

## **GATHERING IDEAS FOR FUTURE STATEWIDE PROJECTS**

The Library Council of Washington is looking for your help in identifying ideas for the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding to meet statewide library needs and opportunities.

Project name (a short descriptive title)

"Generation B: Library Services for Baby Boomers"

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1. Briefly describe your idea for the use of LSTA funding (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

This project aims to assist libraries to provide a variety of materials, programs, and services aimed specifically for the state's active older adults or baby boomers.

Washington libraries can help meet the needs of active boomers while gaining a valuable ally. Many of these boomers visited the library when their children were young; attending story hours and helping research science projects. But over time, the library may no longer be a part of their information gathering routine. By providing programs, services and materials targeted to these active people, libraries can meet the needs of a large and growing population that wants to contribute to the community.

This project will support the development of

- Partnerships between libraries (e.g., between public and medical libraries) and between libraries and community organizations
- Staff training
- Grant cycle(s)

to provide and deliver quality materials, programs and services to the target audience.

This project aims to build upon the work of several organizations and libraries that are developing and delivering programs to this target audience, such as

- Lifelong Access Libraries Initiative (<http://www.lff.org/lifelong/index.php>)
- Montana State Library's "What's Your Story" (<http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory/programmingguide.pdf>)

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- WebJunction: Services to Older Adults  
(<http://www.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=7763>)
- The American Library Association's RUSA guidelines "Library Services to Older Adults"  
(<http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotocols/referenceguide/libraryservices.htm>)

2. Briefly describe why funding of this idea is important to the Washington library community (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2005 Washington's total population was 6,146,338. Of that

- 1,794,730 (or 29.2%) were 50 or older
- 1,346,048 (or 21.9%) were 55 or older
- 964,975 (or 15.7%) were 60 or older

Almost 1/3 of Washington residents are over the age of 50! Our state is facing an explosion of the number of adults 50 and over that, unlike earlier generations, are active, healthy and more engaged in the community. The Urban Institute reports that the retirement years are enhanced where there are social and civic connections, ongoing learning, and opportunities for volunteerism within the community. Libraries are perfect organizations to provide baby boomers with education and outreach.

Many libraries in Washington offer programs for "seniors" but the specific and unique needs of the active, aging baby boom generation has yet to be met. As these boomers age and go through life changes, libraries should be a place where they are able to learn and interact at any stage in life but not be made to feel unwelcome.

3. Briefly describe the outcome that is expected should the idea be funded. In other words, how will we know if the project has been successful and has achieved its goals? (limit your response to approximately ½ page):

Intended outcome 1:

Boomers will demonstrate an increased awareness of the role that libraries can play as a resource for learning more about the issues they are facing.

Measurable indicator:

%/# of boomers that turn to their libraries for information & resources regarding the following areas of learning:

- Finances, including retirement
- Health
- Intergenerational and family issues, "sandwich generation"
- Recreation
- Lifelong learning

Intended outcome 2:

Public library staff will increase collaboration with community organizations that serve boomers

Measurable indicator:

%/# of public library staff who communicate several times/year with community organizations that serve boomers

## General Information

Which library types are intended as the primary beneficiaries of this project? (check all that apply)

- Academic (private and public two-year and four-year academic institutions)  
 Public (libraries organized under RCW 27.12)  
 School (private and public K-12 schools)  
 Special (business and industry, law, medical, other government, tribal, other)  
If other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

The intended beneficiaries of the project? (check the primary beneficiary)

- Library staff  
 Library users or potential library users  
 A specific group of staff or users, or a potential user group. Name the target beneficiaries(s): boomers, i.e., active older adults  
(e.g., children, adults, disadvantaged, remote access library users, unserved community members, reference staff, IT staff, students)

The activities needed to implement this project are envisioned to include (check all that apply):

- User training  
 Staff training  
 Grants  
 Development of best practices  
 Demonstration of emerging technology or practices  
 Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Examples of grants that could support active older adults:

- Library as "Transition Center." Library partners with a local community volunteer center to help match baby boomers' interests to volunteer opportunities in the neighborhood.
- Library recruits active older adults to "read a loud" for homebound or nursing home residents.
- Library recruits and organizes local oral history or veterans' project.
- Library sponsors programs and events. Partners with local community resources and experts to present topics such as "Where'd I leave my keys?" memory enhancement exercises, "Never too late" pre- and post-retirement finances, "Parenting a parent" sandwich generation issues, etc.
- Library host events like a "Reader's Roundtable," "Poetry Slam for the Next Greatest Generation," baby picture contest.
- Library can plan and provide adaptive technologies for changing needs.

Considering the outcome desired, how long should the project continue? 2-3 years  
(Note that most projects are from one year to four years in length.)