



Illinois Heartland Library System

MEMO TO: Finance Committee
FROM: Leslie M. Bednar
DATE: September 11, 2020
RE: IHLS Grants to Member Libraries – eResources Grant

The second grant opportunity with a goal to increase resource sharing in central and southern Illinois focuses on electronic resources (eResources) through participation in a large consortium in the state. In early August we were notified by the Illinois State Library (ISL) a portion of the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) grant funds for Illinois libraries would go directly to library systems for the purchase of eBooks. IHLS was invited to apply for an eBook reimbursement grant from \$100,000.00 to \$125,000.00. Chicago Public Library (CPL) and RAILS (Reaching Across Illinois Library System) both received the same grant offer. CARLI (the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois) may also apply.

No action is requested of the committee.

Background

Late last week IHLS administrators met with peers from CARLI, CPL, ISL and RAILS to discuss the latest recommendation from the [REALM Project](#) regarding library materials delivery and recommendations for item quarantine periods. Recognizing the increasing delays in delivery due to science-based guidance cause challenges for members and their communities, we believe eResources can extend a library's collection out to its community in a safe way. IHLS will offer public library members not currently providing eBooks to their patrons a one-year subscription to this type of service.

IHLS Contribution

This pilot project for FY2021 will target approximate 8 members in total. Each is quite small, serving populations of 2,500 or less. Because this subset of members have no library automation system, their option for an eResources consortium is limited to eRead Illinois which is administered by RAILS. Several IHLS members participate in eRead and are pleased with the Axis 360 project from Baker & Taylor.

The eResources grant has a small General Fund financial impact and we estimate it is below the \$2,500.00 requirement for board action.

Number of libraries who may apply: 8

One-year subscription to eRead Illinois for small libraries: \$250.00

Estimated total: \$2,000.00

Moving Forward

All new library resource sharing services are promoted in the community. IHLS will provide technical assistance, training and marketing materials to grantees. We want our members to be successful in this endeavor. When patrons realize the benefit of the eBook service it is quite possible the value of the library to the community improves. What follows may be self-support of the subscription in subsequent years.

IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!

Should IHLS decide to extend the grant period it will continue to have a similar monetary impact. And we will have a better idea once these members gain usage statistics and feedback from their patrons.

COVID-19 has moved some library technologies to the fore. As much as possible we have a responsibility to make those available to members. Thank you for your thoughtful feedback regarding this opportunity. We hope members find it an impactful tool in their resource sharing programs. Please let me know if you have any questions.