A FEW POINTERS …

**Adequately describe the needs of your community** so that [the Council] will want to help you succeed.

**Describe the need with enough detail** so the reviewer gets an idea of the demographics of the library service area (see examples below). Sometimes the need can be the main weighing factor in the scoring process.

**COMMUNITY PROFILE 1:**
“ABC is the county seat of XYZ County and has a population of 1,530. XYZ County is located in the southwestern area of Alabama and has a population of 27,867. The ABC Public Library served an estimated 9,252 total number of people in 2013. Changes in technology and the reduction in the work force have devastated the economy of the county, leaving the county with an unemployment rate of 10% and a poverty rate of 28.9%. Nearly 65% of the public school students receive free lunches. With the median income for ABC being $22,778 and about half of the county’s population not having Internet access at home, patrons rely on the library to provide this service. In 2013 the library recorded 4,338 computer uses on eight public workstations. The library is located less than one block from XYZ County High School making for easy access for students. After school about 56% of the students come to the library to do work on computers. We have an estimated 22% of job seekers applying on-line for jobs and or certificates for their work.”

**COMMUNITY PROFILE 2:**
“According to “Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries” (2010), nearly 32% (77 million) of Americans accessed the Internet via a library computer in the past year. Library Internet use is highest among “impoverished people and the working poor.” ABC Library is located in XYZ, AL. The population of XYZ is approximately 6,600 with more than 24% living below the poverty line. The library is located next to a Title 1 elementary school and within walking distance of the Housing Authority. Patrons from surrounding communities also access our computers regularly. The library experiences heavy computer use averaging around 1,000 computer logins monthly. We provide the sole point of access to computers and the Internet for many patrons who cannot afford a computer or monthly Internet charges.”

**COMMUNITY PROFILE 3:**
“ABC has a growing Hispanic community comprising 15% of the population. Members of the Latino community have difficulty operating in daily life because they do not speak English. English speaking residents also have communication difficulties with this community because they are unable to speak Spanish. Approximately 40% of the enrollment at the local elementary school is Latino. Language has proven to be a barrier for this community both for Spanish speakers as well as English speakers. In addition, ABC is becoming much more ethnically and culturally diverse and a number of different nationalities now reside in the area. Though Spanish is the predominant primary language of local ESL students, the XYZ County Board of Education lists twenty different languages used in ESL classrooms.”
Include a **population breakdown** of the targeted group(s) you wish to serve. (This step is critical for your application.)

- QuickFacts Alabama
- FactFinder Alabama
- CensusViewer
- Kids Count Data Center Alabama
- AL Free/Reduced Lunch

Have someone **proofread** the application and be sure to **check your math**. Numerous editing mistakes makes the application look rushed and not thoroughly thought out.

Make sure **all questions are answered** even if it seems a bit redundant.

**Include all information requested.** If directions are not followed at the application stage, chances are the grant will not be administered correctly.

Be **specific** regarding intended outcomes (i.e. how will the project make a difference in your community?). You may select **up to three** outcomes (i.e. “Improve ...”) from the choices given in question 2a. Be sure to refer to the definitions included in each category for guidance. Do not select more than three boxes.

The grant award process is highly competitive. Try to make your application **stand out** when compared with others in the same category.

If you are submitting an application for a project that had been denied previously, **be sure to include an explanation of why the project is still needed**.

**Have APLS staff review your draft application(s)** and make suggestions, if needed. We may be able to help you flesh out your community profile.
MARKETING YOUR PROJECT

It is essential that you spread the word regarding your project and what it can do for the community. Unfortunately, marketing and public relations costs can be a bit confusing when determining whether or not LSTA funds are eligible for these costs. Here’s a quick tip: Marketing and PR costs can be paid for with LSTA funds only when the costs are for the specific LSTA project. You cannot use LSTA to pay for “general” marketing of your library.

If you receive a grant, please acknowledge IMLS in any flyers, media spots, and newspaper articles. For example:

“This grant project was supported in part by Library Services and Technology (LSTA) funds awarded to the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).”

Refer to the IMLS GRANTEE COMMUNICATIONS KIT for more information.