



That All May Read

NETWORK LIBRARY TOOLKIT



National Library Service
for the blind and physically handicapped

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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Introduction

This Network Library Toolkit from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, provides tips, resources, and materials designed to help you inform and educate potential patrons and partner organizations about the services and programs available through your braille and talking book library and NLS.

You are already doing many great things to encourage enrollment in the NLS program, and this toolkit is another resource to help you. There are likely people in your community who need these services but may have not heard of the braille and talking book program. This document provides tips on reaching those people and gives you tools to help build awareness of the valuable programs your library offers.

How to Use This Guide

These tools, aimed at increasing enrollment in the braille and talking book program, are designed to complement the outreach work that the network libraries are already doing, and to ensure that the libraries are reinforcing the overarching NLS campaign efforts. The resources in this document were created to be easy to use and customizable, enabling you to include your library's programs and identity, and to tailor the language to meet the needs of your patrons and partners.

This toolkit is broken into four sections: partner outreach, media, social media, and events. These were identified in the NLS strategic plan as key areas of focus for network library outreach. In each section, you'll find sample activities and tips, along with a list of related tools.

We encourage you to come up with your own activities as well. E-mail ThatAllMayRead@loc.gov to share your ideas and success stories with other network librarians who may want to replicate your efforts. We hope you find these materials helpful as you share information about the incredible resources available through the braille and talking book program.

Non-sighted users can find an accessible list of links to all documents contained in this toolkit at www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/toolkit.html.



PART I:

Partner Outreach

I. Partner Outreach: Connecting with others who can help spread the word

Your library can leverage the resources of local partner groups to disseminate messages and materials and dramatically expand your reach. As service providers and trusted resources for the target audiences that NLS serves, local partner organizations are ideal advocates for your library's programs. This section will help you identify local partner organizations and give you ideas on how to cultivate relationships with them.

A. Sample Activities and Tips

□ *Identify Local Partner Organizations*

The first step in leveraging partnerships is identifying and cataloging them. NLS has relationships with national organizations, many of which have regional and local chapters. The table below gives examples of potential partner organizations, broken down by audience. These should serve as a guide to help you generate ideas about the types of local organizations to contact.

□ *Sample Partner Organizations by Audience*

| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES | |
|---|--|
| Sample National Partner Organizations | American Association of People With Disabilities; Muscular Dystrophy Association; Easter Seals; United Cerebral Palsy; state agencies on disability; LinkedIn Professionals With Disabilities group; National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability |
| Audiences Reached | People with disabilities who cannot use regular printed materials – a subpopulation of people with disabilities who are eligible for NLS services |
| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION | |
| Sample National Partner Organizations | National Federation of the Blind, American Council of the Blind, American Foundation for the Blind, Lighthouse Guild International, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Optometric Association, Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, International Academy of Low Vision Specialists |

| | |
|--|--|
| Audiences Reached | People who are blind or have low vision, advocacy groups that represent them, service providers, medical professionals who treat them |
| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING AGING ADULTS | |
| Sample National Partner Organizations | AARP, National Council on Aging, Macular Degeneration Support/ International Low Vision Support Group, Ocular Nutrition Society, state agencies on aging, assisted/independent living facilities |
| Audiences Reached | People experiencing an age-related decline in vision (including those with macular degeneration) and their loved ones |
| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING VETERANS | |
| Sample National Partner Organizations | Blinded Veterans Association, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Service, National Resource Directory, Easter Seals, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Student Veterans of America, The American Legion, other veterans service organizations |
| Audiences Reached | Veterans, their families, their caregivers, and the advocacy groups that represent them |
| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING CAREGIVERS | |
| Sample National Partner Organizations | Caregiver Action Network, AARP, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging |
| Audiences Reached | Adult children of aging adults, the support groups that serve them, and the advocacy organizations that represent them |
| ORGANIZATIONS SERVING STUDENTS | |
| Sample National Partner Organizations | Association on Higher Education and Disability, National Association of Blind Students, vocational rehabilitation services, public school coordinators for students with disabilities, higher education campus coordinators for students with disabilities, schools for the blind, state agencies on education |
| Audiences Reached | Students who are blind or have low vision, students with physical disabilities, their families, professionals who work with these students and families |



□ *Cultivate Relationships With Local Partner Organizations*

Once you have identified a list of local partners, you can begin to conduct outreach. Here is an overview of how to contact these groups and cultivate relationships with them:

- Determine the right person to connect with at the organization. Appropriate points of contact might be communications associates, partnership coordinators, or community outreach managers. Be aware that it might take time to identify the appropriate contact and that you might have to get in touch with the organization to determine who the right person is.
- Reach out by phone or e-mail to tell each contact about your library's programs and find out if he or she is interested in a partnership.
- Determine how the contact would prefer to spread the word about your library, and provide the outreach tools and materials to do so (information sheets, print public service announcements, talking points, poster, etc.).
- Follow up periodically to check on your contact's progress. Make sure to record all your communications in a spreadsheet.

□ *Promote Your Library in Your Community*

- Share links to your library's website and social media site — and the NLS microsite, Facebook page, and video — with your professional network.
- Distribute relevant information sheets to schools, rehabilitation agencies, senior centers, and other local organizations that serve people who may be eligible for NLS.
- Invite potential partner organizations to attend an event at your library.
- Ask to make a brief presentation about your library at a potential partner organization's scheduled meeting.
- Display the campaign poster in your library or at community centers.

□ *Promote Partner Organizations in Return*

Successful partnerships are reciprocal relationships. If a partner organization promotes your library, consider offering the partners something in return. For example, your library could offer to include information about the partner in your newsletter, link to the partner's websites from your website or social media site, host the partner organization as a presenter at a library event, or host a partners' day at the library and invite patrons. If your library or NLS is already promoting the organization in publications, such as the NLS reference guides or directories, you may use that information to encourage reciprocity.

B. Related Tools

The tools in this section can be customized and used for outreach to partner organizations. You may also use them for general promotion of your library's programs.



[*Sample Outreach E-mail*](#)



[*Sample Newsletter Item*](#)



[*Talking Points*](#)



[*PowerPoint Template*](#)



[*Web Badges*](#)



[*Campaign Poster*](#)

INFORMATION SHEETS: NLS PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS



[*Access, Offerings, and Services Information Sheet*](#)



[*Eligibility Information Sheet*](#)



[*BARD Information Sheet*](#)



[*Braille Materials Information Sheet*](#)

INFORMATION SHEETS: AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC



[*Veterans Information Sheet*](#)



[*Students Information Sheet*](#)



[*Low Vision/Aging Adult Information Sheet*](#)



[*Physical Disability Information Sheet*](#)





That All May Read

Name of Your Library
 Address line 1
 Address line 2
 Phone number
 Email address

**Insert
 Logo
 Here**

Sample Outreach E-mail

This e-mail language can be customized to help you conduct your outreach to potential partners.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]
 [Placeholder for your library's contact information]

Dear [name of contact]:

My name is [your name] and I am writing on behalf of [name of your library], an affiliate of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. I would like to speak with you about the braille and talking book program and possible partnership opportunities between [name of partner organization] and [name of your library].

We are spreading the word about the braille and talking book program to people who are eligible, including those who are blind or have low vision. We are in the initial phases of outreach, and I am contacting you to determine your interest in possibly partnering with [name of your library]. Can you help us to spread the word about the braille and talking book program?

We will be happy to share information about [name of partner organization] with our patrons as well. Together we can help improve our communities by sharing news about our organizations so those who need us can find us.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I look forward to hearing from you, and will follow up on this e-mail with a call.

Best,
 [Your name and title]
 [Your contact information]

[Information about your library]

Apply for the service today!
 Call 1-888-NLS-READ (1-888-657-7323)
 or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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SAMPLE OUTREACH E-MAIL

This e-mail language can be customized to help you conduct your outreach to potential partners.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/OutreachEmail.doc>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)



That All May Read

Name of Your Library
 Address line 1
 Address line 2
 Phone number
 Email address

**Insert
Logo
Here**

Sample Newsletter Item

Ask partner organizations to place a short item about your network library in their newsletter. In return, you may offer to include a short paragraph about the organization in your newsletter.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]
 [Placeholder for your library's contact information]

[Name of Your Library] Provides Free Accessible Reading Materials

[Name of your library], an affiliate of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, provides books and magazines in braille and audio formats to U.S. residents who cannot read or use regular print materials as a result of a temporary or permanent visual or physical disability.

[Name of your library] makes it easy to read your way, no matter which format you choose: braille or audio, delivered to your door, or downloaded instantly. Enjoy a wide variety of the most current reading material, including best sellers, biographies, fiction works, how-to books, magazines, and music scores. Best of all, there are no subscriptions or service fees; it is free for eligible borrowers.

[Insert audience-specific or library-specific language here.]

To hear the stories of NLS patrons, visit [insert video URL](#).

To enroll, or to get more information about NLS, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

Apply for the service today!
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 or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ITEM

Ask partner organizations to place a short item about your network library in their newsletter. In return, you may offer to include a short paragraph about the organization in your newsletter.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Newsletter.doc>

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That All May Read

 Name of Your Library
 Address line 1
 Address line 2
 Phone number
 Email address

 Insert
 Logo
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Talking Points

Use these talking points when writing or speaking about NLS or your library. You can cut and paste this language and customize it with the name of your library or program.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

About the Braille and Talking Book Program

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability. To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

Benefits of the Braille and Talking Book Program

It Is Easy to Use

With simple features and clear instructions, the braille and talking book program makes it easy to read your way, no matter the format you choose. Books are sent and returned by postage-free mail. The program provides talking-book players that feature large buttons, braille letters beside the controls, a sleep timer, and built-in audio instructions. The BARD Mobile app allows users to quickly and easily download braille and talking books directly to iOS devices. (An Android app is being developed.)

The Program Is Free

The braille and talking book program has no subscriptions or service fees; it is 100 percent free for eligible borrowers.

Apply for the service today!
 Call 1-888-NLS-READ (1-888-657-7323)
 or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



TALKING POINTS

Use these talking points when writing or speaking about NLS or your library. You can cut and paste this language and customize it with the name of your library or program.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/TalkingPoints.doc>

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That All May Read

Click to add title

Click to add subtitle



National Library Service
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Name of Your Library
Address, Phone Number
Email Address

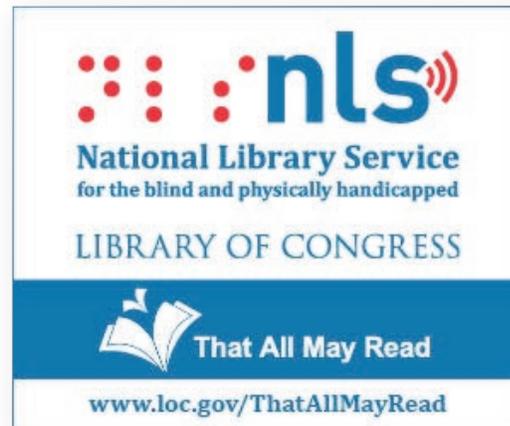
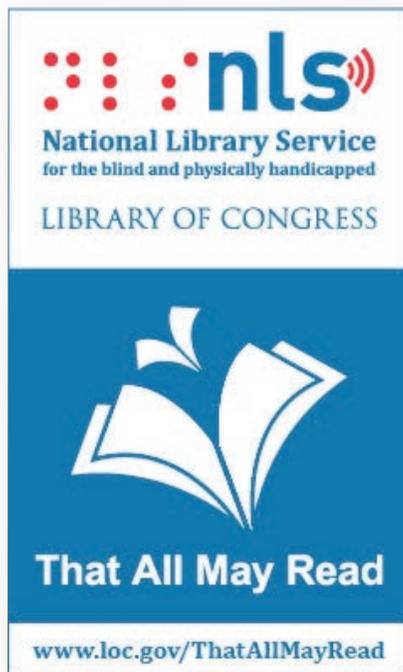
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POWERPOINT TEMPLATE

The PowerPoint template is a branded template that is customizable for your library.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/PPT.pptx>

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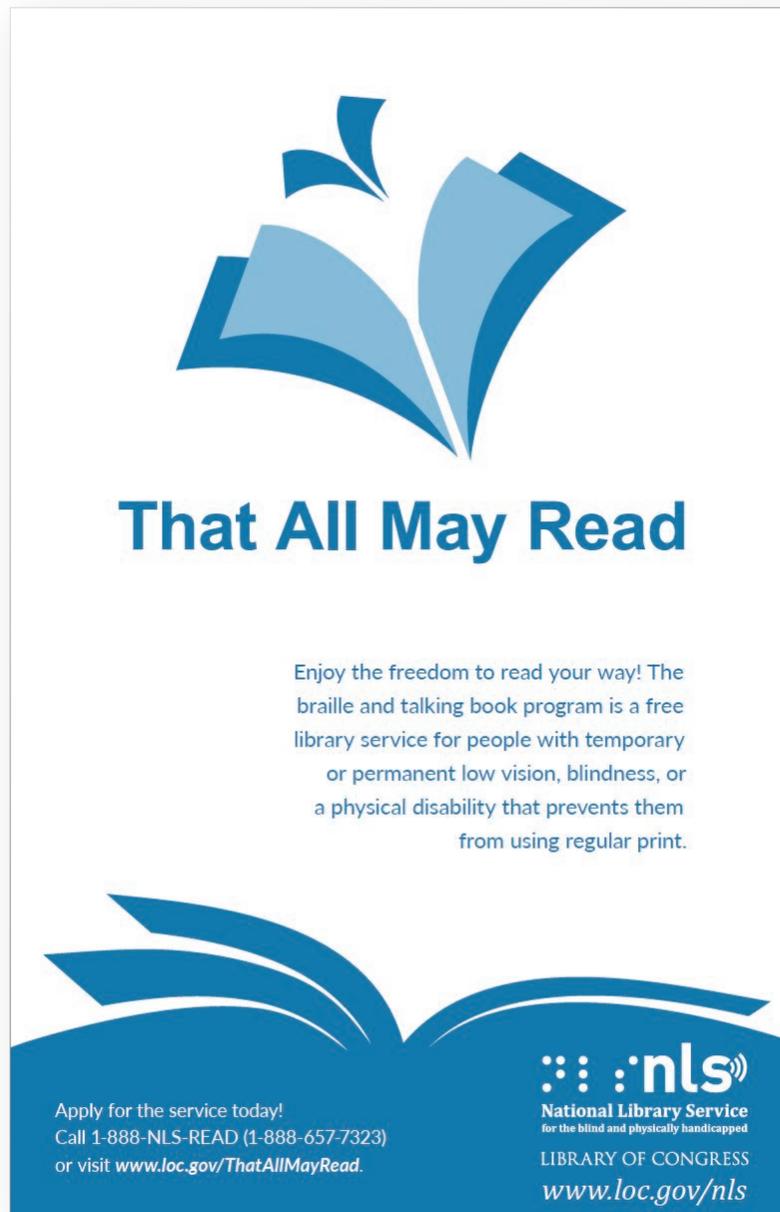
WEB BADGES

Web badges are small icons featuring the NLS logo and/or That All May Read campaign identity. They are embedded with code that links to the NLS microsite. Partners can download these from the microsite to put on their own websites.

The vertical web badge can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/WebBadge1.jpg>

The horizontal web badge can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/WebBadge2.jpg>

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CAMPAIGN POSTER

The campaign poster is a designed piece featuring the campaign identity, “That All May Read.” It can be displayed in your library or distributed to partners.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Poster.pdf>

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INFORMATION SHEETS

Information sheets can be distributed directly to potential patrons or shared with partner organizations that can disseminate them to their audiences. Some of the information sheets are appropriate for all audiences, while others are tailored to specific groups. Each information sheet includes a “What Is NLS?” paragraph at the top to provide context for readers who might be seeing the information sheet alone, without any complementary NLS materials. Similarly, all information sheets should include contact information for your network library.

Information Sheets: NLS Programs and Offerings

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Information Sheets: Audience-Specific

| | |
|---|----|
| <i>Veterans Information Sheet</i> | 18 |
| <i>Students Information Sheet</i> | 19 |
| <i>Low Vision/Aging Adult Information Sheet</i> | 20 |
| <i>Physical Disability Information Sheet</i> | 21 |

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)

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| Name of Your Library | | Insert Logo Here |
| Address line 1 | Phone number | |
| Address line 2 | Email address | |

Braille and Talking Book Program

Access, Offerings, and Services



Library Service Is Local

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, works with a network of regional and subregional libraries to provide a free library service to individuals who are unable to read or use regular printed material because of a visual or physical disability. Many popular titles are available in braille and/or audio formats. Braille and talking books and magazines are circulated to eligible readers by postage-free mail and are returned the same way.

Building on the basic collection of audio and braille titles that NLS provides, the network of cooperating libraries frequently adds books and magazines of local interest. Some libraries lend videos with audio descriptions designed for those who cannot see. During the summer, libraries offer reading programs for school-age children. Readers register with the library that serves their area and can take advantage of these local services in addition to the basic national collection provided by NLS.

Book Collection

Books are selected for the NLS collection on the basis of their appeal across a wide range of interests. Best sellers, biographies, fiction works, and how-to books are in great demand. The collection includes books in Spanish and a few titles in other languages. Books for youths — from preschool to young adult — are available in audio, braille, and print/braille formats.

Registered borrowers learn of new books added to the collection through two bimonthly publications, *Braille Book Review* and *Talking Book Topics*. The NLS book collection and other resources from cooperating agencies are listed in the NLS Union Catalog, which is searchable at www.loc.gov/nls.

Magazines

Magazines are selected for the program based on demonstrated reader interest. NLS produces more than 45 audio and more than 30 braille magazine titles. Readers may subscribe to such titles as *People*, *National Geographic*, and *Consumer Reports* in audio and *ESPN The Magazine* and the *New York Times Large Print Weekly* in braille. Magazines for children are also available.

(continued)

Apply for the service today!
Call 1-888-NLS-READ (1-888-657-7323)
or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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ACCESS, OFFERINGS, AND SERVICES INFORMATION SHEET

The Access, Offerings, and Services Information Sheet is designed to be shared with all audiences and to provide general information about NLS and its offerings.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Access.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)

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Braille and Talking Book Program

Eligibility



What Is NLS?

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, administers a free library service for individuals who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability. Through a network of cooperating libraries, eligible residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad may borrow braille and talking books free of charge. Library service is local; readers register with the library that serves their area and can take advantage of these regional services in addition to the national collection provided by NLS.

Am I Eligible for NLS?

Any resident of the United States or U.S. citizen living abroad who is unable to read or use normal print materials as a result of temporary or permanent visual or physical disability may receive service through NLS.

This includes the following people:

- Blind individuals whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- Individuals with other physical disabilities, including:
 - Those whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material
 - Those certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations
 - Those certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material normally

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 or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION SHEET

The Eligibility Information Sheet can be distributed to all audiences. It provides at-a-glance eligibility guidelines using easily understood language.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Eligibility.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)



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Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD)



What Is BARD?

The Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) is a web-based service that provides access to thousands of special-format books, magazines, and music scores available from NLS. The service is available to registered users of the braille and talking book program through their network library. Books may be downloaded for reading on iOS and Android devices through the BARD Mobile app, though braille readers will need to connect to a refreshable braille display via an iOS device with a Bluetooth connection. The BARD website and mobile app are password-protected, and all files are in an electronically downloadable form of compressed audio or formatted braille.

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is offered through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

“Being able to download titles and manage my reading list independently has made an outstanding service so much better. The BARD Mobile app for the iPhone has also been so wonderful, since it makes it so easy to take books with you anywhere. I truly cannot imagine my life without the NLS program.”

— Peggy, NLS patron since 1962
(continued)

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or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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BARD INFORMATION SHEET

The BARD Information Sheet can be distributed to all audiences to succinctly explain what BARD is and how the program works.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/BARD.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)



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| Name of Your Library | | Insert Logo Here |
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| Address line 2 | Email address | |

Braille and Talking Book Program

Braille Materials



Braille Materials

NLS offers braille materials both in print and online. Registered borrowers learn of books added to the NLS braille collection through a bimonthly publication, *Braille Book Review*. This publication, like the braille books, is sent by postage-free mail. The books may also be returned free of charge.

In addition, the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service provides e-braille via the Internet. With BARD Mobile, an app for iOS devices, readers may access braille titles using a braille display with a Bluetooth connection. BARD and BARD Mobile allow users to access new e-braille materials instantly, wherever they are. Refer to the BARD Information Sheet for more information on this program.

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

Apply for the service today!
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or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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BRaille MATERIALS INFORMATION SHEET

The Braille Materials Information Sheet can be shared with partner organizations that serve people who are blind or have low vision.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Braille.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)

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| Name of Your Library | | Insert Logo Here |
| Address line 1 | Phone number | |
| Address line 2 | Email address | |

Braille and Talking Book Program

for Veterans



The braille and talking book program offers talking books at no charge for veterans who have difficulty reading regular print. You protected our freedom. Now enjoy the freedom to read your way.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

Talking books, audio magazines, and the digital talking-book players needed to use them are provided free of charge, by mail, for as long as you're in the program. NLS patrons may also download reading materials through the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) web-based service or through the BARD Mobile app for smartphones and tablets. And veterans have preference in the lending of materials and equipment! If you have been honorably discharged from the U.S. armed forces and are blind, have low vision, or have a physical disability that prevents you from reading regular print materials, you may access this service, which promotes independence, wellness, and quality of life.

"When I run across other veterans that are curious about what I'm doing, I usually take the time to show them the BARD Mobile app. Most veterans haven't been exposed to having a disability for very long, so they're very curious. And the app gives them an opportunity to be able to enjoy books, to access the content that they may be missing."

– Dan, NLS patron since 2004

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

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or visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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VETERANS INFORMATION SHEET

The Veterans Information Sheet can be distributed to partner organizations that serve veterans to share with their members.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Veterans.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)



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| Name of Your Library | | Insert Logo Here |
| Address line 1 | Phone number | |
| Address line 2 | Email address | |

Braille and Talking Book Program

for Students



For students who are blind, have low vision, or have difficulty reading printed materials because of a physical disability, the braille and talking book program can be an incredible resource.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

NLS offers eligible students a variety of recreational reading materials, from preschool to young adult levels. Braille and talking books allow students to read many of the same books that their peers are reading. Whether they want to read the latest bestseller or that classic needed for a classroom assignment, their local network library can help; materials are sent and returned by postage-free mail. Participants in the program also may download braille and audiobooks through BARD (the Braille and Audio Reading Download online service) or through the BARD Mobile app for iOS and Android devices. For braille books, an iOS device with a Bluetooth connection to an embosser is necessary.

"It's huge to be able to have access to the same books all your friends are reading. To be able to talk about the same books others are reading, as a kid, is about being part of the community, being able to engage."

— Brian, NLS patron since 1985

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

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STUDENTS INFORMATION SHEET

The Students Information Sheet can be shared with partner organizations that represent students, school leaders, teachers, or parents.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/Students.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)

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| Name of Your Library | | Insert Logo Here |
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| Address line 2 | Email address | |

Braille and Talking Book Program

for Aging Adults and Those With Low Vision



As we age, our vision often declines. Be independent. Be inspired. The braille and talking book program allows you to continue reading on your own.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

Aging adults who experience vision loss have several resources through libraries that participate in the braille and talking book program. This library service lends high-quality talking books and the easy-to-use talking-book players needed to use them free of charge. The materials are circulated by postage-free mail. In addition, some libraries offer large-print books and magazines.

Talking books and magazines in audio formats are available online and on the go through the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service and the BARD Mobile app for smartphones and tablets.

“The talking books program has been one of the best things that’s happened to me recently. I had been developing macular degeneration over the past seven years. It’s a big load off my mind to be able to have all that lined up as my vision gets worse.”

— Jack, NLS patron since 2008

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

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LOW VISION/AGING ADULT INFORMATION SHEET

The Low Vision/Aging Adult Information Sheet can be shared with partner organizations that serve aging adults, such as assisted living facilities, and with doctors who treat low vision, who can distribute it to their patients.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/AgingAdultsLowVision.pdf>

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Braille and Talking Book Program

for Those With a Physical Disability



Do you have difficulty holding the printed page because of a physical disability? The braille and talking book program gives you the independence to enjoy the gift of reading.

What Is the Braille and Talking Book Program?

The braille and talking book program is a free library service administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress. The program is provided through a nationwide network of cooperating libraries that lend reading materials to residents of the United States and its territories and U.S. citizens living abroad who are unable to read or use regular print materials because of a visual or physical disability.

Talking books and magazines are available online and on the go through the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service and BARD Mobile. BARD Mobile is available for iOS and Android devices. Talking books also are available on cartridges that can be played using NLS-issued playback equipment. All materials are circulated by postage-free mail.

“For someone who may not be able to physically hold a book in their hands, there are special devices that allow them to access the same content that anybody else would. It’s basically like being able to live in the same world that everybody else is living in.”

– Bill, NLS patron since 1980

To learn more, or to sign up, visit www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.

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PHYSICAL DISABILITY INFORMATION SHEET

The Physical Disability Information Sheet can be shared with partner organizations that serve people with physical disabilities – for example, the local chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/PhysicalDisability.pdf>

[RETURN TO PARTNER OUTREACH TOOLS](#)



PART II:

Media



II. Media: Engaging with journalists and news outlets

Local media outlets can be a crucial partner in building awareness of NLS resources among the general public. Reaching out to the media is not as daunting as it may seem. Reporters often are looking for stories, and you are a great resource to provide content about an important program that serves people in your community. How you approach media outlets will vary, but you can use the tools in this section as templates to get you started.

A. Sample Activities and Tips

- *Share print PSAs with local newspapers, partner organization newsletters, and other community publications.*

Print public service announcements (PSAs) are a great way to build awareness by providing a visually engaging story about the NLS mission and its programs. Share these PSAs with newspapers, organization newsletters, and other publications. Offer the outlet one of the provided PSAs (in half- or quarter-page formats) for publication in black and white or full color so the outlet can choose the option that best meets the needs of the publication.

- *Create a media advisory about library news or events.*

Alerting the media to your library's event is a great way to generate awareness of the program. Whatever the event, it's worth letting the media know. Use the media advisory template to submit information to local media outlets. Visit your local newspaper, radio, or television station websites to learn their submission preferences. Most advisories can be submitted on the website or by e-mail.

- *Take advantage of a local event or occurrence related to blindness or other physical disabilities by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or circular.*

Use the talking points or information sheets to discuss the braille and talking book program's relationship to the event. Keeping the information relevant and interesting to readers will increase its chances of publication. Most media outlets that accept letters

have guidelines, so check the editorial page or the outlet's website to determine if the length of the letter is limited or if there are any other restrictions. The outlet's website also should provide information on how to submit your letter.

B. Related Tools



[*Media Advisory Template*](#)



[*Sample Letter to the Editor*](#)



[*Print PSAs*](#)



Name of Your Library
 Address line 1
 Address line 2
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 Email address

**Insert
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Media Advisory Template

Use this template to alert the media to library news or events.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]
 [Placeholder for your library's contact information]

For Immediate Release
 [Date]

Contact:
 [Name]
 [Organization]
 [Phone Number]
 [E-mail Address]

Media Advisory

[Announcement of event/event name]
 What: [Description of event]

Who: [Field, organization, and/or discipline of guest speakers and/or attendees]

When: [Date]
 [Time]

Where: [Location]
 [Street Address]
 [City, State, ZIP Code]

[Information about your library]

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MEDIA ADVISORY TEMPLATE

Use this template to alert the media to library news or events.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/MediaAdvisory.doc>

[RETURN TO MEDIA TOOLS](#)





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Sample Letter to the Editor

Take advantage of a local event or occurrence related to blindness or other physical disabilities by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or circular. Use the talking points or information sheets to discuss the braille and talking book program's relationship to the event. Keeping the information relevant and interesting to readers will increase its chances of publication.

Most media outlets that accept letters have guidelines, so check the editorial page or the outlet's website to determine if the length of the letter is limited or if there are any other restrictions. The outlet's website also should provide information on how to submit your letter.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

[Date]

To the editor of [name of publication]

Re: [Current event/issue having to do with accessible library programs]

[Insert paragraph about current issue.]

[Name of the network library], an affiliate of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), Library of Congress, offers free library service to people with temporary or permanent low vision, blindness, or a physical disability that prevents them from reading or holding the printed page. Through a national network of cooperating libraries, NLS offers reading materials in a variety of formats: in braille or recorded format, mailed to patrons for free, or instantly downloadable online or through a mobile app.

As the [your title] of [library name], I want to spread the word about our free program. If you or someone you know has difficulty reading regular print, I encourage you to contact [name of network library] to learn more about what we

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SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Take advantage of a local event or occurrence related to blindness or other physical disabilities by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or circular. Use the talking points or information sheets to discuss the braille and talking book program's relationship to the event. Keeping the information relevant and interesting to readers will increase its chances of publication.

Most media outlets that accept letters have guidelines, so check the editorial page or the outlet's website to determine if the length of the letter is limited or if there are any other restrictions. The outlet's website also should provide information on how to submit your letter.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/LettertotheEditor.doc>

[RETURN TO MEDIA TOOLS](#)

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Enjoy the freedom to read your way!
 The braille and talking book program is a free library service for people with temporary or permanent low vision, blindness, or a physical disability that prevents them from using regular print.

Apply for the service today!
 Call 1-888-NLS-READ
 (1-888-657-7323) or visit
www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead.



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www.loc.gov/nls

PRINT PSA

Share print PSA with local newspapers, partner organization newsletters, and other community publications.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/PrintPSA.pdf>

[RETURN TO MEDIA TOOLS](#)



PART III:

Social Media

III. Social Media: Using Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to expand your reach

Many current and prospective patrons of NLS and their family members or caregivers are using social media to gain access to information on demand. Social media sites give you the ability to reach those beyond your immediate circle, providing a valuable tool for generating awareness. These sites are easily accessible by anyone and may lead to more questions about NLS and enrollment in the program. The sites discussed below are varied; some are better suited for specific purposes or audiences than others. By using more than one, you will be able to expand your outreach even further. Major social media sites include:

□ *Facebook*

- Offers a less formal, more personal atmosphere, conducive for exchanging updates in personal and professional life.
- Provides access to caregivers, medical professionals, and other key audience groups.

□ *Twitter*

- Offers an opportunity for quick broadcasting of short announcements and comments (no longer than 140 characters) – simple and to the point.
- Is more public and accessible than Facebook.
- Allows you to follow the comments and thoughts of people of interest and have people follow your comments.
- Provides a great medium for messages about your library's activities and coming events.

□ *LinkedIn*

- Offers an ideal network for collaborating with other professionals and organizations that share your interests.
- Provides access to partner professionals and their networks, which can help you expand your audience.



A. Sample Activities and Tips

□ *Regularly update your library's social media platform.*

Some network libraries already have their own social media platforms. These provide a great way to spread the word about NLS and your library. You can share updates on events or news at your library, or share links to the NLS microsite, Facebook page, and video.

□ *Share content with partner organizations.*

If your library doesn't have a social media presence, consider sharing content with partner organizations and asking them to post it on their social networks. You can ask partners to share links to your website or to www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead, and to your organization's Facebook page or the NLS Facebook page, to spread the word about events or presentations you are hosting.

B. Related Tool



[Sample Social Media Posts](#)





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Sample Social Media Posts

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

NLS has chosen Facebook as its primary social media platform. If your library has its own Facebook page, you are encouraged to share content and link back to your website or the NLS Facebook page and microsite.

Examples of types of posts include news and information about your library and its offerings; questions posed to fans, aiming to drive discussion in the comments section; and highlights and links to articles about relevant news or events. Each post should include an appropriate call to action to spur "likes," shares, and posts and drive users to your library's website, social media site, or the NLS microsite for more information.

| Content Type | Post Language | Accompanying Media (Optional) |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Current event, timely article | Read this article from [name of publication] that highlights [name of your library]'s mission to provide free braille and audio materials to our patrons. | Website link |
| Promotion of your library's services | Age-related vision problems don't mean you have to give up the hobbies you love; [name of your library] allows you to keep reading on your own. Click here to find out if you're eligible for free talking books and more. | Website link and photo |
| Audience engagement | Like this post if you or a loved one is reading one of our talking books, braille books, or magazines! Share your favorites with our community. | Website link, photo, or video |

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SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

NLS has chosen Facebook as its primary social media platform. If your library has its own Facebook page, you are encouraged to share content and link back to your website or the NLS Facebook page and microsite.

Examples of types of posts include news and information about your library and its offerings; questions posed to fans, aiming to drive discussion in the comments section; and highlights and links to articles about relevant news or events. Each post should include an appropriate call to action to spur "likes," shares, and posts and drive users to your library's website, social media site, or the NLS microsite for more information.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/SocialMedia.doc>

[RETURN TO SOCIAL MEDIA TOOL](#)



PART IV:

Events



IV. Events: Planning, hosting, and evaluating in-person and virtual events

NLS network libraries have a proven track record for hosting events, which can be as varied as brown-bag lunches, coffee dates, conferences, and meetings. Some have even had great success with “virtual” events, such as webinars and conference calls. Regardless of the event, this section provides tips to help those who are new to planning events or to inspire the veteran planner.

A. Sample Activities and Tips

□ *Determine the Goal of the Event*

The first step in planning a successful event is determining the goal: knowing exactly what you are trying to achieve. This will help you determine:

- Whom to invite (e.g., partners, patrons, students, veterans, etc.)
- Size of the event
- Type of venue

□ *Identify Key Participants*

Determine who should be involved and find out their availability. This will help determine a date. People you may want to consider participating in your event include:

- Librarians
- Community leaders
- Patrons
- Partner organizations staff and/or members

□ *Set the Date*

A few things to consider when selecting the date of your event:

- The weather (for an outdoor event)
- The availability of your audience — in general, avoid planning events during busy times of the day and avoid scheduling your event in conflict with any major community events



- Time needed to publicize the event, plan the agenda, and get an event permit (if necessary)
- The availability of the venue (if it's not at your library, this may take a little time)
- The budget – if you are using an outside venue, having a catered event, or featuring a popular speaker, you may need funding

□ *Secure the Venue*

You need a location where you can reach the right people in the right way. If your library does not have adequate space, consider the following:

- Your local Chamber of Commerce's website may have a list of community centers or entertainment venues with contact information and/or links. Select a venue that is easily accessible to your audience. Make sure it is large enough to hold everyone, and consult with the venue administrator to ensure that it is equipped with everything you need. If you are hoping to reach patrons directly, consider meeting them where they are instead of asking them to come to you.
- A virtual event, such as a webinar or a conference call, could be an effective option. Refer to the Webinar Planning Guide for tips and best practices.

□ *Plan and Publicize the Event*

Once you have determined the goal of your event and identified your audience, it becomes easier to spread your message effectively. Keep the interests and schedules of your audience in mind as you plan and promote your event.

- Plan a focused, interactive agenda. A period of 30 to 60 minutes usually is sufficient to hold your audience's attention. NLS has tools that may be useful during your event, such as the NLS PowerPoint template, NLS video, and information sheets that can be customized for your library.
- Focus your publicity efforts in the places where your audience spends a lot of time:
 - If you are hosting an event for patrons, reach out to them by mail, post fliers in the common area of your library, and consider promoting the event on social media.
 - If you are hosting an event for partners, reach out to the communications or partnership contact at local organizations and ask them to post fliers in the common areas of their offices. Follow up with an e-mail that includes the details of the event.

- If you are planning a major event, consider distributing a media advisory about it and send an e-mail to your speakers or to key individuals whom you would like to attend. Make sure you hang a poster in your library or post fliers on bulletin boards. Even materials that are not specific to your event will get people talking about NLS and your library.

□ *Follow up After the Event*

The key ingredient to establishing sustainable momentum for your efforts is strong follow-through.

- Distribute an event evaluation form to measure the success of your event; this can be a good source of feedback.
- At the event, provide a sign-in sheet where attendees can list their names and contact information. This will enable you to send follow-up information and thank-you notes.
- Follow up with attendees by sending them a thank-you e-mail or postcard, and keep them updated by forwarding relevant updates about NLS. Send a follow-up note a couple of months after the event to touch base and let them know about future events.

B. Related Tools



[*Webinar Planning Guide*](#)



[*In-Person Event Evaluation Form*](#)



[*Virtual Event Evaluation Form*](#)



[*Information Follow-up Form*](#)



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Webinar Planning Guide

A webinar (short for “Web seminar”) is a presentation or discussion hosted over the Internet. This is a great option for a network library event, particularly if not all of the participants are in the same area.

Depending on the platform you choose, webinars can include streaming video, voice, text messaging, and screen-sharing features. There are many providers available to host your webinar, such as WebEx, GoToMeeting, and CommPartners; your needs and resources will determine the one you choose. Visiting these sites will provide you with information about how they operate and what funding may be required.

Before you decide on a platform, check that your computer has a webcam and that your browser, operating system, processor, and bandwidth meet the system requirements for the desired platform. You also should make sure that the service is accessible to screen-reader users.

Prior to the webinar, plug in and test earbuds, headphones, or a headset. You will need to use one of these during the event to prevent audio feedback.

Webinar Best Practices

- Participate from a quiet location; turn off cellphones and other devices.
- Make sure the room in which you are sitting is well-lit.
- Avoid sitting with a window or light source directly behind you. Be aware of the background that will appear in the video. In addition, do not have something directly behind your head, such as a pole, plant, or light fixture.
- Print a copy of your presentation to use as backup.
- Use a high-speed wired Internet connection (not wireless).
- Do not use a speakerphone or cellphone.
- Turn off your computer speakers.

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WEBINAR PLANNING GUIDE

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/WebinarGuide.doc>

[RETURN TO EVENT TOOLS](#)





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In-Person Event Evaluation Form

Print and distribute this form to measure the success of your event, including what worked well and what can be improved for next time.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

Thank you for attending our event. Please take a moment to share your feedback.

How useful did you find today's event and presentation?

Very useful
 Somewhat useful
 Not useful

Please elaborate: _____

Which [name of your library] programs and resources would you like to learn more about? *(Select all that apply)*

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braille books and magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Music materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking books and magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

How did you hear about this event?

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Media advisory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poster or flier | <input type="checkbox"/> Website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social media | <input type="checkbox"/> Third-party event listing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail invitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forwarded e-mail invitation | |

Please share other ideas or feedback to help us improve our events:

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IN-PERSON EVENT EVALUATION FORM

Print and distribute this form to measure the success of your event, including what worked well and what can be improved for next time.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/InPersonEvent.doc>

[RETURN TO EVENT TOOLS](#)





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Name of Your Library
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 Phone number
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Virtual Event Evaluation Form

E-mail this template to your attendees following the webinar or conference call.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

Thank you for attending our event. Please take a moment to share your feedback.

Did you have any technical problems?

Yes
 No

If so, please describe:

How did you hear about this event?

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Poster or flier <input type="checkbox"/> Social media <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail invitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Media advisory <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> Third-party event listing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|---|--|

How would you prefer to hear about future events?

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail invitation <input type="checkbox"/> Media advisory <input type="checkbox"/> Social media | <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
|--|---|

How relevant was the event to your work?

Very relevant
 Somewhat relevant
 Not relevant

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VIRTUAL EVENT EVALUATION FORM

E-mail this form to your attendees following the webinar or conference call.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/VirtualEvent.doc>

[RETURN TO EVENT TOOLS](#)





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Information Follow-up Form

Print this form to collect attendees' e-mail addresses. After the event, be sure to e-mail attendees to thank them for coming and to follow up on partnership opportunities.

[Placeholder for your library's name/logo]

[Placeholder for your library's contact information]

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

City/State: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Are you interested in partnering with [name of your library]? Y/N

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INFORMATION FOLLOW-UP FORM

Print this form to collect attendees' e-mail addresses. After the event, be sure to e-mail attendees to thank them for coming and to follow up on partnership opportunities.

This product can be downloaded at: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/networkdocs/documents/InformationFollowUp.doc>

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