Public Library Innovation Program
First Call for Proposals

The new eIFL.net **Public Library Innovation Program seeks to** spark the development of innovative public library services with and for their communities. This first Call is designed to gather great ideas that introduce technology to meet user needs and help people improve their lives. This program is supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

We invite public libraries or other organizations in developing and transitioning countries to submit proposals to develop innovative services for and by public libraries.

A maximum of 10 best proposals will be awarded up to $30,000 USD each for a 1 year project to implement the service in support of community needs.

Applications must be received by the deadline of 18:00 (Rome/Italy) time **February 28th, 2010.**

Selected projects will start in April 2010 and end in March 2011.

Please read this important information before completing the grant application form. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact our e-mail help desk at plip@eifl.net

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

Who is eligible to apply for grants?

The call is open to to applicants from the following countries where either eIFL.net has a presence or the foundation's Global Libraries initiative supports projects: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, People's Republic of China, Colombia, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), Poland, Guatemala, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

What kind of institutions may apply?

The call is open to public libraries.

Other organizations can apply in partnership with the public library to develop innovative services for and by the public library.

What do we mean by 'innovative'?

Innovative can mean that the service the project develops meets the following criteria:
- Is completely new;
- Has never been done in this place before;
- Never focused on this target group before;
- Was never done in this partnership before;
- Was never done properly before [say why]; or
- Never used technology (or a particular kind of technology) before.

Examples of innovative library services might focus on improving health care, personal and economic development, agricultural practices, employment, communication, government services, or civic engagement. A public library might suggest a program to reach out to children 'hanging out' in the train station after school by opening a branch there and engaging them with ICT training or the creation of content of interest to them. Another library might propose to use technology to improve the availability of legal information relevant to an ethnic minority and partner with a law firm to offer legal consultation and advice. Other innovative approaches in helping citizens to cope with and improve their everyday lives are encouraged.

What do we mean by 'technology'?

We are open to ideas that deploy computers, access to the Internet, mobile phones and other mobile devices, web2.0 tools, and any software applications that enable the development of these new services and outreach to the community.

Applicants are required to

- implement and document a community needs assessment in order to demonstrate the need they are trying to address (See Tip sheet Needs Assessment);
- show the feasibility of addressing community needs through services that make use of technology in libraries;
- describe why and how the idea proposed will address the community's needs in an innovative way;
- build partnerships;
- actively promote the new service and share lessons learned.

Grant timeline

Selection timeline

Call for proposals	16th November 2009
Application Deadline	28th February 2010
Evaluation of proposals	March 2010
Awards are announced	End of March 2010

Project timeline

Project implementation	April 2010 to March 2011
First grantee meeting*	May 2010
First interim report submitted by grantees	20th August 2010
Second grantee meeting*	End September 2010
Second interim report submitted by grantees	20th November 2010
Final report	April 2011

* All the costs of the meetings will be covered by eIFL.net

Eligible project expenses

The program will cover all project-related expenses except construction or reconstruction costs, or expenses incurred before the grant agreement is signed. Funds for collection development (print and/or e-resources) can be requested if related directly to the project goals.

SELECTION CRITERIA

A selection committee will review grant applications. Applications will be evaluated according to five criteria:

1. **Innovation**
   The service is new for the community or focused on a target group never served before, demonstrates new alignments or partnerships, uses new organizational, programmatic or promotional approaches.

2. **Community need**
   The project addresses a recognized community need with a viable, innovative solution. The project description defines the community need and clearly defines project goals. The proposed project will result in a service that will have a lasting positive impact on the community.

3. **Partnerships**
   The proposal describes a strong and appropriate partnership(s).

4. **Budget**
   The proposed budget is realistic, well planned, and accurate. Cost estimates are researched and reflect local market prices. The budget narrative explains proposed expenses and identifies organizations' capacity to implement the project.

5. **Use of technology**
   The application describes technology that will be used in the project and clearly explains how it will help to support project goals.

Selected grantees will be expected to document their project idea and its implementation and share this locally, regionally and internationally during and following implementation. Grantees will be expected to share knowledge and experience with other PLIP grantees. eIFL.net will provide additional support and assistance as needed.

APPLICATION GUDELINES

1. Applications must be written in English.

2. Please include a page number and the name of your organization in the footer of each page of the "Grant application" form.

3. Applications must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization.

4. Application package should include:

    (1) Completed "Grant application." Application form can be downloaded here.
    (2) A letter of intent from each partner confirming the organization's interest in and commitment to the project.
    (3) A supporting letter from local/regional or national authorities.

5. Applications should be submitted by e-mail to: plip@eifl.net. In case of connectivity problems applications submitted by fax or sent by post will be accepted.

    Postal address:
    eIFL.net
    Piazza Mastai 9
    00153 Rome
    Italy
    Fax: +39 06 5807246

6. In order to avoid errors and incomplete information, we encourage applicants to complete the following steps before submitting an application:
    (1) Read and understand the eligibility and selection criteria.
    (2) Fill out and sign the "Grant application" form. Signature page could be scanned and added as attachment.
    (3) Include the required attachments.

7. The application package must be received by the deadline of 18:00 (Rome/Italy time), February 28, 2010. This applies to all forms of submission.

8. An e-mail help desk will be available during the period the call for proposals is open. Feel free to contact us at plip@eifl.net. The communication language is English.