

# RAILS Resource Sharing Overview

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RAILS commitment to resource sharing drives most of our services to member libraries. The following snapshot is far from comprehensive, but highlights major resource sharing initiatives.

More information is available on the RAILS website at <https://www.railslibraries.info> for all these services. We're also happy to discuss them and answer questions at our first and future meetings.

## Delivery

- In FY2017, RAILS delivered nearly 9.5 million items through regular system delivery, plus over 1.1 million items to libraries served by the Illinois Library Delivery Service (ILDS).
- RAILS provides the ILDS courier service in partnership with the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS). ILDS delivers to most Illinois academic libraries and provides the shuttle service that allows for statewide delivery.
- Delivery methods include RAILS delivery vehicles or contracted delivery by CTL Global, community delivery partnerships where a host library receives deliveries for nearby libraries, ILDS, courier service (within Chicago), and the US postal service.

## E-content

- The Axis 360 platform for eRead Illinois serves 390 participating libraries in RAILS and 25 in IHLS. Sixty percent of RAILS public libraries participate, with an overall participation rate of 32% across all types of libraries (academic, public, school, and special). eRead Illinois has a sliding scale membership fee to make it as affordable as possible for all types and sizes of libraries. All membership fees are used for collection development.
- BiblioBoard Library includes multiple collections—public domain classics, open educational resources, independently published material, fiction, quarterly curated collections, and more. There is unlimited simultaneous access for all Illinois residents through geolocation. There is no charge to Illinois libraries or residents.

## Explore More Illinois

- Explore More Illinois is under development and is expected to debut in 2018. It will allow cardholders from participating RAILS public libraries to reserve free passes, discount admission, and other incentives from cultural attractions in Illinois, such as museums, cultural centers, zoos, aquariums, gardens, historical societies, etc.

## Find More Illinois

- Find More Illinois aims to expand resource sharing and facilitate interlibrary loan by providing a single discovery interface that draws from the online catalogs of participating libraries. It's beginning with a pilot project with 21 libraries from I-Share, PrairieCat, and Rock River Library Consortium, using SHAREit software from Auto-Graphics. Implementation began in late January 2018, and a public launch is planned for late spring 2018. Other libraries will be able to join when the project is expanded, which may be as soon as fall 2018.

## Group purchases and vendor discounts

- Group purchases are negotiated, managed, or otherwise mediated by RAILS, and participation is available for RAILS members.
- Vendor discounts are offers that companies have made available to member libraries.

## Interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing

- The RAILS resource sharing policy provides guidance to libraries on interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing, as well as reciprocal access and public library nonresident issues.
- A recorded introduction to interlibrary loan is available on the RAILS website. Additional training can be provided upon request.

## Shared catalog support

- RAILS provides financial and/or in-kind support to the four shared catalog consortia historically known as LLSAPs (Local Library System Automation Programs): MAGIC, PrairieCat, Resource Sharing Alliance (RSA), and System Wide Automated Network (SWAN). In FY2020, the support model will shift to an annual grant process that will be open to more shared catalog consortia.
- RAILS has also provided grant funding for start-up costs for libraries joining an LLSAP, as well as funding for two consortial consolidations (Illinois RiverShare libraries joined PrairieCat in May 2016; LINC and MAGIC libraries will consolidate into SWAN in May 2018). RAILS awarded a total of \$400,000 in LLSAP membership grants to 16 organizations in FY2017. There is a moratorium on the LLSAP membership grant program for FY2018 due to the many consortial and budget issues in play.
- To facilitate communication with and among consortia, RAILS has a Consortia Committee that meets quarterly, hosts a statewide email list for consortia managers, and organizes an annual in-service day for consortial staff.

## Sharing expertise

- RAILS helps build expertise of library staff through an active continuing education program and through consulting provided by both RAILS staff and contracted consultants. Consulting services include a consultant directory, Management Association discounts for public libraries with an annual operating budget under \$1,000,000, and a hotline for questions about the Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act.
- RAILS helps members share expertise with one another through multiple email lists, member-generated Fast Facts surveys, and a web-based repository for library policies, procedures, and plans.

## Unserved

- Many areas of Illinois, both rural and metropolitan, have no public library service. RAILS developed a resource sharing map to highlight this issue and is working with the Illinois State Library, Illinois Heartland Library System, and other stakeholders to find ways to address this multifaceted issue.
- RAILS provides a template for an intergovernmental agreement that can be used by public libraries in partnership with another agency (often a school district) to extend services to nonresidents.