

NJSL DIRECT

Weekly News Updates for New Jersey Libraries

December 22, 2025

State Library Updates

NJ250 Digital Exhibit Launching in 2026

In partnership with the NJ State Archives, the NJ State Library will soon launch a new digital exhibit: "NJ250: Living Documents, Evolving Rights 1776-2026". As the nation marks 250 years since the Revolution, our exhibition will explore how New Jersey helped shape and was shaped by the fight for liberty. Through the evolution of its constitutions, discover how the state balanced local needs with national ideals and how the meaning of democracy continues to define both New Jersey and you. As a special sneak peek, in honor of Patriots Week, check out New Jersey as it appeared in 1777, through a map originally published in the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*. Waterways, early roads, and familiar towns reveal a state on the brink of transformation, just a year after the 1776 Constitution. Stay tuned for the full digital exhibit, but for now, [here's a teaser!](#)

Money Smart for Life: Financial Literacy Programs in New Jersey Libraries

Our latest blog introduces Money Smart for Life, a new State Library initiative designed to help New Jersey libraries address the growing need for financial literacy in their communities. The post explores why financial literacy matters, how libraries can play a key role in closing knowledge gaps, and what resources and support will be available through this new initiative. Stay tuned, as activities will begin rolling out January 2026. [Click to read.](#)

NJ State Library Awards Digital Literacy Grants to Five Public Libraries

The New Jersey State Library [has announced the recipients of its Expanding Digital Literacy grant program](#), awarding nearly \$109,000 in total among five New Jersey public libraries. Selected libraries will offer programs that teach digital skills and provide access to technology, helping residents gain the competencies and confidence needed to thrive in an increasingly digital society.

A Guide to YouTube Shorts for Libraries

Our latest marketing blog explores YouTube Shorts, how they differ from Instagram Reels and TikTok, and practical ways libraries can use them for event promotion, book talks, and sharing local history. [Read here](#).

News From Around the State

Statewide EDI Resource Solicitation Form for NJ Libraries

As part of the larger [Strategic Roadmap](#) project, led by NJSL, NJLA, and LLNJ, we are conducting an audit of the equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) resources currently being used across New Jersey libraries.

If you or your organization have participated in an EDI training, workshop, or program—or if you've come across a resource you believe is valuable and worth reviewing—we invite you to share it with us through this [EDI Resource Solicitation Form](#). Your input will directly inform this audit and help strengthen collective EDI efforts statewide.

Questions? Contact edi@librarylinknj.org.

NJLA+NJASL Conference Funding Opportunity

The NJLA Professional Development Fund Task Force is excited to announce its inaugural opportunity with funding awards for the 2026 NJLA+NJASL Annual Conference. Does your library lack the necessary professional development funds to sponsor your NJLA Conference trip? Has this deterred you from attending? This fund may be able to help you! **The application will close on January 2.** Award notifications will be sent out by January 16. NJLA membership will be considered, but is not mandatory. [Apply here](#).

NJ STEM Month - March 2026

[NJ STEM Month](#) is a celebration co-hosted by the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN) and Research & Development Council of New

Jersey that highlights NJ's incredible accomplishments in science, technology, engineering, math, and innovation. All organizations in the state are called to showcase and celebrate excellent work in STEM for NJ STEM Month by hosting/attending events and engaging on social media. If your library is considering hosting an NJ STEM Month event, [please fill out the interest form](#).

2026 NJ STEM Month mini-grants are available in amounts of up to \$500 for event/program enhancements. Event/program enhancements can include hosting costs such as snacks, meals, transportation, materials, etc. The deadline to submit is **January 9, 2026**. [Apply for a mini-grant here](#).

Learn more at: www.njstempathways.org/njstemmonth.

National Information

GAO Report Finds Many Buildings Are Reported to Be in Poor Condition, with Increasing Deferred Maintenance

A report published by the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports on the condition of library buildings across the country. The report states that about 40% of library buildings nationwide are in poor condition with more having physical barriers to access for people with disabilities. And while federal funding is available for library programs and services, that does not usually include construction or repairs. For more information you can read the [full report here](#).

NJSL Presents Events

Our NJSL Presents Webinars are free and open to anyone interested in attending. Registration is required in advance and [all webinars are recorded and posted to our YouTube page](#) afterward. You can also [check out event recaps on our blog](#)! Here's what we have coming up, feel free to share within your communities.

- [Virtual Author Talk - Winning the Ten Crucial Days: The Keys to Victory in George Washington's Legendary Winter Campaign](#) - December 29th @ noon
- ["Know Your Rights" Part 1 – Disability and Employment](#) - January 7th @ noon
- [Crime of the Century: The Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping, The Trial, and The Price of Fame](#) - January 9th @ noon

- [Culinary Herbs](#) - January 13th @ noon

Professional Development Opportunities

Visit the State Library's [CE Training webpage](#) for a variety of Continuing Education training opportunities for New Jersey librarians, library support staff, and trustees.

[On-Demand Training Portal](#) in the LibraryLinkNJ LearningSpace and [a list of training programs](#) currently being offered.

[Professional Development Links](#) and [Webinars and Other Training Events](#) from the NJLA Professional Development Committee.

Check out the upcoming LYRASIS CE opportunities on their [calendar here](#).

[Click here for a monthly national list](#) of CE and Professional Development opportunities.

Library Marketing Resources

If your library is looking for marketing tips, best practices and inspiration, [check out our Marketing Blog](#) updated monthly. Here's our most recent blog posts:

- [Five Free Library Content Ideas You Can Post This Week](#)
- [The Secret to Social Media Hooks](#)
- [Refresh Your Library's Approach to Email Marketing](#)
- [How to Create Better Hyperlinks for Accessibility](#)
- [Spotify Playlists for Library Programs](#)

Download sharable social media graphics and videos from the [Statewide Digital Marketing Campaign](#).

Also, you can [download marketing resources from State Library Vendors & Partners](#).

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