



**Institute of Museum and Library Services
Native American Library Services Basic Grant
Native Hawaiian Library Services Grant**

A SAMPLE THREE-YEAR PLAN

IMLS knows that the demands of day-to-day service can make time for planning hard to find, even when library staff know that needs have changed. To help assure that library services meet current local needs and to help grantees develop strategies to build services that will be needed in the future, IMLS is providing this guide to developing the Three-Year Plan required for a Basic Grant. It can also be used as a working document for the librarian and consultant within the scope of a Professional Assistance grant or to help applicants develop proposals for Enhancement Grants or for other competitive grant programs.

The plan answers the questions: where is our library now and where do we want it to go in the future in terms of services? The three-year plan helps provide the opportunity to choose priorities and make strong decisions based on available resources. Throughout the planning process, applicants are asked to consider what their current resources are and what resources they will need for both new and ongoing projects or programs. Resources include staffing, collections of materials, supplies, equipment, facilities, technology, and funding. Remember that three-year plans are flexible and may be revised based on changing needs in the community.

Grant applicants approach the preparation of a three-year plan in many ways. Below is a sample three-year plan that incorporates outcomes-based evaluation which allows libraries to understand whether they are meeting their own goals. You may wonder why, in the sample plan, evaluation is mentioned before proposed programs. The reason is that knowing what results you would like to achieve helps you determine what programs to offer. Specific steps for carrying out activities are not included in the sample plan in order to keep the plan simple and to illustrate the basic components of a plan. Your plan will probably include more specific information about activities within your projects or programs. A list of terms used in the sample plan follows. Your three-year plan would include these elements, even if they do not follow the order in the sample.

TERMS USED IN THE SAMPLE THREE-YEAR PLAN

Mission Statement: A mission statement gives the overall purpose of an organization. It typically identifies the organization's audience, what the organization wants to provide for its audience, why it provides these products and/or services, and the ways by which the organization will achieve its mission. For an example, see the sample plan.

Needs Assessment or Statement of Need: This describes your community's needs. It helps you decide what library services will best help meet those needs. A needs assessment is the process of looking at information that can show what a community wants or needs that a library can provide. A need statement is sometimes described as a summary of the difference between what the organization wants to achieve for its audience and the current condition of services. For an example, see the sample plan.

Goals: Goals translate the needs of the community into library services. They are statements of broad results that guide the organization's design of programs, choice of projects, and management/operations decisions.

Evaluation: Evaluation is the process of gathering information that can tell staff how close a library project or program came to meeting their goals. Evaluation based on outcomes tells the story of what happened in terms of people (for example: how many new library users who attended the summer reading program continued to check out books and use library services over the following twelve months). Evaluation based on outputs tells the story only in terms of activities and services the library provided (for example: number of new books purchased, number of workshops held, number of books borrowed).

Evaluation Plan: An evaluation plan is a written description of each goal for a program or project, with information about how much the library wants to achieve, for which groups in its audience, and what information it will gather to show what happened. It helps library staff make decisions about program priority and design, and it makes programs stronger. Evaluation, actually collecting information using the plan, helps staff know if projects or programs ran smoothly and created hoped-for results.

Outcomes: Outcomes look at **results**. Outcomes describe changes or benefits for individuals in the form of knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, status or life conditions because they participated in library services. Identifying desired outcomes helps applicants design services that directly help program users gain the intended benefits. For example: people will read with their children more often.

Outputs: Outputs look at **performance**. Outputs are the activities, services or products of the library. They are things that can simply be counted. For example: number of new books purchased, number of workshops held, number of books borrowed.

Targets: Targets show the amount of an outcome or output the library wants to achieve. For example: 15% of the people attending the workshop will change their diet (outcome); one workshop per month (output).

Data Sources: *Data sources are the places and ways information about program results and performance can be collected. For example: a data source that can show the number of people attending workshops is the workshop attendance records; a data source to show whether people change their diets after attending a series of workshops is a survey.*

Timeline: *A timeline is the time frame for offering projects or programs. For example: workshops will be offered for one year; books will be ordered on an ongoing basis during the three-year plan period.*

A sample plan follows:

SUMMARY OF LIBRARY'S THREE-YEAR PLAN (YEAR 2005-2007)

MISSION

Provide quality materials and services to the community in a welcoming and respectful atmosphere to meet community educational, information, cultural, health, and recreational needs.

NEED #1: Health Information

The Library Director's meetings with community members and an analysis of information about health in the community led the Library Planning Group to realize that community leaders are concerned about the high rate of diabetes in the community. They believe there is a lack of good information about health and health care.

GOAL

To contribute to reducing the high rate of diabetes by helping community residents make good health care decisions by providing high-quality, culturally sensitive information and by providing a series of workshops to improve the community's knowledge of how to find and use good health care information.

KEY OUTPUT TARGETS

- At the end of a one-year period, 50 participants will have completed the library's health information program.
- Each year, the library will spend at least 10% of its new materials budget on print and electronic health care materials.

KEY OUTCOME TARGET

- At least 30% of the survey respondents will say they have used health information resources in the library in making at least one health decision.

PROGRAMS/TIMELINE

- Provide a community health information education program to promote and encourage use of health care resources.
(Timeframe: 2005)
- Provide printed materials and electronic access to quality health care information to community members and to community health institutions.
(Timeframe: 2005-2007)

NEED #2: Reading Skills

The Library Planning Group learned the following from discussions with local schoolteachers and officials:

- More than half of the community's schoolchildren perform below the state average on reading tests.
- Better reading skills would help the schoolchildren to improve overall academic performance.

GOAL:

Improve reading skills of schoolchildren in the community by partnering with local schools to provide a multi-year childhood literacy program and offer an early childhood literacy program.

KEY OUTPUT TARGETS:

- At the end of 2006, 25 community schoolchildren will have completed the library multi-year childhood literacy program.
- At the end of 2006, 25% of the community's parents with very young children will have participated in the early childhood literacy program.

KEY OUTCOME TARGETS:

- After completing the library's multi-year childhood literacy program, an additional ten children will score at or above the state average on the reading part of the state-wide test.
- Fifty percent of the parents participating in the early childhood literacy program read to their very young children at least once a week according to an annual library survey.

PROGRAMS:

- Partner with local school to provide multi-year childhood literacy program. (Timeframe: 2005-2007)
- Expand an early childhood literacy program that encourages parents to read to their very young children. (Timeframe: 2005-2007)

NEED #3: Preservation of Native American Traditions

The Library Planning Group noted in the Library Director's reports that her discussions with community members showed that many were concerned about the loss of tribal traditions and the lack of up-to-date information about Native American language, culture, genealogy, and tribal government in the library and the local museum. Native American students at the community high school and tribal college found that their libraries' collections were inadequate for the projects they want to do on Native American topics.

GOAL:

Help preserve Native American traditions for members of the community by partnering with the local museum to provide programs on Native American traditions and to provide access to current, relevant resources on Native American topics, so that community members can satisfy their formal and informal educational needs.

KEY OUTPUT TARGETS:

- By the end of 2006, 60 people will have participated in the joint library/museum cultural programs.
- By the end of 2007, the Library will increase its collection of Native American resources by 100%.

KEY OUTCOME TARGETS:

By the end of 2006, 50% of the joint library/museum program participants will indicate in a survey that their knowledge of Native American culture increased.

At the end of 2007, at least 50% of community members participating in the Library Director's informal verbal survey will report that the collection of Native American resources meets their formal and informal educational needs.

PROGRAMS:

- Partner with museum to provide programs on Native American traditions.
(Timeframe: 2005-2007)
- Expand collection of Native American resources in language, history, genealogy, and tribal government.
(Timeframe: 2005-2007)