



# UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

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## Upper Hudson Library System Guidelines for Evaluation of Construction Grant Applications

The NYS Construction Grant Program is an annually funded competitive matching grant program to support facilities projects in public libraries in New York State. The grant funds are part of the NYS budget, administered through the Division of Library Development (DLD) and the public library systems to public libraries. UHLS receives an annual allotment of grant funds based on the total population of the UHLS service area. The member libraries complete and submit an application for grant funding. This is a matching grant, which requires the library to pay a portion of the cost of their project with local funds. All projects must meet the NYS construction grant rules for eligibility to be considered for funding. The UHLS Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the award distribution among the applying libraries each year.

When it has been determined that a construction grant application meets all of the criteria and requirements set forth by the Division of Library Development, the UHLS Services Committee and Board of Trustees will use the following guidelines for the evaluation of construction grant applications and the recommendation for distribution of funds.

- A. Each application will specify a FINAL PROJECT COST. This will be the amount used to determine the % of grant funding awarded for each application.
- B. The Services Committee will recommend funding for an application of no more than:
  - 75% and no less than 35% of the “Cost of Project for Which Funding is Being Requested” for libraries located in an economically disadvantaged community as defined annually by the criteria established by UHLS.
  - 50% and no less than 35% of the “Cost of Project for Which Funding is Being Requested” for all other libraries.
- C. All qualified projects will be evaluated and ranked in priority order using the following criteria in this order from most important to least important:
  1. **NYS Minimum Standards** - Projects which bring the library up to the State Minimum Standards as detailed in NYS Education Commissioner’s Regulations (8 CRR-NY 90.2).
  2. **Critical Infrastructure/Safety** - Projects which address critical infrastructure needs that currently or if left unattended, will result in immediate (within the 3 year window of the grant cycle) limitations on the library’s ability to provide regular library services; OR projects which address significant safety issues for the community, library users, or staff.
  3. **Accessibility** – Projects which improve access to and use of the library building by all library users, including those with physical disabilities.

4. **Increase space capacity** – Projects which increase the effectiveness of library service as the result of increased building space capacity.
5. **Improve existing space** – Projects which increase the effectiveness of library service as the result of improvements to existing building space.
6. **Energy efficiency/Sustainability** – Projects which result in more efficient, cost effective, or environmentally sensitive utilization of the building.
7. **Property acquisition** – Projects which will acquire through purchase agreements buildings and/or property for future expansion or relocation of library services.
8. **Service to geographically isolated/economically disadvantaged** – Projects which enable the library to provide and/or improve library services to geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged communities within their service area.

The committee will also consider a variety of other factors in the formulation of its award distribution recommendation including, but not limited to past grant funding history, relative scalability of the project, the library's identified minimum award threshold, alternative sources of funding which may be available for the project, viability of the project to proceed without construction grant funding, etc. Information related to these considerations will be gathered from each applying library during the period between the Initial grant application deadline and the final grant application deadline (please see D. below).

- D. In order to allow sufficient time for committee consideration and for follow up with each applying library, UHLS will establish TWO DEADLINES for the submission of the grant applications:

The **Initial Grant Application deadline** - The Initial Grant Application MUST be submitted to UHLS in the online application portal and MUST include the following:

- Completed application form with a **FINAL PROJECT COST** (this will be the number the % grant award will be based on);
- Additional Funding Sources;
- Project Narratives;
- Project Budget; and
- Contractor's Quote which reflects the Final Project Cost above (note this is the ONLY attachment required for this deadline).

The **Final Grant Application deadline** – The online application must be completed and re-submitted to UHLS by this deadline. All required documentation and attachments for the grant application must be submitted by this date. All applications must be complete, including all of the required attachments, before they can be considered. Any grant application that is deemed by the Services Committee to be incomplete or incorrect by the second deadline will not be considered for funding.

- E. Exceptions to the above guidelines may be made by unanimous vote of the members present at a meeting of the Services Committee.

Approved by the UHLS Services Committee and Board of Trustees on 2/11/09

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