



MEMO

To: Network Advisory Council
From: Suzanne Reymer, Statewide Consulting Librarian and Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting & Learning Librarian
Subject: Tech Support Recommendations
Date: March 4, 2024

MSL staff led conversations at each spring 2023 federation meeting about the technical support needs of libraries. Staff also surveyed librarians and held one-on-one conversations with library directors.

A review of the themes reveals the following needs:

- **Centralized State-Level IT Support:** Consider hiring or contracting with a state-level IT professional or team who can provide support, advice, and training to libraries across the state. This would be especially beneficial for smaller libraries that lack the resources for dedicated IT staff.
- **Cooperative Group Purchasing:** Create a system for cooperative group purchasing of technology equipment and software. This can help libraries save costs by leveraging bulk purchasing power.
- **Technology Training:** Offer technology training sessions for library staff, focusing on common issues and tools used in libraries. Webinars and online courses could be a cost-effective way to provide training.
- **Website Development:** Invest in website development resources to improve library websites, making them more user-friendly and accessible.

MSL staff met with Sean Anderson, Agency Procurement Officers, and determined that we may be able to use the State's Procurement contracts to help meet some of these needs.

Centralized IT Support/Website Development

- The State Procurement Bureau has a master IT contract that includes firms that offer technical support and website assistance. The State Library, with the assistance of the State Procurement Bureau, could develop a Contractor Engagement Proposal (CEP). Libraries and MSL staff would determine what services are needed, the cost libraries can bear, and the evaluation criteria. This information would be sent to the IT vendors that are part of the master IT contract. They would bid on the services. A group of librarians and MSL staff would evaluate the responses and select potential vendors.

Cooperative Group Purchasing

- The State Procurement Bureau offers a cooperative purchasing agreement where local government units can receive the same hardware and software pricing as the state.



Libraries would need their local government unit (city or county) to create an MOU with the state. Libraries would be able to purchase directly from the state marketplace once their local government has an MOU in place.

Technology Training

- MSL staff have limited capacity for addressing this need. We may be able to include it in a list of desired services. We may also want to budget funds for either an online learning service or a contracted trainer to assist libraries. MSL staff would need assistance identifying which training needs exist. We will continue to share links to free technology training resources.

Questions for the NAC

1. Which of these items would you like MSL staff to pursue in FY25?
2. If the NAC is interested in trying any of these ideas, are there volunteers to assist MSL staff with the development of a list of desired services, evaluation criteria, and review of a plan for implementing this project?