

## **MVLS Community Engagement, Library Impact and Sustainability Project**

**Goal Statement:** Public Libraries are a highly valued resource in all MVLS communities. All segments of the population, including non-users, recognize that public library services increase the local quality of life, and consider public libraries a good investment of public funding. Communities support local public funding at an appropriate level in conformance with the statewide average of \$53.65 per capita.

**Proposed Activities** The project will include activities in four activity clusters, identified as A - D below.

- A. Community Engagement. All participating MVLS libraries use surveys and community listening sessions to gather information on community needs and aspirations, and on perceptions of the library. MVLS provides guidance and access to consultants, and pays direct community engagement costs. Libraries may choose their own consultants, with MVLS approval. This community engagement is a necessary precursor to the Service Expansion element of this project. Community engagement continues throughout the project. Particular emphasis is placed on engaging community segments that are not currently library users and supporters.
- B. Service Expansion. Every participating library develops an expanded or enhanced service in a visible and newsworthy manner by implementing a system-developed project or a project of their own design that has been approved by MVLS. All activities will be evaluated with Outcome Based Evaluation using the ALA Project Outcome or a similar model. Libraries will receive either funding or services from MVLS, with amounts based on library size.
- C. Communicating Impact. Each participating library will develop a communications plan for educating their local public on library services and impact. This will include additional community engagement and targeting of non-users.
- D. Ongoing Sustainability. All participating libraries work with MVLS to develop a detailed plan for ongoing sustainability for their chosen project as outlined in Project Structure below. In addition, every participating library, working with MVLS using the Community Engagement activities above, develops a 10-year plan for increasing their budget to the statewide average of approximately \$50 per capita.

**Project Structure & Timeline** This general timeline may be altered in specific cases. For example, a library may progress on to year 2 activities before 2018, and libraries that wish to pursue activities more in line with activities C. and D. will be able to do so before 2018 or 2019.

- Year 1 (2017)
  - MVLS holds workshops on Community Engagement and Strategic Planning
  - MVLS assists every library (up to 3 SCP branches) with community engagement and strategic planning, providing surveys, focus group moderators and funding for PR and supplies
  - Each library produces a strategic plan that identifies targeted unserved populations and new service goals

- MVLS works with each library to develop a budget for these activities that includes administrative and in-kind costs. MVLS will pay all costs involved in producing and compiling surveys and listening session input and results. Each library must document a minimum of 10% of the MVLS costs in administrative or in-kind costs
- Year 2 (2018)
  - MVLS provides workshops on reaching unserved audiences, customer service and outcome based evaluation
  - MVLS works with each library to develop a project to provide services to the targeted unserved audience, and provides other identified new services
  - MVLS will allocate funding to each library based on the fees that they pay for automation services. Libraries will be eligible for up to 25% of their annual JA fees to implement the new service project
  - MVLS works with each library to develop a budget for this new project, including administrative and in-kind costs. MVLS will pay up to 80% of the cost, up to the amount identified through the JA fee formula identified above
  - Each project will include outcome based evaluation using the ALA Project Outcome or a similar approved evaluation method and continuing community engagement component
  - Each library develops a communications plan designed to share information with the community concerning library services and the project
  - Every participating library works with MVLS to develop a sustainability plan for the project
- Year 3 (2019)
  - MVLS provides workshops on library advocacy, increasing local public funding and communicating impact
  - Projects continue with some alteration based on year 2 evaluation results
  - MVLS continues to support projects, but at a reduced level with the MVLS share of the overall project budget at up to 60% of project budget and up to 15% of the library's JA fees.
  - Year 2 Communicating Impact activities are continued
  - MVLS assists every participating library in developing a 10 year plan for
    - Continuing the community engagement, service, and impact aspects of this project
    - Reaching sustainable funding at a level consistent with the NYS average
    - Holding an annual public budget vote

## Graphic Illustration of Project Goals

The goal of this project is for every MVLS library to become a thriving library - a library that is:

- engaged with and valued by its community
- communicating its impact
- funded and used at rates consistent with Capital District and NYS averages
- Sustainable for the foreseeable future

MVLS assists libraries in working toward those goals by helping libraries get on the Thriving Library Drive Wheel

