

Libraries Without Borders US

Library-School Partnership Request for Proposal (RFP)

Enhancing library access for youth and families through their local schools

RFP Overview:

Libraries Without Borders US (LWB US) is growing its partnership base across the country in order to increase library access and usage for underserved youth and families! This initiative aims to enhance partnerships between local schools, school libraries, and public libraries.

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), LWB US will select five (5) public libraries or library systems with high levels of community need and a commitment to sustain successful efforts launched through the partnership.

Selected partners will receive technical assistance for community data collection and analysis, strategy and development for school-library partnerships, implementation support, ongoing evaluation, and sustainability planning. To nurture a successful partnership, LWB US will provide supplies and materials up to \$5,000 to support the implementation of school-library initiatives. Please note that *LWB US is not a grant funder*. We partner with public libraries and library systems in order to increase community access to and engagement with resources and offerings.

This work is funded through a generous grant from DEMAINE*, supporting nonprofits around the world to provide equal opportunities and access to health, education, and culture.

About Libraries Without Borders US:

LWB US is the American branch of the international nonprofit, *Bibliothèque Sans Frontières*. We expand access to essential information, educational opportunities, and critical resources to build stronger, more inclusive communities.

LWB US collaborates with public libraries and community organizations to expand their reach and use, catalyze community connections, and bridge critical resource gaps. Using data-driven outreach models and community engagement strategies, our partnerships help libraries sustainably reach new populations and create ongoing connections to information, education, and local resources.

We specialize in research and data analysis, community stakeholder engagement and asset mapping, staff and volunteer training, immersive community outreach, evaluation for continuous improvement, and sustainability planning. Leveraging data-driven insights from our quantitative and qualitative research, LWB US partners with library staff and leaders to make informed decisions, identify and implement solutions, capture learnings, and measure results.

LWB US has a long and successful record of providing tools, programs, technology, and expertise to expand the reach of libraries. With the support of DEMAINE*, we will leverage this experience to develop public library access points at local public schools, bridging the gap for families and students who are otherwise unaware or unable to access the available resources.

**DEMAINE is a donor advised fund administered by CAF America, a US Public Charity with EIN 43-1634280.*

Project Rational:

- Public libraries across the United States have long been places of refuge for underserved families and youth seeking resources for learning and entertainment.
- Libraries today are trusted spaces that provide critical information, educational opportunities, and community resources for families.
- Families and youth face barriers such as time, distance, or lack of awareness - often preventing them from accessing valuable library resources and services.
- By bringing the public library to school, we break down these barriers and build familiarity, increasing access for families and youth while increasing the likelihood of continued engagement with their local library.

Through this RFP, LWB US will partner with five public libraries to directly expand library access and usage for underserved families and youth. Bringing public libraries to schools is an opportunity to promote library offerings to youth and their families and to provide streamlined services and resources in a trusted community space.

Strategies and solutions supported through this RFP may include:

- Awareness-building campaigns and activities
- Targeted outreach through existing school communication channels, offerings, and events
- Creating access points at local schools or other community locations
- Promoting and offering library services and programming on-site in schools
- Facilitating resource and collection sharing (for teachers/school staff as well as students and families) between library and school systems.

LWB US is open to and interested in other ideas or opportunities proposed that will increase library access for underserved youth and families.

In addition to increasing access to books, internet, and technology through public school partnerships, we encourage libraries to use this partnership to increase the use of programs and community resources such as language and literacy classes, legal services or tax support, or additional educational and job training support.

Applicant Eligibility:

Applicants must be a Public Library or Public Library System (accessible by the general public and funded from public sources) operating within the United States.

Competitive partnership applicants will:

- Serve a community with a high representation of underserved population/s.
- Demonstrate a commitment to community engagement through existing outreach efforts.
- Have a relationship with local schools and/or a commitment from local school systems to engage through this partnership at the elementary, middle, and/or high school level.
- Have dedicated staff capacity to actively engage in this partnership.
- Indicate a commitment to sustaining and expanding successful efforts launched through this partnership.

Selected partners will commit to collecting and reporting on key metrics throughout the duration of the partnership, including but not limited to levels of outreach and community engagement, number of library card sign-ups amongst target populations, and collection use statistics.

Technical Assistance and Support Provided

LWB US will provide hands-on assistance to all partners throughout the partnership, including:

- Data collection and analysis of existing library utilization patterns and barriers to access
- Strategy and partnership development to optimize relationships between libraries, schools, and relevant community organizations
- Implementation support to create new pipelines of library awareness, access, and usage
- Ongoing evaluation of library access and usage
- Sustainability planning and library staff training for ongoing implementation

Funding Limitations:

This partnership covers up to \$5,000 to support the direct costs of establishing and enhancing outreach and access within their local school system. LWB US and partners will collectively determine appropriate use of funds. Funds will not support staffing or other indirect program costs. Please note that LWB US is not a grantor.

Application Process & Timeline:

Partnership applications will be accepted through August 31, 2025 via this [Library-School Application Form](#).

Late applications will not be considered for this partnership opportunity.

LWB US will review applicants and conduct finalist interviews in early August with partnership determinations anticipated later that month.

The project period will span the 2025-2026 school year.

Contact Information:

Questions regarding this RFP can be directed to LWB US Program Manager Vanesha McGee at vanesha@librarieswithoutborders.us

This RFP and link to the application are also available on the LWB US website at www.librarieswithoutborders.us/welcome/library-school-partnership-rfp/.