

United for Libraries & Penguin Random House Grant Information Session 1

United for Libraries Contact Information

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Links & Resources

- Download the [slides](#) from this information session.
- Watch the [recording](#) of this information session.
- Watch the [recording](#) of “Starting a Friends of the Library Group.”
- Download the [slides](#) from “Starting a Friends of the Library Group.”
- Learn more about the [grants](#).

Links Shared in the Chat

- [United for Libraries Website](#)
- [United for Libraries Member Benefits](#)
- [United for Libraries Statewide Training Partners](#)
- [United for Libraries News](#)
- [United for Libraries Monthly eNewsletter](#)

Definition of Small and Rural Communities

- If your library meets both the *Small Community* **and** the *Rural Community* requirements below, your library is eligible to apply.
- If your library meets one requirement but not the other, your library is not eligible.

Small Community Requirement

If the population of the city/town in which your library is located is 25,000 or less, then your library meets the small community requirement.

NOTE: Use the actual population of the city/town in which your library is located, not the library’s service population. In many cases, when a library provides service to a surrounding area, the library’s service population is larger than the town population.

Rural Community Requirement

If the city/town in which your library is located is more than, or equal to, five miles from an urbanized area (defined as a town/city with a population of 25,000 or greater), then your library meets the rural community requirement. NOTE: This applies from border to border. The border of the city/town in which your library is located must be 5 or more miles away from the border of city/town with a population of more than 25,000.

Small & Rural Eligibility Q&A

Q. In the recording, you mentioned IMLS codes. Where do I find that information?

A. Please refer to the first section of this document, Definition of Small and Rural Communities. As we finalized the application, we simplified the process for determining eligibility.

Q. What do you mean by a small and rural community?

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) defines a rural community as one that is more than, or equal to, five miles from an urbanized area (defined as a town/city with a population of 25,000 or greater) and small communities to have a population of 25,000 or less.

Q. I'm from a suburban library serving a population of less than 25,000. Is my library eligible?

A. No. To be eligible, your library must meet both requirements for being a small and rural library. If your library is more than five miles from an urbanized area and serves a population of 25,000 or less, then you are eligible.

Q. I'm from an academic library serving a student population of less than 25,000 but we are located in a city. Is my library eligible for this opportunity?

A. No. To be eligible, academic libraries must be located in and serve a small and rural community that meets the IMLS definition above.

Q. My library service population is greater than 25,000; however, all of the communities we serve are small/rural. Are we eligible?

A. Many rural libraries serve communities in their surrounding area and thus may have a total service population that is greater than 25,000. As long as there are no towns/cities in or within 5 miles of your service area with a population of 25,000 or more, you would be eligible as a rural library.

Q. How do you measure the 5 or more miles portion of the rural definition?

A. This applies from border to border. The border of the city/town in which your library is located must be 5 or more miles away from the border of city/town with a population of more than 25,000.

Q. My library serves a small and rural community but is part of a consortium of libraries that serves more populated and/or less isolated areas as well. Is my library eligible?

A. Yes. If the applicant library serves a small and rural community, it is eligible.

Q. My library serves a small and rural community; however, due to the way libraries are organized in our state, we are part of a regional/county/state institution that serves larger areas. Is my library eligible?

A. Yes, even if libraries in your state are part of a single state-wide institution (e.g., Hawaii State Public Library System) or are organized into regional/county systems (e.g., South Carolina or Wyoming county libraries), as long as the library or branch that is applying serves a small and rural population, it is eligible.

Q. I work in a tribal library in a small and rural community. Is my library eligible to apply?

A. Yes. Tribal libraries serving small and rural communities are eligible to apply.

Friends Group Q&A

Q. Does my Friends group need their 501(c)(3) status to apply for this grant program?

A. No, a 501(c)(3) status is not needed, though United for Libraries does recommend that all Friends of the Library groups apply for 501(c)(3) status through the IRS.

Q. We are just starting a Friends of the Library group. Are we eligible to apply for this grant program?

A. Yes! A library that can demonstrate it is in the process of starting a Friends group is eligible to apply. On the application, you'll be asked to share what you have done and what your next steps are planned toward starting a Friends group.

Q. My library is a non-profit and we don't need a Friends of the Library group. Are we eligible to apply?

A. To be eligible to apply for this grant program, you must have an existing Friends group or be in the process of starting a Friends group. Friends of the Library groups exist to support any type of library, including public, school, academic, tribal, museum, special, non-profit, and prison libraries. Even non-profit libraries can benefit from having a separate group "friendraising," fundraising, and advocating for the library.

Additional Questions Asked During the Information Session

Q. Can I share the recording, slides, and/or this FAQ with others?

A. Yes, you can share!

Q. Is a library Foundation eligible to apply for this grant program?

A. No, this grant program is for Friends of the Library groups and libraries in the process of forming a Friends of the Library group.

Q. I'm a library Trustee/Board Member. Can I apply for the grant?

A. If your library has an existing Friends group, then the Friends group or library staff (on behalf of the Friends group) submits the application. If your library does not have a Friends group, you can start the process now. So long as a library can demonstrate it is in the process of starting a Friends group, then the library may apply. In either case, the application is submitted by the Friends group or by library staff.

Q. Will these grants be given annually?

A. As of right now, this is a standalone single-year grant program.

Q. Can the Friends group apply for a \$500 or \$1,000 grant *and* the library apply for the in-kind book donation grant?

A. You may apply for one of the three options - \$500, \$1,000, or \$500 in-kind book donation grant.

- If you apply for a \$1,000 grant and are not selected, your application may be considered for a \$500 grant.
- If you apply for a \$500 in-kind book donation grant and are not selected, your application will *not* be considered for a \$500 or \$1,000 grant.

Q. My library applied for a Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) grant. Can we also apply for this grant program?

A. Yes, your library's Friends group may apply for this grant program regardless of whether it or the library received an LTC grant.

Q: My regional library serves 4 counties with 9 branches. Can a branch from each county apply, or just one branch library in the regional system?

A: Yes, each branch library's Friends group can apply if (1) the branch has an existing Friends group or is in the process of starting one, *and* (2) the branch meets both the Rural and Small community requirements.

Q: Does the grant money have to be spent by July 1?

A: Grant recipients will be asked to submit a short report by July 1; however, grant funds do *not* have to be spent in full by July 1. If you have not spent all funds by July 1, you'll submit a short status report, and we'll follow up with you later when your project/program has wrapped up.

Q: How does the \$500 in-kind book donation grant work?

A: Books may be used for your collection or a project/program. If you do not have specific titles to request, the Penguin Random House team will work with you to curate selections based on your genre, audience, and language needs. Eligible titles can be found at [PRH.com](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com); title prices are listed on the site.

Program and Project Examples

During the information session, the following programs and/or projects were asked about in the chat. While each would be considered an eligible project and/or program, grant recipients will be selected based on the entirety of their application. As shared during the information session, the selected grant recipients will include diversity in geographic location, project/program, and library type.

The following would all be considered as eligible projects/programs:

- Starting and/or purchasing museum passes for a museum pass program.
- Starting a volunteer program such with platform costs, training/workshops, etc.
- Starting a youth advisory group, including food to entice young people to attend/participate!
- Author visits, performances, etc.
- See also the examples shared in the [slides](#).