



# Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) State Library – CNMISL

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## LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-2027

For submission to the  
Institute of Museum and Library Services

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# INTRODUCTION

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) authorizes state program grants to certified state library administrative agencies (SLAAs). In order to be eligible for funding, SLAAs must submit a Five-Year Plan for implementation that is consistent with the stated purposes of LSTA and with the priorities of the “Grants to States” program. Each year, SLAAs throughout the nation carry out more than 1,500 projects that are supported by this program. Funds are distributed to the states, territories, and republics in Compacts of Free Association with the United States, and are monitored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Following are purposes of LSTA and the priorities<sup>1</sup> of the Grants to States program.

## Purposes of LSTA (20 U.S.C. § 9121)

1. Enhance coordination among Federal programs that relate to library, education, and information services;
2. Promote continuous improvement in library services in all types of libraries in order to better serve the people of the United States;
3. Facilitate access to resources in all types of libraries for the purpose of cultivating an educated and informed citizenry;
4. Encourage resource sharing among all types of libraries for the purpose of achieving economical and efficient delivery of library services to the public;
5. Promote literacy, education, and lifelong learning, including by building learning partnerships with school libraries in our Nation’s schools, including tribal schools, and developing resources, capabilities, and programs in support of State, tribal, and local efforts to offer a well-rounded educational experience to all students;
6. Enable libraries to develop services that meet the needs of communities throughout the Nation, including people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers;
7. Enable libraries to serve as anchor institutions to support community revitalization through enhancing and expanding the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, economic and business development, critical thinking skills, health information, digital literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills, and new and emerging technology;
8. Enhance the skills of the current library workforce and recruit future professionals, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services;
9. Ensure the preservation of knowledge and library collections in all formats and enable libraries to serve their communities during disasters;
10. Enhance the role of libraries within the information infrastructure of the United States in order to support research, education, and innovation;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ims.gov/grants/grants-state/purposes-and-priorities-lsta>

11. Promote library services that provide users with access to information through national, State, local, regional, and international collaborations and networks; and
12. Encourage, support, and disseminate model programs of library and museum collaboration.

## Grants to States (20 U.S.C. § 9141) Priorities

1. Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats (including new and emerging technology), in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and financial literacy and other types of literacy skills;
2. Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improved coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services;
3. (A) Provide training and professional development, including continuing education, to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership, and advance the delivery of library and information services; and (B) Enhance efforts to recruit future professionals, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services;
4. Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and community-based organizations;
5. Target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills;
6. Target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 9902(2) of title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved;
7. Develop library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international collaborations and networks; and
8. Carry out other activities consistent with the purposes set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 9121, as described in the State library administrative agency's plan.

The following document presents the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMI) FFY 2023-2027 LSTA Plan for fulfilling the requirements of the LSTA Grants to States program. It summarizes the needs of CNMI's library as well as the library and information needs of CNMI residents. These needs have been identified through an examination of a variety of factors including demographic data, relevant societal indicators, and findings and insights from the recently completed evaluation of CNMI State Library's (CNMISL) implementation of its 2018-2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan. The new 2023-2027 LSTA Five-Year Plan sets forth goals and identifies anticipated projects designed to address these needs.

# ENTERING THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Where America’s Day begins, the Northern Maria Islands is a U.S. commonwealth in the Pacific Ocean with its capital on Saipan, which is the largest island. Saipan is where the main library facility is located, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library (JKPL).

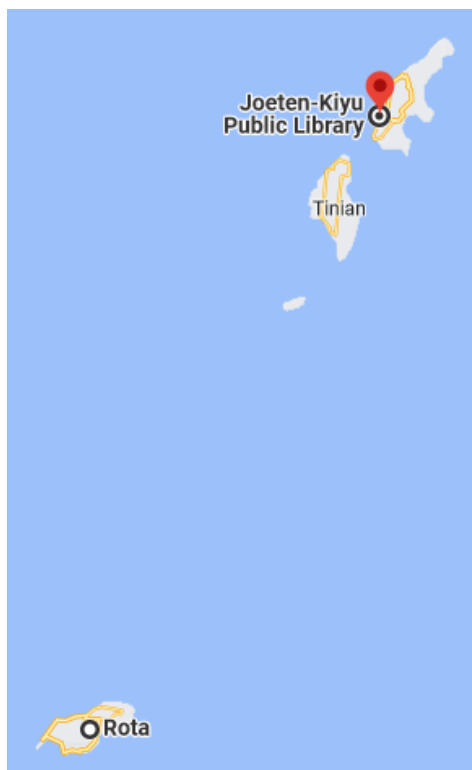
## MISSION STATEMENT

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is the CNMISL information hub, preserving CNMI’s cultural heritage and connecting people, libraries and government to the resources and tools they need to succeed and to build a strong community.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### General Demographic Characteristics

About the data



*Much of the data used in this report is from the U.S. Census; unfortunately, the majority of the census materials and reports that a demographic overview might rely on have not yet been calculated for 2020, and so there are several important instances where the 2010 data is still used. This has also meant that this demographic report relies more heavily on other available sources, such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education publications, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration publications, the CNMI Office of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation, and the CNMI Bureau of Commerce reports. Additionally, the range of years cited for the compilation of this report is widely varied, with 2010, 2017, 2019, and 2020 all being cited. Importantly the full impact of two major typhoons followed by the COVID-19 pandemic is not captured in any currently available data resources. A complete list of references is also included.*

## Population

The 2020 population of the Northern Mariana Islands was 47,329 as of April 1st, 2022. This represents a 12.2% decrease from the 2010 Census population of 53,883. The housing unit count decreased similarly, from 20,850 units in 2010 to 18,290 units in 2020, or a 12.3% decrease.<sup>2</sup>

## Race/Ethnicity

Although not yet calculated for 2020, as of 2010, the residents of CNMI identify as Filipino (35.3%), Chinese (6.8%), Korean (4.2%) or other Asian (3.7%), Chamorro (23.9%), Carolinian (4.6%), other Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (6.4%), two or more ethnicities or races (12.7%), and other (2.5%).<sup>3</sup>

## Geography/Distribution

Fourteen islands make up the CNMI, with a total land area of 183.5 square miles which is spread out over 264,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean.<sup>4</sup> The Northern Mariana Islands fourteen islands, along with Guam to the south, make up the Mariana Archipelago. The southern islands are limestone with level terraces and coral reefs, while the northern islands are volcanic, and tend to be uninhabited or only very lightly populated. The Mariana Trench, located to the east, is the deepest point in the world's oceans. CNMI is approximately 3,700 miles west of Hawaii, 1,300 miles from Japan, and 125 miles north of Guam. The CNMI's population lives primarily on three islands; Saipan is the largest and most populated island, with 43,385 (of 47,329 in 2020) residents. In addition to accounting for the majority of the population, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota account for 65% of CNMI's total land area, and almost all of the economic activity and energy use. Saipan is 12.5 miles long and 5.5 miles wide. The other two populated islands are Tinian and Rota, with 2,044 and 1,893 residing on these two islands respectively. The other nine northern islands are very sparsely populated and have no infrastructure services.<sup>5</sup>

## Age

As of 2020, approximately 37% of the population is between 25-54 years old (male 9,934/female 9,325), with 0-14 years olds making up the next largest percentage of the population, at 25% (male 6,937/female 5,934). 16% of the population is between 15-and 24 years old (male 4,518/female 3,857), followed closely by the 55-64 year old group which

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/dec/2020-commonwealth-northern-mariana-islands.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/northern-mariana-islands/#people-and-society>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.coris.noaa.gov/portals/cnmi.html>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: HRSA Maternal and Child Health "Overview of the State - Northern Mariana Islands - 2020"

<https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/Overview/ad48c169-b39e-4883-84a0-ea7e5bcf9695> and "Table 2. 2020 Census Population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands: Municipality and Village" <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/dec/2020-commonwealth-northern-mariana-islands.html>

comprises 14% of the population (male 3,921/female 3,286). Those 65 years and over make up the smallest percentage of the remaining population at 7% (male 1,988/female 1,733).<sup>6</sup>

## Language

English, Chamorro, and Carolinian are the official languages of the CNMI, however there are many languages spoken. Philippine languages make up almost 33% of languages spoken, followed by Chamorro (24.1%), English (17%), other Pacific island languages (10.1%, including Carolinian), Chinese (6.8 %), and other Asian languages (7.3%).

## Education

In 2017, almost half (47.5%) of the population 25 years and older had a high school diploma or GED. Over twenty percent (20.2%) had some college or an associate's degree. Close to seventeen percent (16.9%) of the population over 25 years old had less than a high school diploma, 13.4% had a bachelor's degree, and those with a master's degree and beyond totaled 2.1%.<sup>7</sup>

Most elementary students in CNMI are not reading at grade level or higher, according to standardized assessments. In 2015, only 17 percent of grade 3 students in the CNMI Public School System scored at or above ACT Aspire Reading assessment (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Office of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation, 2015). THE CNMI Public School System leadership prioritized and made substantial investment in teacher professional development and hiring of literacy coaches to provide continuous support and by 2019 students meeting reading proficiency rates had risen substantially, to 24%. However the proficiency rates varied widely—from 10 to 46% (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Office of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation, 2019a).<sup>8</sup>

## Internet Access

As of 2016 it was estimated that CNMI had approximately 17,418 internet users, reaching approximately 31% of its population.<sup>9</sup> The wifi devices and mobile hotspots made available through the public school system and through the CNMISL system, via bookmobile, are critical to the residents and to remote learning and working needs across the islands.

## Economy

Tourism is the main economic activity in the Northern Mariana Islands, with a focus on the natural beauty of the islands and the surrounding ocean. Subsistence farming and fishing is practiced extensively by many islanders to supplement their income and there are a number of commercial crops as well, including taro, cassava, yams, breadfruit, and bananas.<sup>10</sup> The CNMI

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/northern-mariana-islands/#people-and-society>

<sup>7</sup> <https://ver1.cnmicommerce.com/lfp-2017-by-education-level/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL\\_2021116.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2021116.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/northern-mariana-islands/#communications>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.pacificcrisis.org/places/commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-islands/>

benefits from subsidies and development assistance from the federal government. U.S. air and naval military stations also contribute to the population and local economy. Additionally, the garment industry was formerly a substantial component of the Northern Marianas economy, but a US minimum wage law in 2007 resulted in stepped increases, eventually matching the U.S. federal wage, combined with the lifting of World Trade Organization restrictions on Chinese imports to the US, put CNMI-based trade under pressure, and led to a number of closures -- therefore this is no longer a substantial source of income.<sup>11</sup>

## Equity

With the majority of CNMI's population on Saipan, people living in the less populated spaces do not have as ready access to library services. Additionally, the lack of consistent internet and technology access creates a huge barrier for CNMI households accessing library services. However, the CNMISL system now comprises four locations, serving all of the major population centers, as well as a bookmobile and Technology Mobile Express in Saipan, to help reach groups not as easily served by the physical locations and without wifi access.

## Climate Change

CNMI is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures and stronger and more frequent tropical storms and typhoons. The sea level rise has a huge impact on islands, threatening infrastructure, such as houses, businesses, and transportation, and ecosystems. More frequent and intense coastal flooding and erosion are anticipated in the coming years. This is compounded by warming oceans, which are causing coral bleaching that is already widespread and severe. Extensive coral loss is a very real possibility, which could be very difficult for the local economy which sees tens of millions of tourist dollars annually.<sup>12</sup> Because large-scale tourism is focused on the natural beauty of the Northern Mariana Islands, small changes in climate can have major impacts, the coral bleaching one example of this threat. Landfills to support the increasing population have resulted in some groundwater contamination in Saipan, which can contribute to disease and have conflicted with environmental conservation and endangered species protection.<sup>13</sup>

## Library Characteristics

### Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands State Library

Three of the fourteen islands have a library presence in the Northern Mariana Islands. The CNMI State Library (CNMISL) is the only public library system in the CNMI and is also the designated SLAA. CNMISL reports directly to the Commonwealth Library Council (CLC), which is appointed by the CNMI Governor. CNMISL oversees the technical aspects of library operations for the main library facility in Saipan (JKPL) and the new Fernando M. Benavente

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Northern-Mariana-Islands/Economy>

<sup>12</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/climate-change-in-cnmi-pirca-2021-low-res.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.pacificcrisis.org/places/commonwealth-of-the-northern-mariana-islands/>



Memorial Library on Saipan, as well as for the Antonio C. Atalig (ACA) Memorial Library on the island of Rota and the Tinian Public Library (TPL) on the island of Tinian, which are managed in collaboration with the respective mayors of Rota and Tinian municipalities. CNMISL employs 18 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff members, plus additional interns, and six Librarians across **four library buildings on three islands**, plus a bookmobile and a Technology Mobile Express, both of which operate on Saipan.

## GOALS OVERVIEW

Following is an outline summary of the Goals and Projects that CNMISL anticipates will be carried out with LSTA support using Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 - FFY 2027 funds.

### **GOAL 1 - Promote Literate CNMI**

- Project 1.1 - Literacies for 21st Century Skills
- Project 1.2 - Early Literacy
- Project 1.3 - Adult Literacy
- Project 1.4 - Community Engagement

### **GOAL 2 - Strengthen Institutional Capacity**

- Project 2.1 - Workforce Development
- Project 2.2 - Community Partner Development

### **GOAL 3 - Enhance and maintain CNMI Technology Infrastructure**

- Project 3.1 - Connectivity
- Project 3.2 - Technology Infrastructure and STEAM Support
- Project 3.3 - E-Content

### **GOAL 4 - Provide welcoming library environments**

- Project 4.1 - Facilities Planning and Assessment
- Project 4.2 - Disaster Planning

## GOALS

In compliance with the requirements of the 2010 Museum and Library Services Act as Amended, this document presents CNMISL's FFY 2023-2027 plan for fulfilling the objectives of the LSTA Grants to States program. However, the Plan is not limited to the scope of

projects, activities, and initiatives that will be carried out using Federal LSTA funds. Rather, the Plan is an integrated document that demonstrates how CNMISL will pursue its efforts to fulfill its mission using a myriad of funding streams ranging from local and federal revenues to non-governmental sources.

This Plan summarizes the needs of the CNMISL as well as the library and information needs of residents. These needs have been identified through an examination of a variety of factors including demographic data, relevant societal indicators, and findings and insights from the recently completed evaluation of CNMISL's implementation of its 2018-2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan. The new 2023-2027 LSTA Five-Year Plan sets forth goals and identifies anticipated projects designed to address these needs. The Plan identifies projects that are most likely to utilize federal funds.

## **GOAL 1. PROMOTE LITERATE CNMI**

Develop library services, programs, collections, and partnerships that promote learning, literacy, and community connection for residents of all ages, including underserved populations. Enhance the knowledge and skills of CNMI residents, and ensure cultural heritage resources and programming are made widely available.

### **IMLS Purposes and Priorities**

- (Priority 1) Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats (including new and emerging technology), in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, financial literacy, and other types of literacy information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, financial literacy, and other types of literacy.
- (Priority 4) Develop public and private partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and community-based organizations
- (Priority 5) Target library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills
- (Priority 6) Target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 9902(2) of title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved;
- (Purpose 7) Enable libraries to serve as anchor institutions to support community revitalization through enhancing and expanding the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, economic and business development, critical thinking skills, health information, digital

literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills, and new and emerging technology

### **IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area**

- Lifelong learning

### **IMLS Measuring Success Intents**

- Improve users' formal education
- Improve users' general knowledge and skills

### **Needs addressed:**

- In an end user survey conducted by the evaluators in fall 2021, 50% of respondents reported that they come to the library in order to improve their or their family's reading skills.
- In an end user survey in 2021, children's programming was the number one area in which respondents want the library to continue and expand services. In the library's 2018 community survey, 35% respondents reported coming to the library specifically for the children's summer reading programs. In a survey conducted in spring 2022 to determine patron needs, 28.2% of responses requested increased children's programming and 25.0% requested an increase in reading materials. Both surveys uncovered an interest in expanded children's tutoring and summer programming, as well as a need for more teen-specific programming.
- Over a fourth of CNMI residents are native Chamorro or Carolinian and nearly a third identify as Filipino; only 17% speak English as a first language. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the new Cultural Corner programming was widely popular, with patron requests for expansion of programming to teach residents about native culture and history.
- Community engagement and involvement in culturally relevant and lifelong learning programming further cements the library as a trusted space and anchor within the CNMI community, allowing the library to be both a catalyst for new opportunities and to serve in unexpected support roles, as needed. During the COVID-19 pandemic and in the aftermath of several typhoons, this trust allowed the library to play roles pivotal to community well-being, such as serving as a student meal distribution site during virtual learning, and in assisting with unemployment and pandemic assistance.

## **Project 1.1 Literacies for 21st Century Skills**

Develop library services, programs, and collections that promote essential literacies and 21st century skills, including health literacy, financial literacy, and digital literacy; **and connect residents to their history and culture by providing programming and collections that celebrate CNMI's heritage.**

### **Evaluation method**

- Track statistics on programs offered, including type of literacy
- Track attendance at programs
- When feasible, collect pre- and post- IMLS outcome surveys from participants
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to program participants to collect demographic information, satisfaction data, and better understand impact.

## **Project 1.2 Early Literacy**

Develop and support early and emergent literacy services and programs in the library.

### **Evaluation method**

- Track statistics on programs offered
- Track attendance at programs
- When feasible, collect pre- and post- IMLS outcome surveys from participants
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to program participants to collect demographic information, satisfaction data, and better understand impact.

## **Project 1.3 Adult Literacy**

Support formal and informal learning for adults through the development of adult literacy services and programs within the library.

### **Evaluation method**

- Track statistics on programs offered
- Track attendance at programs
- Pre- and post IMLS outcome surveys will be distributed to participants to identify baseline levels and track changes in outcome measures.
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to program participants to collect demographic information, satisfaction data, and better understand impact.

## **Project 1.4 Community Engagement**

Cement the role of the library as an anchor institution; develop and leverage community partnerships to maximize resources and services; **connect residents to their history and culture by providing programming and collections that celebrate CNMI's heritage; and** support and engage the community in innovative and creative ways through outreach and programming such as:

- bookmobile and Technology Express services
- summer programming on Rota
- flexible spaces for programs and activities
- cultural programming

- serving **underrepresented/minoritized** communities
- partner with Friends of the Library and Foundations in community engagement

### **Evaluation method**

- Track attendees, including demographics of attendees where possible, at programs.
- Track community partnerships and outcomes of partnerships.
- Pre- and post IMLS outcome surveys will be distributed to participants to identify baseline levels and track changes in outcome measures.
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to program participants to collect demographic information, satisfaction data, and better understand impact.

## **GOAL 2. STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

Library staff, volunteers, and community partners will be afforded professional development opportunities enabling them to provide exceptional library programs and services to all residents of CNMI.

### **IMLS Purposes and Priorities addressed by Goal 2**

- (Priority 3) (a) Provide training and professional development, including continuing education, to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership, and advance the delivery of library and information services, and (b) enhance efforts to recruit future professionals, including those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, to the field of library and information services.
- (Priority 2) Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improve coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6) for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services.

### **Primary IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area**

- Institutional Capacity

### **Primary Measuring Success Intents**

- Improve the library workforce
- Improve library operations

### **Needs addressed:**

- The majority of library staff do not have degrees in library science and a number of staff have only high school diplomas. The remote geographic location of CNMI combined with the time zone creates significant challenges to professional development for staff; making library-supported opportunities critical to staff's ability to provide efficient and effective customer service, and increase knowledge and skills.
- The library relies heavily on volunteers, in particular for early literacy initiatives, including the Summer Reading Program and storytime. Volunteers are often high school and

college students. Training opportunities allow volunteers to provide consistent services across the patron experience, and also serve to build a diverse pipeline of young people interested in the field of librarianship and library employment.

## **Project 2.1 Workforce Development**

Provide training and professional development opportunities to the library workforce to ensure staff have the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to provide high quality services to the community and to create a strong and innovative library workforce.

### **Evaluation method**

- Track all professional development opportunities in which staff participate
- Staff members will complete the pre- and post- IMLS-outcomes survey for each professional development opportunity
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to patrons that will include feedback on their interactions with staff and volunteers.

## **Project 2.2 Community Partner Development**

Maximize the skills of the library's network of community members serving as volunteers and supporting the library via partnerships by providing training and workshops to improve their ability to support the library as it offers high quality services and programs.

### **Evaluation method**

- Track statistics on the number of volunteers/partnerships
- Consistently survey volunteers/partners about their experiences working with the library; use the data to inform training and program improvement
- Provide pre- and post- IMLS outcome surveys for volunteer/partner who participate in trainings

## **GOAL 3. ENHANCE AND MAINTAIN CNMISL TECHNOLOGY**

All residents will have access to technology and assistance using technology to support individuals' needs for education, lifelong learning, and digital literacy skills.

### **IMLS Purposes and Priorities addressed by Goal 3**

- (Priority 2) Establish or enhance electronic and other linkages and improved coordination among and between libraries and entities, as described in 20 U.S.C. § 9134(b)(6), for the purpose of improving the quality of and access to library and information services;
- (Priority 1) Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats (including new and emerging technology), in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals' needs for

education, lifelong learning, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and financial literacy and other types of literacy skills

### **Primary IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area**

- Information Access
- Institutional Capacity

### **Primary Measuring Success Intents**

- Improve users' ability to discover information resources
- Improve users' ability to obtain and/or use information resources
- Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure

### **Needs addressed:**

- The library's provision of free, high-speed Internet computers is seen as an increasingly valued service by the community. According to the CIA World Factbook, only a third of residents in CNMI have home internet access, highlighting the critical nature of this service.
- The National Research Council concludes that learning experiences across informal environments such as libraries positively influence science learning in school, shape attitudes toward science, and expand interest in science-related occupations.
- In an end user survey conducted in 2021, the library found some of the lowest levels of patron satisfaction with accessing e-books.
- Survey and anecdotal feedback during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for easily accessible virtual library resources.

## **Project 3.1 Connectivity**

Develop and support libraries as local community hubs for broadband connectivity.

### **Evaluation method**

- Count of uses of public access machines
- Count of connections to library wifi network
- Count of mifi usage
- Data from patron satisfaction surveys on library internet connectivity and access

## **Project 3.2 Technology Infrastructure and STEAM Support**

Support existing and future technology infrastructure needs, including appropriate staffing; plan for cost-effective MakerSpace and STEAM programming services for children and teens that take advantage of supported learning technologies.

### **Evaluation method**

- Quantitative data collection on technology purchased and used
- Once every 3-5 years, the library will provide a more in-depth survey to program participants to collect demographic information, satisfaction data around technology infrastructure and STEAM support, and better understand impact.
- If STEAM programming services are implemented, track use and provide pre- and post-IMLS outcome surveys to gauge improvements in knowledge, skills, and abilities

### **Project 3.3 E-content**

Provide e-content (purchased, licensed, or digitized locally) to CNMISL users. Market digital collections resources to users, and ensure appropriate technologies (e.g. hardware, software, ,ils) for access are available at physical and remote locations.

#### **Evaluation method**

- Track statistics on usage of e-content
- Collect data from patron satisfaction surveys on e-resources

## **GOAL 4. PROVIDE WELCOMING LIBRARY ENVIRONMENTS**

All residents will have access to comfortable, welcoming, and safe library environments where programming supporting Goals 1, 2, and 3 can be offered.

#### **IMLS Purposes and Priorities addressed by Goal 4**

- (Purpose 7) Enable libraries to serve as anchor institutions to support community revitalization through enhancing and expanding the services and resources provided by libraries, including those services and resources relating to workforce development, economic and business development, critical thinking skills, health information, digital literacy skills, financial literacy and other types of literacy skills, and new and emerging technology
- (Purpose 9) Ensure the preservation of knowledge and library collections in all formats and enable libraries to serve their communities during disasters;
- (Purpose 6) Enable libraries to develop services that meet the needs of communities throughout the Nation, including people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, residents of rural and urban areas, Native Americans, military families, veterans, and caregivers

#### **Primary IMLS Measuring Success Focal Area**

- Institutional Capacity

#### **Primary Measuring Success Intents**

- Improve the library's physical and technological infrastructure

#### **Needs addressed:**



- The ability to respond effectively in disaster planning is critically important for the CNMISL as recent experiences have indicated and captured in the evaluation report.
- Ensuring well serviced library buildings while planning for needed changes in the library environment by effectively repurposing areas to support literacy, professional development and outreach, technology support, and STEAM/STEM learning among other needs is a critical area of development.

## **Project 4.1 Facilities Planning and Assessment**

The CNMI has buildings that require long term planning; facilities planning is often planned over a ten to twenty year period. Considerations should be given to the needs of the communities served; a vision for the future role of library buildings in delivering library services will need to be conceptualized to help CNMI plan for its physical building infrastructure.

### **Evaluation Method:**

- Review similar libraries in comparable communities and understand how they capture community needs in relation to the library environment
- Solicit input and engage community members to shape the vision for a long term facilities plan for the CNMI (master-plan)
- Complete a facilities assessment for each of the current buildings

## **Project 4.2 Disaster Planning**

Engage in disaster planning and risk assessments regularly to implement mitigation and preparedness strategies to limit the impact severity to CNMI during and following an emergency. Regularly examine the physical environment of the CNMI facilities to identify primary hazards, secondary hazards, and vulnerabilities for CNMI to have a good understanding of associated risks. Safe buildings ensure that both collections and people inside the buildings are also safe.

### **Evaluation Methods:**

- Review and document appropriate risk assessments for each library building
- Implement professional training in disaster planning that result in improvements in the documentation
- Address improvement needs in the condition of the library buildings
- Develop and update a disaster plan annually
- Review building specific risk assessments annually

# COORDINATION EFFORTS

The Plan’s narrative organizes all projects for which LSTA funding is anticipated under the IMLS Measuring Success Focal Areas and Intents. Additional crosswalk tables displaying these relationships in a graphic format can be found in APPENDIX B.

In addition, the following anticipated Projects will be coordinated with the other governmental entities listed below:

xxx

# EVALUATION PLAN

Because many of the projects envisioned under the 2023 – 2027 LSTA Plan are continuations of existing projects, the processes for the collection of some of the information and data necessary to measure success are already in place. However, additional efforts have been made to identify more effective ways to capture additional outcomes and to align ongoing project and activity assessment with the IMLS Measuring Success focal areas and intents. By structuring the Plan around the focal areas and intents, CNMISL has created a framework that will serve it well both throughout the implementation of the Plan and at the time of the next five-year evaluation. Details regarding the approach to evaluating each anticipated project is included in APPENDIX C.

CNMISL intends to review its progress toward meeting its stated goals and objectives on an annual basis with staff and the Library Board, from time to time as appropriate, with the stakeholders of specific projects and activities. If substantive changes to the Plan are necessary due to staffing capacity issues or other unforeseen circumstances, CNMISL will communicate with IMLS to determine whether an amendment to the Plan is needed. If the Plan is altered, evaluation methods and metrics will also be adjusted accordingly.

CNMISL intends to implement a holistic approach to evaluating implementation of its new Plan, relying not only on raw output data, but making a greater effort to incorporate feedback from sub-grantees and, to the extent possible, from end-users through pre and post-participation surveys.

# STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The ***CNMISL Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023 - 2027)*** is based on considerable input from the library community, from the independent evaluators who recently conducted CNMISL’s LSTA evaluation for 2018 - 2022, and from other

stakeholders. This includes both direct input gathered through personal interviews, surveys, group meetings, and extensive contact between the facilitators of the Plan and the CNMISL Library Director, as well as less direct feedback gleaned from an in-depth review of past State Program Reports (SPR) and relevant 2019 Public Libraries Survey (PLS) data.

On May 18th, 2021, CNMISL contracted with QualityMetrics LLC to assist with both the evaluation of the implementation of CNMI's 2018 - 2022 Five-Year LSTA Plan and with the development of the 2023 - 2027 LSTA Plan. Because they were engaged to conduct both the evaluation and facilitation of the Plan, QualityMetrics was able to efficiently integrate both retrospective and prospective elements into the evaluation process. The assessment of CNMISL's efforts in carrying out the 2018 - 2022 Plan was conducted by QualityMetrics CEO Dr. Martha Kyrillidou and evaluators Joyce Chapman and Genya O'Gara.

In short, ***CNMISL Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** is based on stakeholder input secured through a variety of quality sources over the span of the last year.

## COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY

The CNMISL will make the 2023 – 2027 LSTA Plan available to all CNMISL staff and will review specific portions of the Plan in detail with the individuals with responsibilities related to carrying out the projects and activities described in the document. The new Plan will be presented to the CNMISL Library Board and will also be shared with the Governor's Office, and with other appropriate agencies within the Commonwealth government. The Plan will be shared with the larger public via the library's social media accounts, and made available on the library's website. It is anticipated that it will subsequently also be publicly available on the IMLS website. The members of the Library Board will receive periodic updates on LSTA funded projects and activities at their regularly scheduled meetings.

## MONITORING

The implementation of CNMISL's ***Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Five-Year Plan (2023-2027)*** will be monitored on a continuous basis. Appropriate CNMISL staff will be assigned to track the execution of all aspects of the Plan. Specific staff will be tasked with preparing and generating relevant reports as required as well as to inform decision making. All projects will be monitored on a regular basis as ongoing activities are

conducted, documented, and measured. Information and data collected as part of this process will be used to inform CNMISL's reporting to IMLS in the annual SPR.

# ASSURANCES