

Library of Congress Q&A

*Notice of Funding Availability
Online Interactives and Mobile Apps on Congress and Civic
Participation*

1. Q: What is the deadline for application submission?

A: **Applications are due by 5:00 pm EDT, on May 31, 2015.** Responders should submit one electronic copy of their proposal by email by the due date of May 31 and three unbound hard copies must be post marked on or before May 31.

Applications for this grant should be submitted to:

Vivian Awumey
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave. S. E., Washington, D.C. 20540-1300
email: vawu@loc.gov

2. Q: What if hard copies aren't mailed on time?

A: Responders should submit one electronic copy of their proposal by email by the due date of May 31 and three unbound hard copies must be post marked on or before May 31. Due to delays caused by the Library's security procedures, we recommend using an express mail service operated by the US Postal Service or a private company, such as FedEx or DHL, to send hardcopies of proposals. Applications received without hardcopies will be considered incomplete.

3. Q: Will the online interactive be hosted solely on the developing organization's website? Or will the interactives need to also be hosted or i-framed on the Library of Congress/TPS platforms?

A: The Library of Congress/TPS website will provide a link to the apps that are created with the grant monies and are hosted by the developing organization's website. [As outlined in NOFA]

4. Q: Does the app need to maximize the breadth of all the Library of Congress materials available, or will the developing organization be able to more narrowly curate the learning experience?

A: No. The Library's online resources are too vast to expect grantees to "maximize their breadth." Meeting the curricular needs of teachers and students should be paramount.

UPDATE

*The open period for
submitting questions
ended May 25, 2015.*



*Please fully review the
Notice of Funding
Availability before
submitting questions.*

*Questions should be
submitted in writing to
Aimee Munzi
(Amunzi@loc.gov) in
our Grants
Management Office.*

*We will be updating
the Q&A as necessary.*



5. Is there an estimated time/scope commitment related to the Consortium components of the Grant Requirements? Looking for clarity regarding “outreach activities” and “evaluation exercises”.

A: In describing planned outreach activities, applicants should reflect a commitment to not only creating the apps and online interactives, but also a commitment to promoting them with the target audiences. In describing participation in evaluation exercises undertaken by the Consortium, applicants should reflect an understanding that periodically, partners are expected to respond to surveys, contribute data on usage of materials, and report on interaction with teacher audiences.

6. Q: The document requests "Participate in evaluation exercises." Are those Library organized? If so, how many? What are the goals? We want to understand scope so we can properly budget personnel time.

A: In describing participation in evaluation exercises undertaken by the Consortium, applicants should reflect an understanding that periodically, partners are expected to respond to surveys, contribute data on usage of materials, and report on interaction with teacher audiences.

7. Q: Reach: Obviously K-12 is an extremely wide range. How do you envision we make this relevant to a full spectrum of K-12 classrooms? What will be most widely applicable and useful?

A: Applicants should determine what segment of the K-12 audience their expertise can most successfully engage.

8. Q: Will preference be given to developers willing to enter into a cooperative agreement based on Library of Congress use terms over developers offering a perpetual, royalty-free licensing agreement?

A: No preference will be given. All grant recipients will be expected to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Library. [As outlined in NOFA]

9. Q: What is SAM.gov?

A: The System for Award Management (SAM) combined federal procurement (including grant) systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. The overarching benefits of SAM include streamlined and integrated processes, elimination of data redundancies, and reduced costs while providing improved capability. SAM currently includes the functionality from the following systems: Excluded Parties List System (EPLS), Central Contractor Registry (CCR), Federal Agency Registration (Fedreg), and the Online Representations and Certifications Application. All applicants must have an active registration on SAM.gov

10. Q: Does the Library have a preference for either of the following: a tool that enables teachers to design their own interactive experiences for students; or a tool that "curates" a set of lessons and interactions that teachers implement with their students?

A: The Library will consider all tools that engage students.

11. Q: Can the tool be used to simulate civic participation (similar to Model UN) by engaging young people in trying to pass "mock legislation," or does the Library prefer the tool be used only to support engagement with pending legislation on Congress.GOV?

A: The Library will consider all tools that engage students.

12. Q: Usage: the stated intended usage is in the classroom, but do you see this as primary use by teachers for lesson planning and presentation to students, or for the experience to be directly used by students?

A: The Library will consider all tools that engage students.

13. Q: Does the Library have a preference for the use of particular databases in the apps? For example, American Memory vs. Congress.gov? Or, should the apps enable access to all databases?

A: Use of content from either or both loc.gov and congress.gov are encouraged.

14. Q: Will the Library provide developers with full access (via APIs) to all relevant collections, as well as to relevant document tagging and metadata standards?

A: There are no APIs available to support this work. Metadata standards will be shared to support this work upon grant award.

15. Q: Is there any possibility that the Library can enlist involvement from House or Senate members? For example, legislators might be willing to read consensus bills that kids produce, possibly even introducing them to a committee?

A: If recipients are interested in working with Members of Congress, the recipient would be responsible for connecting students with their constituent Members.

16. Q: Is there guidance or rules around subcontracts or subawards that can be shared? Specifically, do the requirements of the prime agreement flow down to the sub recipients?

A: Yes, the requirements of the prime agreement flow down to the sub recipients. Please see Question 15 for additional information regarding subawards.

17. Q: If the primary applicant wanted to hire a consultant and issue a fixed-price, deliverable-based contract, is that acceptable under the terms of the award?

A: Yes. If awarded a grant, the recipient agrees to:

- Obtain approval from the Library for any new subaward work that is not outlined in the approved work plan;
- Establish all subaward agreements in writing;
- Document the Grant Number, on all subaward agreements under this award;
- Maintain primary responsibility for ensuring successful completion of the Library-approved project (this responsibility cannot be delegated or transferred to a subrecipient);
- Ensure that any subawards comply with the standards in 2 CFR 200 Subpart D and are not used to acquire commercial goods or services for the recipient;
- Ensure that any subawards are awarded to eligible subrecipients and that proposed subaward costs are allowable, reasonable and allocable;
- Be responsible for selecting its subrecipients and, if applicable, for conducting subaward competitions.
- Ensure that any subawards to 501(c)(4) organizations do not involve lobbying activities;

- Monitor the performance of their subrecipients and ensure that they comply with all applicable regulations, statutes, and terms and conditions which flow down in the subaward;
- Obtain Library consent before making a subaward to a foreign or international organization, or a subaward to be performed in a foreign country; and
- Ensure that any questions about subrecipient eligibility or other issues pertaining to subawards are addressed to the recipient's Library Project Manager, as appropriate. Additional information regarding subawards may be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/financial_fin_single_audit.

18. Q: Is there a limit or cap to how much of the total the consultant lines can be, as a percent of the total?

A: There is no limit or cap as a percent of the total budget. Limits or caps do exist, however. Consultant Cap: Library participation in the salary rate (excluding overhead) paid to individual consultants retained by recipients or by a recipient's contractors or subcontractors shall be limited to the maximum daily rate for a Level IV of the Executive Schedule, available at: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/>, to be adjusted annually.

19. Q: Partnerships: Would we need to partner with one of the existing consortium members to deliver PD about the new media developed under the grant? Or should we partner with a solid tech ed institution?

A: Applicants should use their own discretion when forming partnerships to deliver effective PD.

20. Q: What does "participation in outreach activities" mean? Is this attendance of events to demo what we are developing or something else?

A: Applicants should describe activities they intend to engage in for the purpose of alerting educators to the development of, and ultimately to the availability of, the online interactive[s] and mobile apps. [As outlined in NOFA]

21. Q: One of the deliverables is "2 professional development modules that incorporate the apps/interactives". Presumably those would be delivered through the Library CMS, but can you give us some additional insight on the features/functions of these modules that you were anticipating?

A: No. We ask applicants to consider and propose substantive PD approaches.

22. Q: Are the "4 professional development events" organized by the TPS consortium and we attend to run some sessions, or do we have a larger role? Is there a presumption that we are touching base with participants between events (which would be a good PD practice)?

A: The four PD events are to be conceived and described by the applicants.

23. Q: Is the formal application form available on the SAM website?

A: There is no formal application.

24. Q: Where can we find a budget and narrative format that can be edited?

A: The budget and narrative formats included as appendices to the NOFA are suggested formats. A template is attached below the NOFA on the Library's website.

25. Q: Will grantees be given membership to the educational consortium? Is membership required?

A: Although the grantee's work products will differ from those of the existing TPS Consortium members, it is expected that the grantees will become active members of the Consortium. Applicants should demonstrate a record of success in 1) the development and implementation of curricular programs on Congress and civic participation, and/or 2) the development and long-term maintenance of successful online interactive [s] or mobile apps for classroom use.

26. Q: Are you planning to make one grant or multiple grants from the \$950,000 of funding authorized?

A: The total amount of funding available is \$950,000. There is no minimum award amount. Individual funding levels will depend on the content and quality of applications, the number of applications received, and availability of funding. [As outlined in NOFA]

27. Q: Will grantee or grantees be required to complete all components of the NOFA - that is, creating an online interactive and app on Congress and civic participation - as well as marketing these educational materials and developing professional development programs? Or will you be breaking out these multiple components into multiple grants to various organizations?

A: Each grantee will be expected to fulfill all of the requirements identified in the NOFA.

28. Q: Are there current examples of online interactives that we can see?

A: No.

29. Q: On page 5, #4. under appendices: Do the three letters of recommendations have to focus on technology building and/or curriculum development?

A: The letters should address the applicant's record of success in establishing a regional or national reputation in providing high-quality curriculum materials for K-12 audiences on Congress and civic participation, and participating in collaborations and partnerships with K-12 audiences.

30. Q: On page 5, #4 under appendices: "Note that the Library of Congress will not allow indirect administrative costs", but on page 7, under Terms and Conditions, A. General, it states the "The following authorities will be administered in accordance with standard federal requirements for grant agreements, as interpreted by the Library: 2CRF Part 200..." .. As of September 26, 2014, indirect administrative costs are required.

A: Historically, the Library did not issue grants that included indirect Administrative costs. Although budgets can now include indirect costs, it remains the Library's preference that they be limited, to ensure grant dollars are expended to meet program objectives.

31. Q: We are a non-profit with a federally approved indirect cost rate. Does the statement on pg. 5, which states that the Library will not allow indirect administrative costs mean that no indirect costs, of any kind, can be represented in the budget? In our prior experience with the Library, budgeting in accordance with our indirect cost rate agreement has been allowed.

A: If an indirect cost rate is in place, and the grantee wishes to charge for indirect costs, the costs may be incorporated directly into the Administrative section of the budget.

32. Q: When you discuss mobile apps, is it required that the end deliverable work on smartphones? Or would tablets suffice? Is any web-based app acceptable?

A: The Library will consider all tools that engage students.

33. Q: Is the final proposal to be single or double spaced?

A: Applicants should use their own discretion.

34. Q: Is it possible to make the grant funded work generally available (per the terms of the NOFA) but also include it within our existing subscription-based products?

A: Yes.

35. Q: What types of organizations qualify as partners under Appendix C? Could you provide some examples?

A: Any partnerships formed are at the discretion of the applicant.

“Appendix C: Letters of support from current or intended partner organizations that clearly articulate the nature of collaborations under the grant proposal.” [As outlined in NOFA]

36. Q: Who will be responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions for using copyrighted Library of Congress materials in the interactive that is developed? Does the Library of Congress plan to help successful grantees with this process? If so, what form will the assistance take?

A: It will be the grantee’s responsibility to secure the necessary permissions to use materials that are restricted by copyright.

37. Q: How will the developers gain access to the document source files for inclusion in the app, and in what file formats will they be available?

A: Digitized materials from the Library’s collections that are available online are available for download directly from the Library’s website as TIFF, GIF, and JPEG files.

38. Q: Can you clarify your definition of “online interactive”? If our program uses the internet and is interactive, but the actual learning experience takes place offline between students in a classroom, does that meet your definition?

A: The goal of this effort is to enable organizations to combine new technologies with valuable civics content to enhance student learning. The resulting online interactive [s] and apps will provide young people with engaging and meaningful opportunities to learn.

39. Q: Does the proposed program need to include BOTH an online interactive AND an app?

A: No.

40. Q: Can you clarify your definition of “classroom”? Does it need to be located in a school?

A: The statute, making available these grant dollars, uses the word “classroom”. The online interactive [s] and mobile apps should demonstrate broad utility.

41. Q: In Appendix C, are we to provide letters of any partners that would work with us to complete the grant? Or are we to provide letters from partners who we have worked with in the past on similar projects?

A: Letters of support should come from current or intended partner organizations that clearly articulate the nature of collaborations under the grant proposal.

42. Q: Will grantees have access to database administrators/tech team who maintain Congress.gov?

A: The Library's staff administering this program will facilitate appropriate discussions with relevant staff elsewhere in the Library.

43. Q: Is the Library or the grantee responsible for maintenance and technical support of developed technologies during and after the grant period?

A: For any online interactive [s] and apps developed, the recipient is expected to provide technical assistance and support during the grant period. Support following the grant period is subject to available of funding and Library discretion.

44. Q: Can the app include content from other sources, or does the app need to be exclusive to Library of Congress archival content?

A: Congress allocated additional funds to the TPS program with the intent to increase competitive opportunities for developing online interactives and mobile apps for classroom use on Congress and civic participation using Library of Congress collection materials. Augmenting these materials is not prohibited.

45. Q: Can you please help to clarify the policy regarding indirect costs on Library of Congress grant applications?

A: Historically, the Library did not issue grants that included indirect Administrative costs. Although budgets can now include indirect costs, it remains the Library's preference that they be limited, to ensure grant dollars are expended to meet program objectives.

If a federally approved indirect cost rate is in place, and the grantee wishes to charge for indirect costs, the costs may be incorporated directly into the Administrative section of the budget.

Please note: The Library of Congress is part of the legislative branch and is not bound to comply with OMB Uniform Guidance; including indirect cost rates.

46. Q: Do you have specific types of evaluation that you are looking for when considering the "successfully test with target population" requirement, and will usability and feasibility studies with the target population of interest be sufficient for a proof-of-concept, or do you require an experimental study?

A: proposed approaches to testing with the target audience (K-12 students and teachers) are at the discretion of the applicant. Their results should influence the development of the final deliverables.

47. Q: Do you have a list of the Library's primary sources that you want included in the interactives and apps? Or will the developer select which to use? About how many primary sources do you expect to be included?

A: The applicant should use their discretion to determine which primary sources would be appropriate to include.

48. Q: I understand this will somewhat depend on our evaluation of the accuracy and quality of the existing resources, but can you estimate about how much of the instructional content around the primary sources will be picked up directly from the TPS program vs. revised vs. written new?

A: The extent to which instructional content is to be used, revised, or created, will be at the discretion of the applicant.

49. Q: Should the professional development materials, to be created, fall into all program levels, as defined by the TPS website? (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/about/professional.html>)

A: The professional development materials should incorporate the online interactive [s] and mobile apps, such that educators learn about them and their classroom utility. It is expected that applicants will propose a diverse range of outreach activities.

50. Q: What responsibilities will be included in "participate in outreach activities to alert educators to the development of, and ultimately to the availability of, the online interactive [s] and mobile apps"?

A: Responsibilities included in participating in outreach activities will be determined by the applicant.

51. Q: How many people will be required to attend the TPS Educational Consortium meetings? Should they be content experts, tech developers, or a combination of both? What is the time commitment for each conference?

A: At a minimum, the program director will be expected to attend the two in-person meetings, each lasting two full days.

52. Q: How long should each of the four or more professional development events for teachers be? Should those include training videos or any other multimedia? Will they be held in-person, via web conference, or a combination of both?

A: The four professional development events are to be conceived and described by the applicants.

53. Q: We are assuming the content should be aligned to CCSS and NCSS standards, can you confirm?

A: Although the NOFA does not require alignment with any specified curriculum standards, the online interactive [s] and mobile apps should provide young people with engaging and meaningful opportunities to learn.

54. Q: Would you like any of the following to be included with the app?
Assessments, printable or digital worksheets, etc.

A: All content decisions are at the discretion of the applicant.

55. Q: Will the apps/online interactives need to conform to any accessibility standards (508, ADA, etc.)? If yes, please provide additional information about what specific standards must be followed?

A: Please refer to Section i: Nondiscrimination, in the NOFA Terms and Conditions. Additional accessibility questions should be directed to: <http://www.loc.gov/accessibility/>.

56. Q: "Description of your proposed strategy for developing and maintaining online interactive[s] and mobile apps for classroom use on Congress and civic participation..." Can you give us some detail about this section, "methodologies and formats"?

A: Applicants should describe the methodologies and formats, or approaches/procedures/plans, they intend to follow and/or incorporate as they develop and maintain the online interactive[s] and mobile apps for classroom use on Congress and civic participation.

57. Q: Please confirm application deadline.

A: **Applications are due by 5:00 pm EDT, on May 31, 2015.** Responders should submit one electronic copy of their proposal by email by the due date of May 31 and three unbound hard copies must be post marked on or before May 31.

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