
RAILS Report – Consortia Committee

Catalog Membership Grant

The first deadline for FY2025 Catalog Membership Grants is November 1. The updated application form can be found at <https://railslibraries.org/grants/catalog-membership>.

Secretary of State Library Technology Grants

Secretary Giannoulis has awarded \$2 million in grants to 113 libraries in underserved communities across Illinois for the purpose of enhancing their technology infrastructures, with applications describing the intended use of the funds due on June 14. Awardees were determined based on eligibility for updated equalization funding (which results from a low tax base) and high poverty rates, and grants will be made in amounts of either \$12,500 or \$27,500 depending on the size of the community.

Digital Accessibility Resources

RAILS' re-scheduled June Member Update focused largely on the topic of digital accessibility, with a preview of the new Title II web accessibility requirements from Keith Hays, ADA IT Coordinator at the University of Illinois, Urbana-champaign, and a preview of the Modern eAccessibility Landscape from Sonya Schryer Norris. Antioch Public Library District Director Jennifer Drinka also shared her library's ongoing experience with a digital accessibility complaint. The event was recorded and can be found on the RAILS YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaYZXtPa8Pgy2LIGLK1kF1Q>.

We have also added a new Pulse page focusing on Digital Accessibility at <https://railslibraries.org/digital-accessibility>. This page will receive frequent updates with more information on digital accessibility issues, federal laws and guidance, resources for libraries, continuing education, and related learning opportunities. Included on the page is a new memo from Ancel Glink regarding Digital Access Discrimination complaints made against libraries to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights.

Improvements to L2

We successfully completed a major upgrade to the software running the live L2 site in June, from Drupal 9 to Drupal 10, with work to resolve lingering bugs continuing. We are awaiting Illinois State Library approval for FY2025 of the special grant that funds maintenance and ongoing feature development and have worked with the statewide L2G2 advisory group to identify top priorities for development, documentation, and other administrative matters. A complete reworking of event template functionality is the top development priority for FY2025.

FY2025 System Area and Per Capita Grant Application

The FY2025 System Area and Per Capita Grant Application was submitted to the Illinois State Library on May 31 for their review and approval. The application includes RAILS' Board-approved budget and

Operational Plan, and can be reviewed at

<https://railslibraries.org/sites/default/files/mtg/2024/05/106195/9.1%20Operational%20Plan%20and%20FY25%20Budget%20REVISED.pdf>.

RAILS Board Universal Service Committee and Possible Plan Update

RAILS Board Universal Service Committee met on June 6th for their last meeting of the fiscal year. They reviewed goals from the 2020 Universal Service Plan and discussed a potential upcoming revision, including revisiting the definition of “unserved.” They also discussed an IGA between Des Plaines Public Library and the Village of Rosemont and received a presentation on “paper libraries” by Joe Filapek. The meeting schedule for FY2025 will be determined after the new RAILS Board is seated in late July and new members join the Committee. Meeting documents can be found at

<https://railslibraries.org/board/committees/meetings?mtg=Universal%20Service%20Committee%20Meeting>.

Find More Illinois Updates

The Find More Illinois team continues to onboard new CCS libraries to what one of them has described as a “garden of delights.” As of June, the following CCS libraries are officially active in the system:

- Algonquin Public Library District
- Cary Area Public Library District
- Glencoe Public Library
- Glenview Public Library
- McHenry Public Library District
- Morton Grove Public Library
- Park Ridge Public Library
- Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District

Organizational Changes

Note that your contacts for Find More Illinois and Data department oversight have changed, as we've made some updates to the RAILS organizational structure as of July 1. The Find More Illinois program (consisting of the Consortial Services Supervisor and Technology Special Project Coordinator) has moved under the direction of Leila Heath, Director of Library Resources and Programs. The Data department (consisting of the Data Analysis Manager and the Data Research Specialist) has moved under the direction of Anne Slaughter, Director of Technology Services. These changes follow an 18-month general review of the organizational structure aimed at ensuring continued sustainability, innovation, and exceptional customer service across RAILS programs, and were approved by the RAILS Board at their June meeting.