief officers of state and territorial library agencies responsible for library development in their state or territory. COSLA's mission is to nurture state library administrative agencies and lead with a collective voice for the nation's libraries.

Advance Federal Funding to Strengthen and Expand Library Services



The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States program administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services is the largest source of Federal funding for library services in the US. State library agencies receive LSTA funding to support statewide initiatives and services and may distribute funds through subawards to libraries or consortia, all to the benefit of local libraries and the communities they serve.

COSLA seeks an increase in funding for libraries through LSTA in 2025, and additional funding in 2026 with the long-term goal of federal funding for LSTA allocated in the total amount of \$1 for every American. A survey by the Colorado Library Research Service¹ shows that nationally a \$1 investment in libraries yields an average of \$5 in benefits. Libraries strengthen the skills of individuals and serve as economic drivers in their community, creating significant short-term and long-term economic benefits.

COSLA asks Congress to provide \$214 million for LSTA in FY25 and to support stable advancements toward the full authorized funding level of \$232 million in FY26. COSLA also asks for level funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services for its critical support and strategic vision for advancing the nation's libraries.

Fostering Strong Readers for a Brighter Future



Libraries nationwide coordinate programs and resources to increase and strengthen the reading skills of children and adults. Reading is the gateway to success in education, work and life; it strengthens problem solving, language and communication skills and enables adults to decode critical health, financial, and other information.

COSLA encourages legislators to include libraries as key partners in legislation supporting reading. The first early reading experiences of many children come from library story times and books. Children who learn to read proficiently by 3rd grade have a greater chance of succeeding academically and in the workforce according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation² report, "How to Improve Reading Skills of a Child."

Invest in Universal and Affordable Broadband Access



States are investing millions of federal dollars to address existing gaps in broadband service, particularly in rural areas, through the NTIA's Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD), Middle Mile, and Digital Equity programs. Public libraries are critical catalysts for this type of expansion, as they often provide the only free access to broadband in their communities. Libraries also serve as a key resource for those seeking to develop or improve their technology skills and use of online information.

COSLA asks the federal government to follow through on existing legislation that calls for all libraries and other anchor institutions to have high-speed (gigabit) broadband available. COSLA also calls for federal policymakers to find a stable, long-term funding mechanism for the Universal Service Fund, including E-Rate. COSLA also supports initiatives to expand broadband adoption across the US, such as efforts by libraries to promote digital literacy training and subsidies to make broadband more affordable for low-income consumers.

America's Libraries: The Heart of the Community



Libraries are leaders in thriving communities, providing a breadth of services to community members of all ages and abilities, regardless of circumstance. Libraries are much more than a physical space and access to books. They serve as connectors to community services, from social services to workforce support to disaster recovery. Libraries are necessary to support an informed citizenry, the hallmark of our democracy.

COSLA seeks to strengthen and grow partnerships with local, state and the federal government by driving greater understanding of the opportunities and services that libraries provide to communities.

1. Summary of Recent Public Library Return on Investment Studies, <https://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/return-on-investment/recent-studies/>
2. How to Improve Reading Skills of a Child, <https://www.aecf.org/blog/how-to-improve-reading-skills-of-a-child>