



125 Tower Drive
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
630.734.5000
railslibraries.org

March 21, 2025

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 8.4 IMLS Impacts in Illinois

Thank you for your comments and questions related to the ongoing developments related to the [Executive Order](#) from March 14 that called for elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to the “maximum extent consistent with applicable law”. Much about the ultimate effects of this order remains unclear, but it is important that the RAILS Board have the opportunity to share thoughts, perspectives and questions related to the latest developments related to this order.

In your packet, you will find an informational handout prepared by the Illinois Library Association that details the impact that IMLS has in the State of Illinois.

I look forward to our discussion.



Federal Funding for Libraries in Illinois: IMLS/LSTA

Administered through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), the only federal program that exclusively covers services and funding for libraries, provided \$5.7 million for Illinois Libraries in FY2024 under the Grants to States Program. **Please support LSTA funding in the FY2025 federal budget; over 11.8 million Illinoisans reside in public library service areas which benefit from this funding.**

In FY2024 this funding impacted Illinois libraries through:

Efficiently Sharing Resources: 11 million items were transferred among more than 1,700 public, school, academic, and special libraries in Illinois. LSTA-supported resource sharing allowed for ground delivery services provided by the regional library systems and at no-charge to Illinois residents who requested the library materials. No one library can own everything; and sharing resources between libraries benefits library users across the entire state.

Additionally, through subscriptions for WorldCat Discovery/FirstSearch services Illinois libraries conducted nearly 1 million citation searches between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 to serve their library patrons and support their library operations. Academic and college libraries constituted (263,379) 28% of searches; public libraries (65%) 610,099; K-12 school libraries (5%) 47,157 and special libraries such as medical, law, corporate, and government (2%) 17,254. Use of these services allows libraries to identify and access the resources that are required to meet the expectations of their patrons.



Project Next Generation Grants: This initiative is designed to educate at-risk students and bridge the digital divide. Public libraries work closely with their school districts to identify needs; since its 2000 inception, thousands of teens benefited. In FY2024, 30 libraries received more than \$500,000 infunding to enhance students’ abilities to deal with life experiences, develop critical thinking skills, and prepare for the future. The program is designed to immerse students in learning while providing access to computers, software, and technologies. The Peoria Public Library received \$12,500 to implement “Project Next Generation Mini Stem Activities” at its Lincoln Branch. Other communities benefitting from this program included Normal, Highwood, Chicago Ridge, Carbondale, Evanston and Glen Carbon.

Public Library Programming: Administered by the Northbrook Public Library, the “Illinois Libraries Present” initiative allows over 200 public libraries to afford high quality online programming for their patrons that would be cost prohibitive for single libraries to hold on their own. The program affords public libraries access to nationally known speakers and authors at no cost to the public they serve.

Professional Development: The Illinois Library Association receives funding from the Illinois State Library and partners with the Reaching Across Illinois and the Illinois Heartland library systems to provide library leadership training for library directors, those who are brand new or those newer to the position, via “Directors’ University.” These programs enable library leaders to make the most out of local tax dollars which support the bulk of public library operations in this state.

Questions? Contact Executive Director Cynthia Robinson, crobinson@ila.org, 312-644-1897

Illinois Library Association
 560 W. Washington Blvd, Suite 330 Chicago, IL 60661
 o: 312-644-1897 f: 312-644-1899 w: ila.org

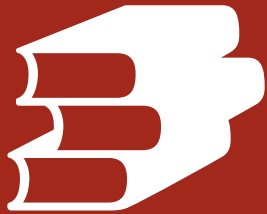


Illinois Public Libraries by the Numbers FY2024



Illinois has **640** Public libraries with a service area population of **11,807,164**.*

4,019,072 Illinois residents have library cards, about **32%**.



Illinoisans checked out **990,685,270** materials – that's **7** per resident or **23** per card holders.

E-books, e-audiobooks, and e-videos were downloaded **16,763,660** times.



Illinois residents visited libraries **36,260,689** times.

4,096,023 Illinoisans attended **218,009** library programs either in person or virtually.



Illinois residents connected to library Wi-Fi **23,703,627** times.

Illinois libraries do all this for only **\$72** per person!

