

## About the Program

The Literacy Bridges: Empowering 21st Century Communities Grant Program is a two-year initiative that includes professional development for library staff working in Carnegie-built libraries in small and rural areas of the U.S. to deliver programs integrating adult basic and digital literacy skills.

## Program Commitments

This cohort is designed as a supported cycle of learning and doing, where participants try things out, reflect, collaborate, and build on their experiences together over time. To get the most out of this opportunity, each applying library should designate one primary representative who can participate consistently. This allows for a cohort environment where members can build trust, shared language, and a strong peer community.

Each cohort participant will be expected to participate in monthly Literacy Bridges Cohort meetings online via Zoom for 9 consecutive months. Meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 11 am PT / 2 pm ET and last for one hour.

Participants must be able to travel\* to two in-person events:

- 2026 ARSL Conference, September 16-19 in Montgomery, Alabama
- 2027 ARSL Conference, September 15-18 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*\*Grant awards may be used to fund travel and conference registration expenses*

## Confirmations (required)

- My Carnegie-built library received an invitation to apply for this grant.
- One representative from our library will be assigned as the designated cohort participant.
- I confirm that the cohort participant from our library will be able to attend the monthly, one-hour online Literacy Bridges Cohort training sessions.
- I confirm that the cohort participant from our library will be able to attend the 2026 & 2027 ARSL Conferences in person.
- I confirm our library will be able to adequately host adult basic and digital literacy programs in the seven months following cohort training program completion.

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## 2026 Literacy Bridges Application

### Project Director and Cohort Participant

*The Project Director and Cohort Participant may be the same individual, or they may be separate individuals within your organization.*

*Please provide the following information about the person with whom all grant and project related communications will be conducted. This person must be authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the library, or be the person at the library who manages contract approvals with the local governing authority.*

#### Project Director Name:

First Name

Last Name

#### Project Director Email:

#### Job Title or Role:

Phone:



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*Please provide the following information about the person that will be the designated cohort representative to participate in the training cohort. This person must attend all required events. Sharing of knowledge and program activities can be provided to other staff members in their library/libraries.*

**Cohort Participant Name:**

First Name

Last Name

**Cohort Participant Email:**

**Job Title or Role:**

Phone:



**Library Information**

*Please provide the following information about the library for which grant funding is being requested.*

**Library Name:**

**Library Address:**

Country

Address

Address Line 2 (optional)

City

State, Province, or Region

Zip or Postal Code

**Library Mailing Address or PO Box (if different from the Street Address):**

Country

Address

Address Line 2 (optional)

City

State, Province, or Region

Zip or Postal Code

**Library Website:**

**Year your Carnegie library was built:**

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**ARSL Membership Status:**

- Organizational (Library) Member
- Individual Member
- Nonmember

*ARSL membership is NOT required to apply for this grant opportunity. We encourage all nonmember applicants to consider [joining ARSL](#) to ensure you stay informed about future grant opportunities and to obtain discounted pricing for conference attendance.*

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## Payment Information

If awarded, please provide the name of the entity that will accept the grant funds:

*This entity may be your library; the Friends of the Library group associated with your library; or the city, county, or other government entity that manages finances for your library.*

**Check Recipient Mailing Address (if different than Library Address above):**

Country

Address

Address Line 2 (optional)

City

State, Province, or Region

Zip or Postal Code

*Checks will be mailed to all selected grant recipients to the address provided in this application. A check re-issue fee will be applied to any undeliverable or otherwise re-issued checks.*

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## Cohort Preference

Participants for both the 2026 and 2027 cohorts will be selected during this application process. While specific cohort placement cannot be guaranteed, every effort will be made to accommodate scheduling preferences when possible.

## Cohort Training Program

### Cohort #1: June 2026 - March 2027

*First Wednesdays at 11 am PT / 2 pm ET*

- July 1, 2026
- August 5
- September 2
- October 7
- November 4
- December 2
- January 6, 2027
- February 3
- March 3

### Cohort #2: June 2027 - March 2028

*First Wednesdays at 11 am PT / 2 pm ET*

- June 2, 2027
- July 7
- August 4
- September 1
- October 6
- November 3
- December 1
- January 5, 2028
- February 2

Please indicate your preferred cohort placement:

- Cohort #1
- Cohort #2
- Either Cohort

While preferences will be considered, exact placement cannot be guaranteed.

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### Program Information

The following questions will describe the scope, nature, and proposed impact of your grant-funded project and participation.

#### Current Capacity and Funding

Describe your library's service area; operating budget; main sources of revenue/income; community demographics such as age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc.

Service Population (#):

What funding currently exists to support Adult Basic Literacy programming in your library?

\$  USD

Please describe your library's current capacity to provide Adult Basic and Digital Literacy programming, including the staff and/or volunteer resources available to facilitate educational activities and the spaces you have access to for program delivery. If awarded, would this funding allow you to address any capacity issues, and if so, how?

*Suggested word count: 300 words*

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#### Program Outcomes & Goals

Please describe the anticipated outcomes of your participation in this learning opportunity. In your response, explain how the knowledge and skills you may gain as a library staff member participating in an educational cohort will enhance your effectiveness in your current role, how you intend to share your learning with co-workers or peers, and how these efforts may contribute to positive impacts on you and your library's programming.

*Suggested word count: 300 words*

Please describe the adult literacy needs and assets in your community, addressing both the most pressing challenges and the key strengths, relationships, or existing efforts that your library has or can build upon.

*Suggested word count: 200 words*

How will community voices inform the design and focus of your Literacy Bridges project? In your response, describe how project priorities may be identified, validated, and refined in partnership with community members and/or community-based organizations.

*Suggested word count: 300 words*

The Literacy Bridges initiative seeks to provide literacy support across the full spectrum of adult library users. How would you propose addressing the needs of all adults in your community (e.g.; young adults, mid-career, English language learners, seniors)?

*Suggested word count: 200 words*

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### Reporting Requirements

Cohort participants will be asked to complete brief pre- and post- evaluations for their individual training experience.

After completion of all grant funded activities applicants will be required to submit a brief report detailing the implementation and outcome of their library held programs. Photos will be encouraged but not required.

Note:

- Photos, program activities, and testimonials provided may appear in future ARSL and Carnegie Corporation of New York marketing campaigns.
- Receipt submissions for program expenses are not required.

I agree to the above reporting requirement