

# Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund

## Keystone Grant for Public Library Facilities: General Guidelines

---

*July 2021*



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)



## **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**

Tom Wolf, Governor

### **Department of Education**

Noe Ortega, Secretary

### **Office of Commonwealth Libraries**

Susan Banks, Acting Deputy Secretary

### **Bureau of Library Development**

Heather Sharpe, Acting Director

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, [sex] gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, gender identity or expression, AIDS or HIV status, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with State Law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and with Federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Pennsylvania Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies:

#### **For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in Employment:**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Equal Employment Opportunity Representative  
Bureau of Human Resources  
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-5446

#### **For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in All Other Pennsylvania Department of Education Programs and Activities:**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
School Services Unit Director  
333 Market Street, 5th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-3750, Fax: (717) 783-6802

If you have any questions about this publication or for additional copies, contact:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Library Development | Office of Commonwealth Libraries  
333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Voice: (717) 783-5747, Fax: (717) 772-0044  
[www.statelibrary.pa.gov/Libraries/Subsidies-and-Grants](http://www.statelibrary.pa.gov/Libraries/Subsidies-and-Grants)

All Media Requests/Inquiries: Contact the Office of Press & Communications at (717) 783-9802

**Contents**

Keystone Grant 2021..... 4

Source of Grant Funds..... 4

Matching Requirements ..... 4

Eligible Applicants..... 4

    Sponsoring Municipality..... 4

    Sponsoring School District..... 5

    Shared Facilities..... 5

Eligible Project Types..... 5

    Examples of Eligible Projects: ..... 5

Ineligible project costs:..... 6

Application Evaluation Criteria ..... 6

    1. Keystone Priorities ..... 6

    2. Impact ..... 7

    3. Budget..... 7

    4. Need ..... 7

    5. Readiness ..... 7

    6. Project Planning ..... 7

Application Procedures ..... 7

    Application..... 7

    Review of Applications ..... 8

    Post-Award Procedures..... 8

    Contract..... 8

    Bid Specifications and the Competitive Process ..... 8

    Project Sign/News Releases ..... 8

    Reporting and Payment..... 9

    General Information..... 9

## **Keystone Grant 2021**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Office of Commonwealth Libraries is accepting applications from eligible applicants for grants to improve the physical facilities of state-aided public libraries.

- Grants may be requested up to a maximum of \$750,000.
- There is no minimum amount that may be requested.
- Grant amounts may not exceed 50 percent of the total project cost.
- Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis by PDE and guided by an assessment of the applicant's needs, funding priorities, and grant award criteria.
- Grant payments will be made on a reimbursement basis.

All applications must be submitted via the eGrants platform no later than midnight of October 29, 2021. Late applications and incomplete applications will not be considered.

## **Source of Grant Funds**

State grants for library facilities are available through the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund and are administered by PDE.

## **Matching Requirements**

Keystone Grants must be matched dollar-for-dollar. Matching funds may include cash and in-kind contributions, federal funds, and other state funds. Documentation of the matching funds must be clearly identified in the application. Any special conditions attached to these funds must be explained. Carefully read the program regulations (22 Pa Code § Chapter 124 - Grants for Public Library Facilities) for additional information concerning matching funds. Sufficient funds to complete the entire project must be documented and available at the time of application.

## **Eligible Applicants**

Joint grant applications are required. The sponsoring municipality and the board of the state-aided public library must submit an application developed cooperatively by both entities and with the approval of both their governing bodies.

## **Sponsoring Municipality**

Keystone Grant applications will be accepted from municipalities, defined as: "Any county, city, borough, incorporated town, township, home rule municipality or any official agency created by the fore-going units of government under the laws of this Commonwealth" (22 Pa Code § 142.1). PDE will accept applications from Councils of Governments (COG) and authorities.

However, an application from a COG or an authority must be approved by the participating local governing bodies of the COG or authority.

Libraries that are organized as authorities must have one of the participating local governing bodies of the authority act as the sponsoring municipality and applicant.

To be eligible to apply for a Keystone Grant, a municipality must sponsor a public library. The municipality, alone or in cooperation with other municipalities, must make appropriations out of current revenue or out of monies raised by the levy of special taxes to establish and/or maintain a public library. The municipality may directly provide the service by including the public library within the municipal government structure or may delegate responsibility for public library service to a board of directors or to a nonprofit corporation.

### **Sponsoring School District**

Some Pennsylvania public libraries are supported by school districts. The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Act does not permit school districts to apply directly for grants. When a state-aided public library is sponsored by a school district, a municipality that is located (in whole or in part) in that school district may apply for a grant on behalf of that school district for that public library. In this case, the application must be approved by governing bodies of both the school district and the municipality.

### **Shared Facilities**

In the case of shared facilities, Keystone Grants and related matching funds may pay only for the portion of the building to be used as a state-aided public library. The application should make very clear the portion of the project directly affecting the library and the percentage of total project costs directly supporting the project as it affects the library.

### **Eligible Project Types**

- **Planning** – Master site development plans, feasibility studies, maintenance, management plans, and other plans and documents, including long-range plans for the allocation of grants, useful to municipalities and state agencies in the planning, development, operation, protection and management of their public library facilities and programs.
- **Acquisition** – The purchase or lease with an option to purchase land or buildings for public library use.
- **Development** – New construction, improvement, alteration or renovation required for and compatible with the physical development, improvement of land or buildings for public library purposes.
- **Rehabilitation** – The improvement or restoration, excluding routine maintenance, of existing public library facilities.

### **Examples of Eligible Projects:**

- Construction of a new library building or expansion of an existing structure;
- Projects which make public library facilities accessible to persons with disabilities, such as Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible doors;

- Improvements to facilities, particularly where service to the general public is impeded, creating a public hazard or causing a hazard to the library collection. These projects may include: weatherization, roof repair, replacement doors, HVAC upgrades, gutter/downspouts, replacement windows, parking lots (if based on safety or accessibility), or lighting;
- Remodeling or renovation of existing buildings to demonstrably improve library service to the general public; and/or
- Projects supporting energy efficiency, including installation of efficient heating and air conditioning, window replacement, lighting upgrades, and other green building technologies or upgrades.

### **Ineligible Project Costs**

- Operating costs of a public library, including costs of purchasing books or other library materials, personnel costs and costs of routine maintenance;
- Costs of equipment or software, or both, to automate public library functions and catalogs unless the automation is part of the development or rehabilitation of a public library facility;
- Planning, acquisition, development or rehabilitation of facilities that are not public libraries;
- In the case of shared facilities, the grant and related matching funds may pay only for the portion of the facility to be used as a public library;
- Renovation and/or expansion of parking lots, storage areas, and staff work flow modifications; and
- Purchase of equipment or furniture.

### **Application Evaluation Criteria**

The following criteria are used to judge grant applications:

#### **1. Keystone Priorities**

The project meets one or more of the following priorities of the grant program:

- Energy efficient projects;
- ADA requirements;
- Non-routine maintenance or mechanical system upgrades;
- New building construction or additions, and/or interior renovation/remodeling, which provide additional space and/or demonstrably improve library service to the general public;
- The public library serves an area with a high unemployment rate, low personal income or low property value and meets the eligibility requirements for Equalization Aid by serving the most economically distressed communities in the state;
- The library has not received a Keystone Grant in the last five years;
- The library is located in a geographical area which has previously not received a Keystone Grant; and/or
- The library has demonstrated good library/municipal communication and grant management, including timely reports on past Keystone Grant projects.

## **2. Impact**

- The project improves the direct service to library users.

## **3. Budget**

- The total cost of the project is reasonable in relation to the anticipated results.

## **4. Need**

- The applicant demonstrates need for the project based on the library's goals and an analysis of the community's needs for and use of the library.
- The applicant demonstrates that the project cannot be realized without the Keystone Grant.

## **5. Readiness**

- The local matching and grant funds will be sufficient to complete the proposed project within a reasonable time frame, normally 18 months or less, with good cause shown for projects expected to take longer.
- The application demonstrates the applicant's readiness to proceed with project.

## **6. Project Planning**

- Adequate planning for the project is demonstrated, including an indication that the library board, system board (if a system member library), library director, district consultant librarian, and, if appropriate, an architect and library building consultant have been involved.
- The building plan reflects good library practices, facilitate public service and include the capability of using advanced information technology.

# **Application Procedures**

## **Application**

- An application is submitted by the municipality on behalf of the library.
- The application is completed and submitted electronically on the eGrants platform. You must follow instructions for filling out all required questions, and provide all required attachments.
- The PHMC review form should be submitted to PHMC as soon as possible following the links and instructions provided. This approval is a required element of the application and obtaining it may depend on the schedule of PHMC.
- To be considered for review, the complete application must be submitted no later than midnight of **October 29, 2021**.

## **Review of Applications**

Applications will be reviewed and ranked by a team of reviewers. Reviewers will judge applications according to the criteria outlined above and will score the application using a pre-established scoring rubric.

## **Post-Award Procedures**

Applicants are expected to be notified of the review outcome in March 2022.

## **Contract**

Applications, if approved, become part of a written contract between PDE's Office of Commonwealth Libraries and the grantee. The contract will include terms and conditions of the grant, the project budget, and the standard terms and conditions of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Funds granted must be expended solely for the stated purpose outlined in the application and in accordance with the terms of the project contract. Funds not expended shall be repaid to PDE's Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

## **Bid Specifications and the Competitive Process**

The project must be publicly advertised to ensure fair and equitable vendor participation. All local rules and procedures of the sponsoring municipality shall be followed for estimates, bid specifications, and the bidding process. Grantees should adhere to local bidding regulations and conduct a fair process through which a reasonable bid can be accepted. In order to speed up the grant process, bid specifications may be submitted with the application or any time thereafter. **Bid specifications must be submitted within 90 days after the contract start date.** All bid specifications must be approved by PDE's Office of Commonwealth Libraries before publicly advertising the project or announcing an invitation to bid.

## **Project Sign/News Releases**

During the project period, the grantee must display a sign at the project site identifying the project and stating:

“This project is supported in part through a grant from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Pennsylvania Department of Education, with funds provided from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund.”

All news releases about the project shall contain a similar phrase acknowledging the assistance of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the source of the funds.



## **Reporting and Payment**

The fully executed contract will be sent to the municipality only. All reporting documentation will be made available to both the municipality and the library.

All grant recipients must submit **Quarterly Reports** beginning with the first full quarter after the fully executed date of the contract. The number of Quarterly Reports due will be dependent on the length of the project. At the discretion of the municipal grantee, it is permissible for these quarterly reports to be completed and submitted by the Library.

The grant award total may be divided into one or more benchmark reimbursement amounts. When eligible project expenditures have reached a reimbursable amount shown on the Commonwealth's **General Invoice**, the grantee may submit supporting invoices and a request for payment.

A **Final Financial Summary** must be submitted by the municipality within 90 days of the completion of the project, after all invoices and reimbursements have been received. Any late invoices not submitted with previously submitted forms must accompany the **Final Financial Summary**, which is a reconciliation of the project. The amount of Keystone Grant funds requested for reimbursement may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the project. Any grant funds exceeding 50 percent of the final total cost of the project must be returned to the Commonwealth.

## **General Information**

Grantees are required to keep separate bookkeeping records for the grant project in order to establish an audit trail. In the case of state funds, PDE reserves the right to audit the provision of services and the expenditure of funds. The grantee will provide the auditor selected by PDE with full and complete access to all records related to, and all persons and employees involved in, the performance of the contract.