

# Penguin Random House & ARSL Grants for Small, Rural Libraries FAQ's

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Have a question that you don't see here? Email the ARSL Office at [info@arsl.org](mailto:info@arsl.org).

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### Q. How long will the application take me to fill out?

A. We can't give you an exact time, because it depends on a few factors, but we would estimate 30 minutes to an hour. If that sounds like a lot, please don't let it dissuade you! In that estimation we are including the time to plan your project, review the questions, gather any necessary details, and think about and write your responses. When they read your proposal, our reviewers will want to get to know about your community, your plans, and how this funding and training will make a difference.

### Q. Where can I find general grant writing support?

A. For tips on writing a competitive grant, watch the Programming Librarian webinars below:

- [Grant Writing 101](#)
- [Pre-Application Webinar for Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries](#)

You can also check out the [Budget & Funding Resources](#) from WebJunction.

### Q. May I preview the grant application before completing it?

A. Yes. You may download the [Monetary Grant Application](#) and the [In-Kind Grant Application](#) for reference.

\*Note: the preview applications were created using the 2022-23 grant application. The dates on the preview applications reflect that grant cycle, but the questions are unchanged for the 2023-24 grant cycle.

### Q. May applications be submitted by email, mail, or fax?

A. No. Applications must be [submitted online](#) by 5:00 pm (ET) on Friday, December 15, 2023. Applications that are late or incomplete will not be reviewed.

### Q. May I submit for both in-kind and monetary grants?

A. No. Only one application form may be submitted per organization for *either* a monetary *or* in-kind grant. If your in-kind grant cannot be fulfilled as submitted by the collection development team at PRH it will be converted to a monetary ask and assessed for potential fulfillment that way.

### Q. Are there any ineligible expenses for the grant funds?

A. Yes. Grant funds may not be used to support indirect costs (e.g. general library administrative expenses) or as donations to other organizations. In-Kind Donation Grants cannot be used to support digital collections (ebooks or downloadable audiobooks). Unless PRH determines they are unable to meet the applicant's collection development needs through in-kind donations, monetary donations cannot be used in support of collection development projects for non-digital collections.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Q. What types of libraries are eligible?**

A. This opportunity is open to any type of library in the U.S. that serves a small, rural community(ies) in all 50 US states, US territories, and the District of Columbia.

### **Q. I received a grant as part of the 2021-22 PRH/ARSL Small & Rural Libraries Grants. Am I eligible to receive funding through this grant?**

A. Yes. Grant awards from prior funding rounds in the PRH/ARSL grants program will not impact your eligibility for the current grant.

### **Q. What do you mean by a small, rural community?**

A. The Institute for 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. This round of grant funding is available to libraries that meet *both* of these parameters.

### **Q. How do I prove my library serves a small, rural community?**

A. We are not requiring proof of service area size, population, or distance from an urbanized area as part of this grant. We trust our applicants to apply in good faith based on your knowledge of your community.

### **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. In order to be eligible, academic libraries must be located in and serve a small, 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 small, rural library.

**Q. My library serves a small, 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/rural community it is eligible.

**Q. My library serves a small/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 or are organized into regional/county systems, as long as the library or branch that is applying serves a small/rural population, it would be eligible.

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

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

**Q. Are non-accredited libraries allowed to apply?**

A. Yes. Non-accredited libraries (e.g.: volunteer-run libraries) are allowed to apply.

**Q. Do libraries need to be registered 501(c)3 organizations to apply?**

A. No, 501(c)3 status is not a requirement for eligibility.

**Q. Do libraries need to be members of the Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL) to apply?**

A. No, ARSL membership is not a requirement for eligibility.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

**Q. How many grants will be awarded?**

A. Up to 25 \$1,000 grants may be awarded.

**Q. How will I be notified about the status of my application?**

A. You will receive a confirmation email as soon as your application is submitted. All applicants will be notified of their award status via email by March 8, 2024.

**Q. Can I edit my application after it has been submitted?**

A. No. Applications cannot be edited once they are submitted.

**Q. How will my library's proposal be reviewed?**

A. Proposals will be assessed by a panel of library workers serving small and rural communities, led by the ARSL Grants, Awards & Scholarships (GAS) Committee. The GAS Committee will make the final decisions based on peer reviewer feedback using a rubric designed to align with the application questions.

**Q. What are the reporting requirements for this grant?**

A. Grantees will be required to submit a short reporting form detailing the implementation and impacts of their grant-funded project. A link to the form will be provided with the notification of award for successful applicants.

**Q. We are anticipating leadership turnover during the grant project. How do we account for that on our application?**

A. If you know your library will undergo a leadership change (e.g. retirement, maternity leave) during the grant project you should indicate the *current* individual authorized to enter into contracts and/or make purchasing decisions on behalf of your organization. If possible, we recommend using an email address that will continue to be checked after the outgoing leader's departure, like a general library@ or director@ address, rather than one tied to a specific individual. This will ensure continuity of communication between your library and the ARSL Office. When the leadership change occurs you will need to notify the ARSL Office of that change, and we will update our records accordingly.

**Q. Are grantees required to submit receipts or proofs of purchase for grant-funded materials?**

A. No, receipts or proofs of purchase are not a requirement of this grant.