

NY State Aid for Library Construction

Application Evaluation Guidelines

Overview

State Aid for Library Construction is a formula aid program with an annual allocation in the state budget. The grant program is administered through the Division of Library Development (DLD) and is a matching grant, meaning libraries must pay a part of their construction project cost with library funds. Public library systems, including SALS, receive an allotment of these grant funds each year to distribute to member libraries.

Member libraries must submit an application via the New York State Office of Cultural Education Online Grant System that meets all the application criteria and requirements. SALS' Facilities Committee will review the applications, and make award recommendations to SALS' Board of Trustees. DLD and DASNY (Dormitory Authority for the State of New York) will determine and announce the award recipients and amounts.

Eligible projects must be for capital construction, and award funds cannot be used for building maintenance or repair (including replacement, repainting, refinishing, etc.). State Aid for Library Construction prioritizes projects that emphasize increased energy conservation and increased accessibility. The minimum award amount is \$2,500. There is not a set maximum award.

Evaluation Guidelines

The SALS' Facilities Committee will consider the below criteria when evaluating applications and recommending award amounts to the SALS' Board of Trustees.

1. Total Project Cost

The total project cost is the sum of the award funds (money received from the state) and library share (money the library supplies to cover the difference between the total project cost and the amount of the award funds). Does the library have enough matching funds available at the time of application to complete the project?

2. Quality of Application

The SALS' Facilities Committee will take the following under consideration when evaluating application quality. Was the application submitted to SALS by the deadline with all project application requirements and attachments included? Were all application instructions correctly followed? Are the project narratives complete, descriptive, and do they include sufficient detail? Do the project bids match the work described and also include appropriate detail? Does the project fit in with the library's overall board-approved facilities plan?

3. NYS Minimum Standards

Will the construction project ensure the library is meeting, or bring the library up to meeting, New York State's Minimum Standards for Public and Association Libraries?

4. Past Grant Funding History

When is the last time the library has received or applied for State Aid for Library Construction? Is this a phased project? How viable is the project without construction grant funding? The Facilities Committee will use a Cumulative Grant Funding History spreadsheet to review the library's previous construction projects, if any, and evaluate how the new construction project fits in.

5. Energy Efficiency/Sustainability

Projects that will promote energy conservation and efficiency and/or the use of alternative energy will be prioritized.

6. Accessibility

Projects that will increase access for all library users, and improve accessibility to library programming and services for all users, will be prioritized.

7. Improve/Increase Existing Space

Construction projects that improve or increase building capacity and space, and in turn increase the impact and effectiveness of library services and programming, will be prioritized.

8. Service to Rural and/or Economically Disadvantaged Communities

Any project that improves library service to rural or isolated communities, as well as communities that are economically disadvantaged, will be given priority.

Award Eligibility Criteria

The library share amount will range from 10 percent to 50 percent. If the construction project meets the above criteria, SALS will recommend the state fund 50 percent of the total project cost.

If the construction project serves an economically disadvantaged community, the SALS Facilities Committee will recommend an award of 75 percent to 90 percent. In order to qualify for a 75 percent to 90 percent match recommendation, the library will need to submit a [Reduced Match Eligibility Form](#) to SALS along with their application.

50% Eligibility Criteria

Public or Association libraries will qualify for a 50 percent award recommendation if they meet the above evaluation guidelines.

Criteria for a Reduced Library Share

75% Eligibility Criteria

If funds are available, the SALS' Board of Trustees will recommend an award of 75 percent (reducing the library share to 25 percent). The library may receive this higher award if it is determined they serve an economically disadvantaged community. To qualify for the reduced library share, construction projects have to meet **two** of the following criteria:

- The percentage of persons below the poverty line in area served is above the New York State average of 4.3%ⁱ.
- The unemployment rate by county is greater than the average of 4.3 percent for New York State.ⁱⁱ
- The median household income is below the New York State average of \$85,974ⁱⁱⁱ/
- The percentage of persons with a Bachelor's degree or higher is lower than the New York State Average of 40.2 percent.^{iv}
- The percentage of high school graduates is lower than the New York State average of 88 percent.^v
- The percentage of individuals eligible for free/reduced lunch is greater than the New York State average of 52.2 percent.^{vi}

90% Eligibility Criteria

If funds are available, the SALS' Board of Trustees will recommend an award of 90 percent (reducing the library share to ten percent). The library may receive this higher award if it is determined they serve an economically disadvantaged community. To qualify for the reduced library share, construction projects have to meet **three** of the same criteria.

ⁱ <https://dol.ny.gov/local-area-unemployment-statistics>

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ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY#>

^{iv} <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY#>

^v <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY#>

^{vi} https://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_profile.cfm?subIndicatorID=52