
RURAL LIBRARY GRANT PROGRAM

Administered by The Library Network
in partnership with
Woodlands Library Cooperative
and Suburban Library Cooperative



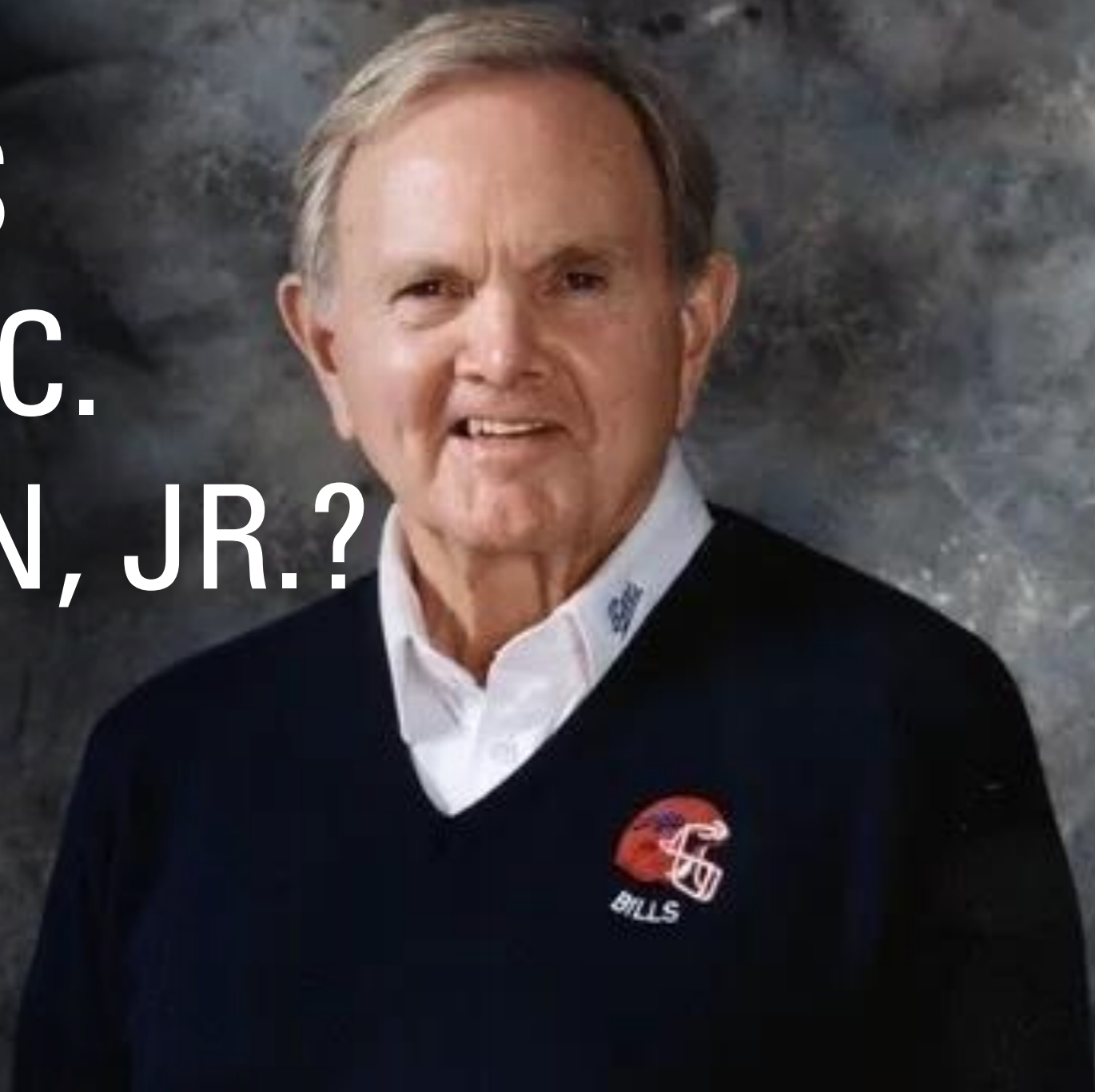
RALPH C. WILSON, JR.

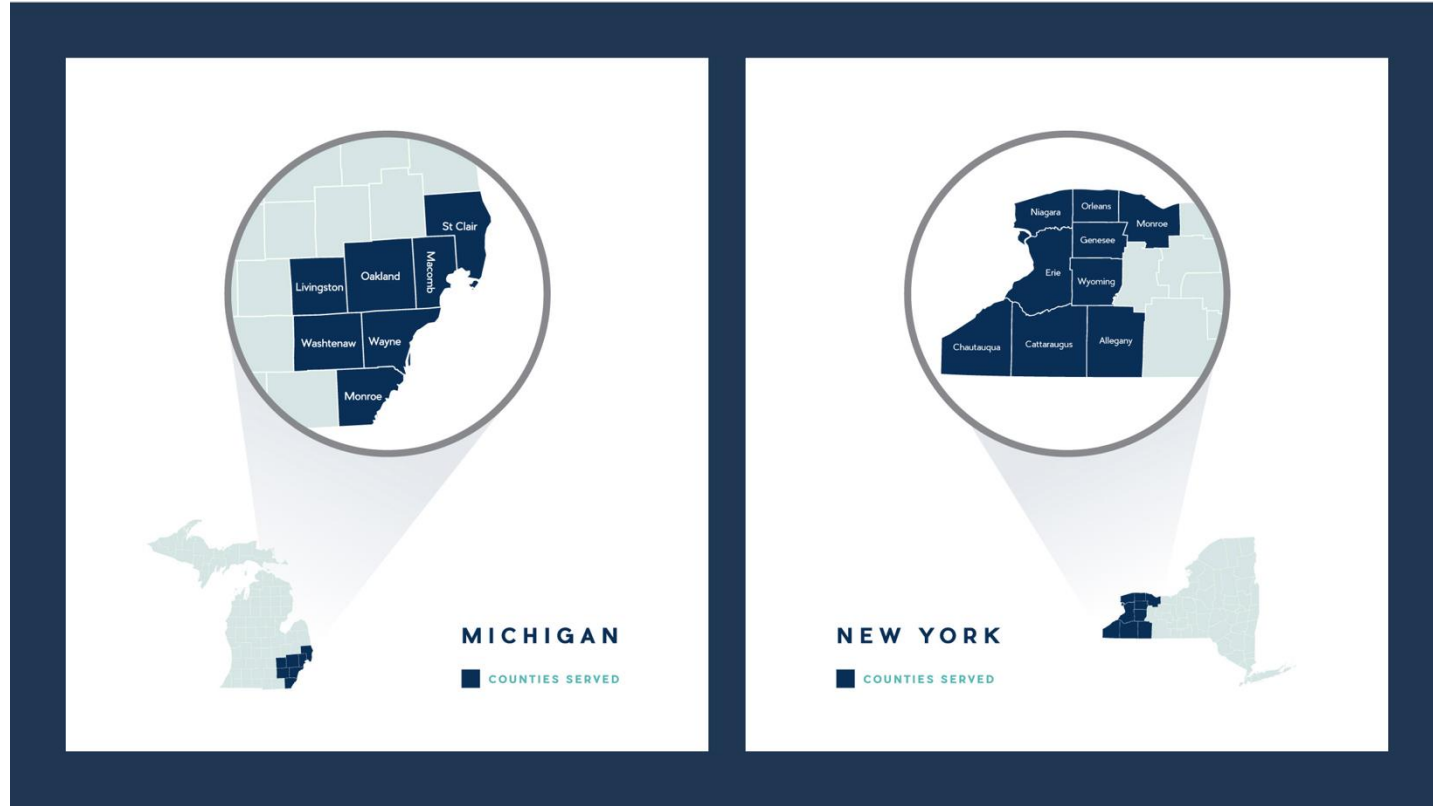
F O U N D A T I O N

**POWERED BY
THE RALPH C.
WILSON, JR.
FOUNDATION**

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a “spend down” grant making organization dedicated primarily to the sustained investment in the quality of life of the citizens of Western New York and Southeast Michigan.

WHO IS RALPH C. WILSON, JR.?





OPPORTUNITY FOR
ELIGIBLE RURAL
LIBRARIES IN
SE MICHIGAN AND
WESTERN NEW YORK
THAT
SERVE AS
COMMUNITY HUBS

MICHIGAN INTERMEDIARY GRANT AWARDED TO **THE LIBRARY NETWORK AND ITS PARTNERS**

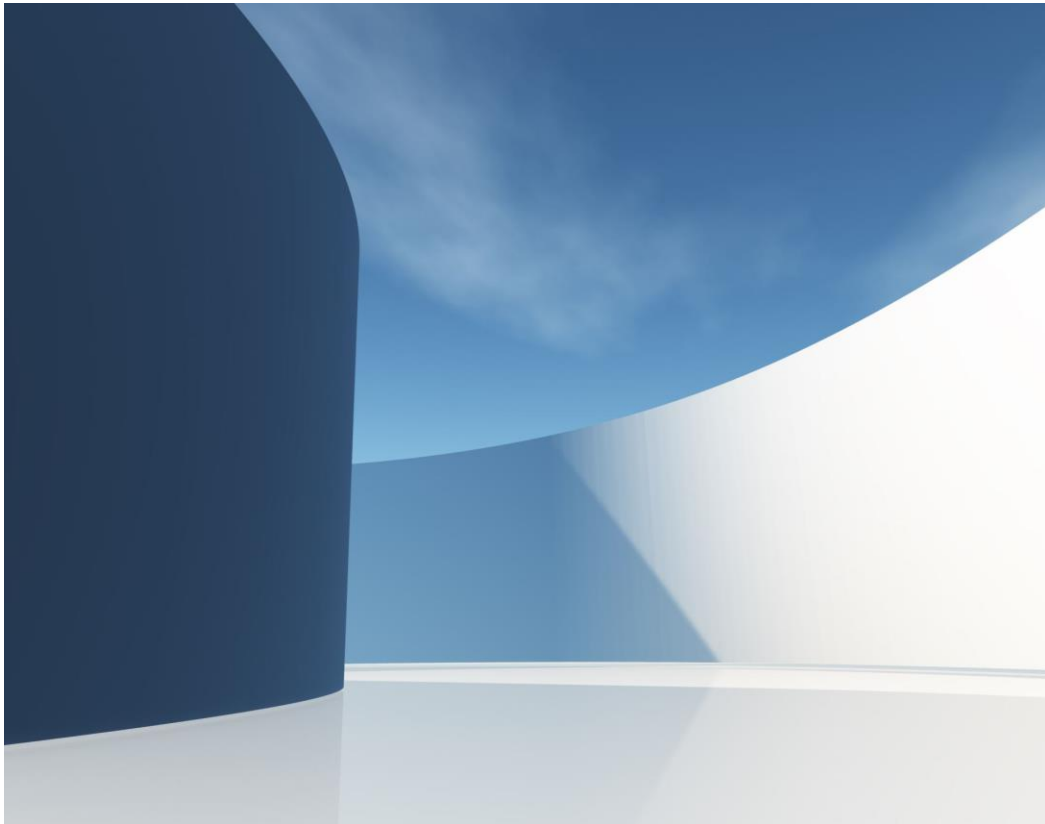
- TLN received a total of \$1.5 million dollars for three years to grant to eligible rural libraries
- Each year (2026, 2027, 2028) TLN will subgrant \$500,000 to eligible rural libraries
- It is the intent of the RCWJRF that an additional \$1.5 million will be granted to continue the program in 2029, 2030 and 2031

ONE TIME OPPORTUNITY

This one-time opportunity will enable rural libraries to put projects in place to bring impact to their community and move something forward that may be needed in their community

- Capital Projects
 - Programs
 - Staffing (People)
-

CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY



- Rural Library facilities must be based in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, or Wayne County
- Rural Library facilities must be physically located in a city, town or village with a population base of under 25,000. (Regardless of library's total population served.)
- Rural Library must be 5 miles from an urbanized area



ELIGIBLE RURAL LIBRARIES IN SE MICHIGAN

ELIGIBLE SE MICHIGAN RURAL LIBRARIES*

LIVINGSTON

- Brighton District Library
- Cromaine District Library
- Fowlerville District Library
- Hamburg Township Library
- Howell Carnegie District Library
- Pinckney Community Public Library

MACOMB

- Armada Free Public Library
- Graubner Library
- Jean Waterloo Lenox Township Library
- Kezar Branch Library
- Lois Wagner Memorial Library
- MacDonald Public Library
- Ray Township Public Library

*TLN reserves the right to add additional libraries that qualify as Rural

ELIGIBLE SE MICHIGAN RURAL LIBRARIES*

MONROE - (Monroe County Library System)

- Bedford Branch Library
- Blue Bush Branch Library
- Carleton Branch Library
- Dorsch Memorial Library
- Dundee Branch Library
- Ellis Library & Reference Center
- Erie Branch Library
- Frenchtown Dixie Library
- Ida Branch Library
- Lillian Stewart Navarre Branch Library
- Maybee Branch Library
- Newport Branch Library
- Rasey Memorial Branch Library
- Robert A. Vivian Branch Library
- South Rockwood Library
- Summerfield - Petersburg Branch Library

*TLN reserves the right to add additional libraries that qualify as Rural

ELIGIBLE SE MICHIGAN RURAL LIBRARIES*

OAKLAND

- Addison Township Public Library
- Brandon Township Public Library
- Clarkston Independence District Library
- Highland Township Public Library
- Holly Township Library
- Lyon Township Public Library
- Milford Public Library
- Orion Township Public Library
- Oxford Public Library
- Salem-South Lyon Library
- Springfield Township Library
- Walled Lake City Library
- Wixom Public Library

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ELIGIBLE SE MICHIGAN RURAL LIBRARIES*

ST. CLAIR - (St. Clair Library System)

- Algonac-Clay Library
- Burtchville Township Library
- Capac Library
- G. Lynn Campbell Library
- Ira Township Library
- Marine City Library
- Marysville Public Library
- Memphis Public Library
- St. Clair Library
- Yale Public Library

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ELIGIBLE SE MICHIGAN RURAL LIBRARIES*

WASHTENAW

- Chelsea District Library
- Dexter District Library
- Manchester District Library
- Milan Public Library
- Northfield Township Public Library
- Saline District Library

WAYNE

- Belleville Area District Library
- Flat Rock Public Library
- Sumpter Media Center

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ELIGIBLE RURAL LIBRARIES IN SE MICHIGAN

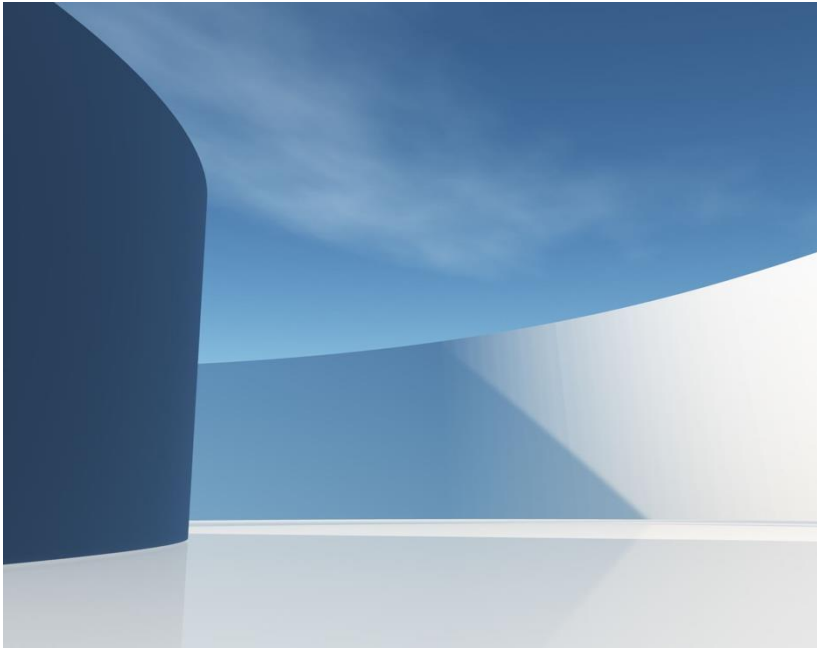
LINK HERE:

[HTTPS://TLM.ORG/WILSON](https://tlm.org/wilson)

5 KEY AREAS OF INTEREST

All applications must meet at least one area of interest of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

- ACTIVE LIFESTYLES
- PREPARING FOR SUCCESS
- CAREGIVERS
- ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- NONPROFIT SUPPORT AND INNOVATION



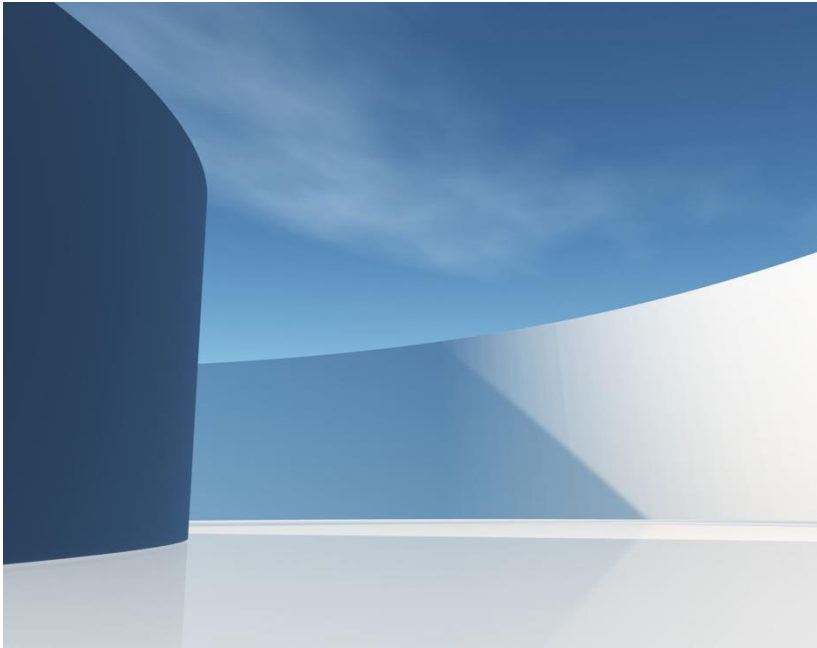
SAMPLE IDEAS

- Active Sports Equipment to lend - footballs, baseballs, soccer, etc.
- Outdoor Equipment to lend - bikes, Snowshoes, binoculars for birding
- Programs to support biking, hiking, birding, etc.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES



YOUTH SPORTS & RECREATION
Expand access to safe library spaces
and programs that support physical
activity and active play for children in
rural areas



SAMPLE IDEAS

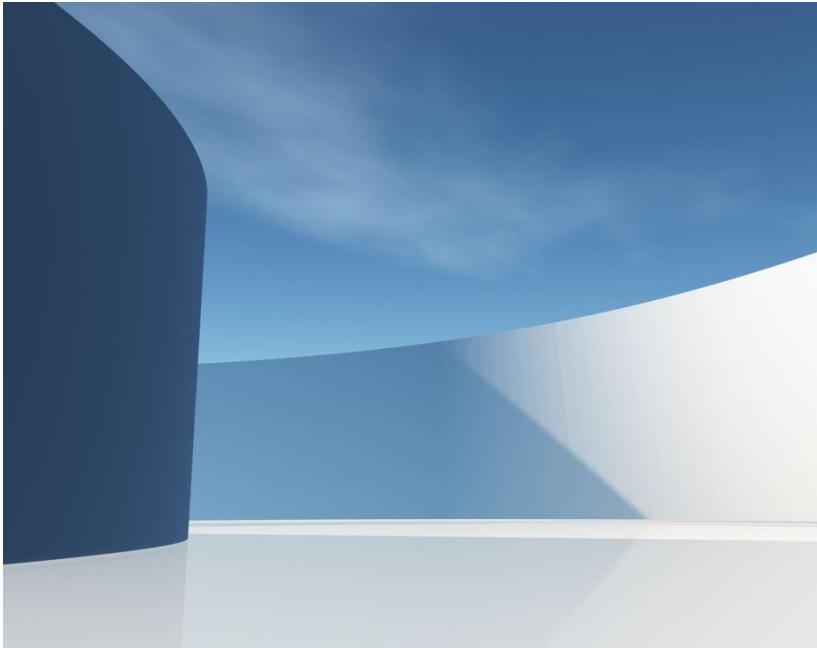
- Story Trails
- Bike Racks and Benches
- Water Fountains/Filling Stations
- Fix-it Stations
- Connector trails to libraries from established parks
- Outdoor gardens/patios

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES



PARKS, TRAILS & GREEN DESIGN

Position rural libraries as community connectors that link residents to nature, recreation opportunities, and environmental stewardship through partnerships, education, and access to regional parks and trails



SAMPLE IDEAS

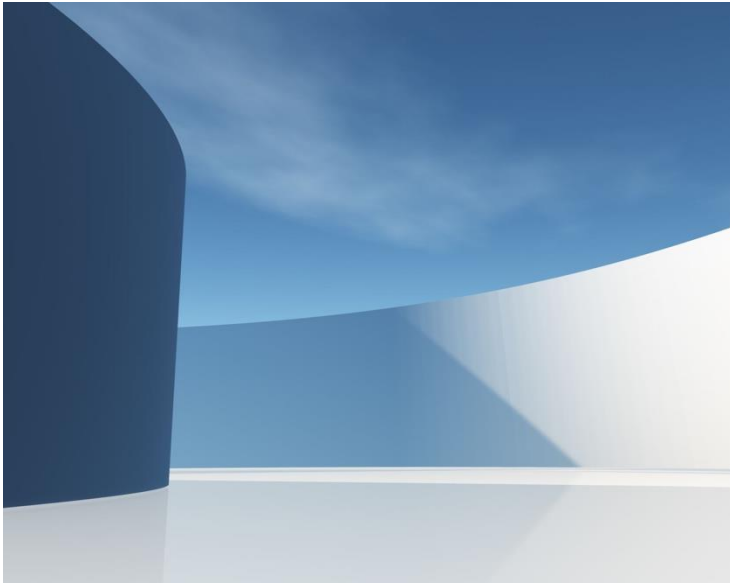
- Story Times with caregivers
- Puppet collection/stage
- Reading 1000 books before Kindergarten
- Toddler Area in Library
- Early literacy programs & partnerships
- Sensory/auditory spaces
- Play yards/cradles

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS



EARLY CHILDHOOD

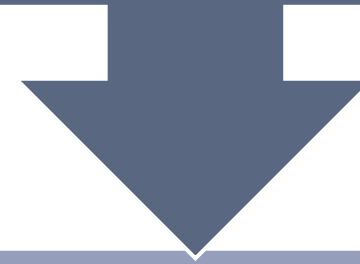
Leveraging rural libraries as collaborative hubs that support social and emotional development for young children, helping them enter kindergarten ready to learn and thrive



SAMPLE IDEAS

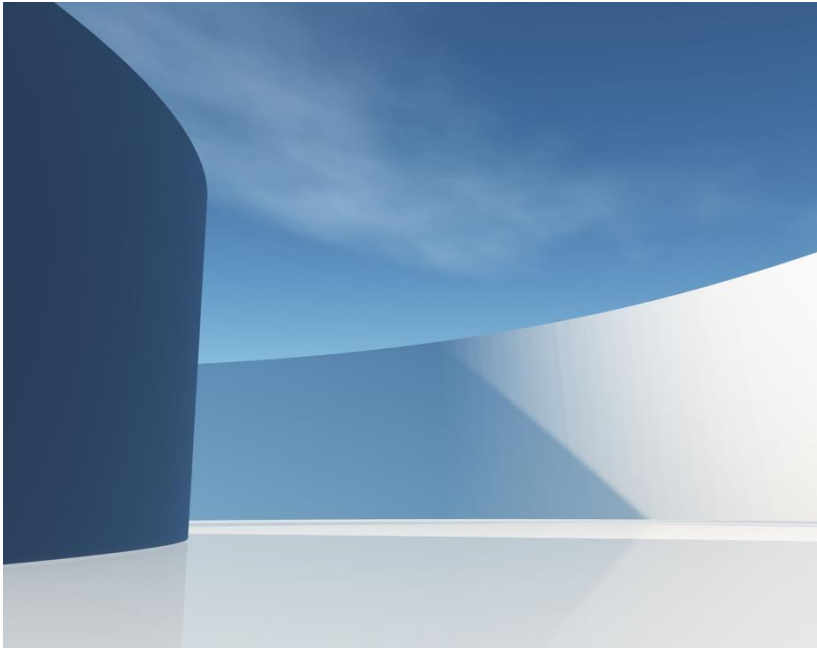
- Lending Library of Teen-Focused Games and Activities
- Teen Center/Area
- Supplies for Afterschool or Summer Programming
- MakerSpaces and Design Equipment
- STEM programming and infrastructure
- Mentoring/tutoring support

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS



AFTER SCHOOL

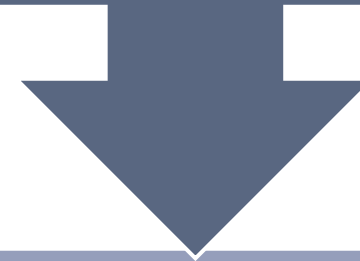
Empower children in rural communities to engage in out-of-school opportunities at our libraries that spark curiosity, develop transferable skills, and broaden awareness of future careers



SAMPLE IDEAS

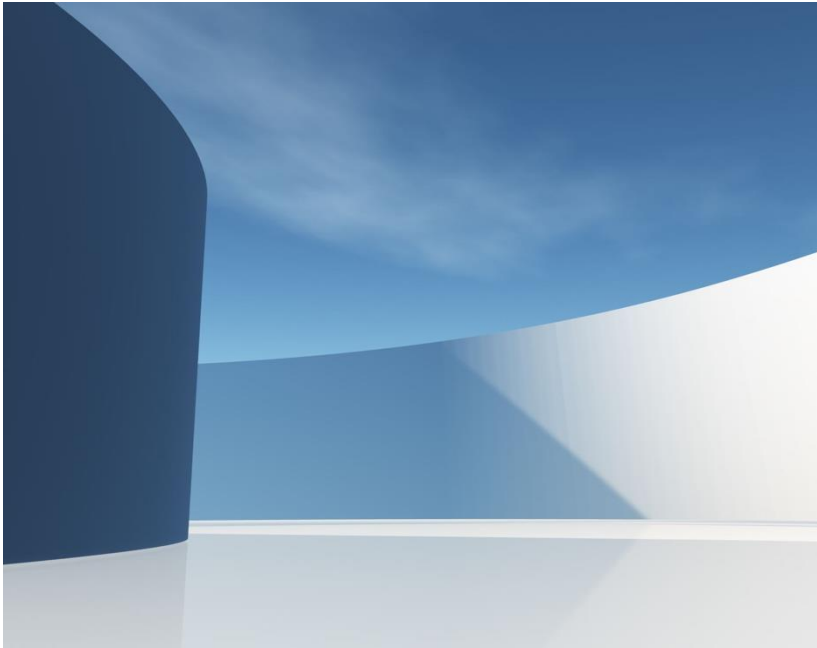
- Tool Lending library
- Programs for Trades/Skill Training
- Computer Station for Online Job Searches/Job Training Activities
- Study/Learning pods and meeting rooms
- Access to Career Planning Resources
- Test Prep for higher learning

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS



YOUNG ADULTS & WORKING FAMILIES

Through the services of our rural libraries, enable rural community members to access and succeed in careers by building the knowledge, soft skills, and technical expertise required for current and emerging workforce needs



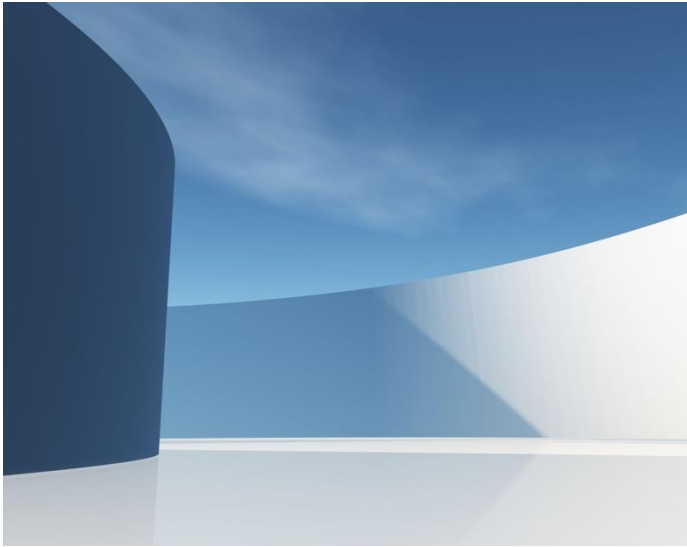
SAMPLE IDEAS

- Build out of a respite room for caregivers
- Resources for Caregivers to check out
- Programming (support groups) for Caregivers
- Build out care giver collections/tools for older adults
- Family workstation/desks

CAREGIVERS



Position rural libraries as supportive hubs for family and direct caregivers for older adults by affirming the value of their work, fostering strong local networks, and connecting caregivers to providers, resources, and expertise



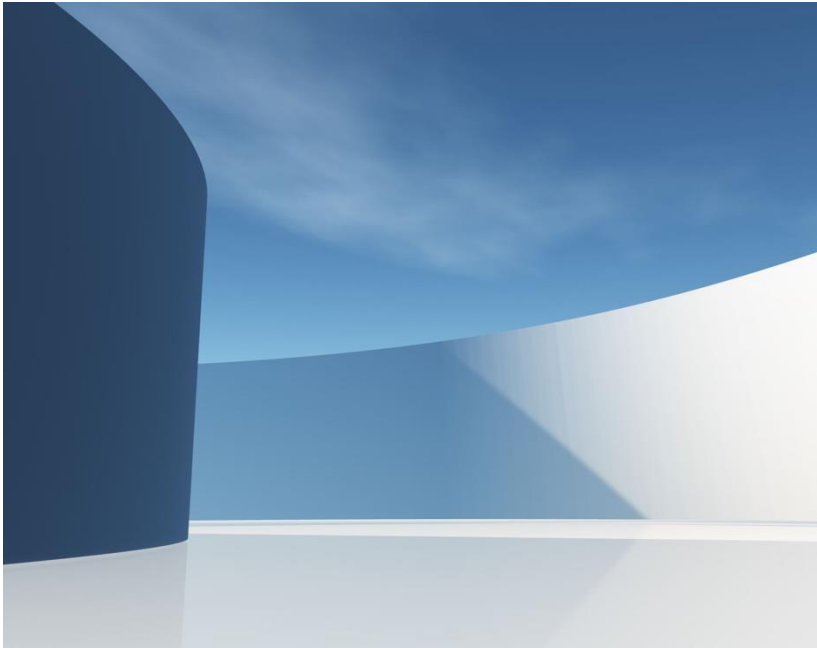
SAMPLE IDEAS

- Private spaces/rooms/co-working spaces for entrepreneurial workers
- Collection development and resources for entrepreneurs
- Digitization of Library's Local History Collection, as part of place-making efforts
- Physical upgrades that tie to community wide economic development projects
- Library presence in community using tools to engage the community
- Wall Murals/Sidewalk Murals
- Amphitheatre for outdoor concerts on site

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



To foster vibrant and thriving rural communities, we will invest in infrastructure improvements and outdoor place-making opportunities at our rural libraries as they revitalize key commercial corridors, as well as create entrepreneurial opportunities



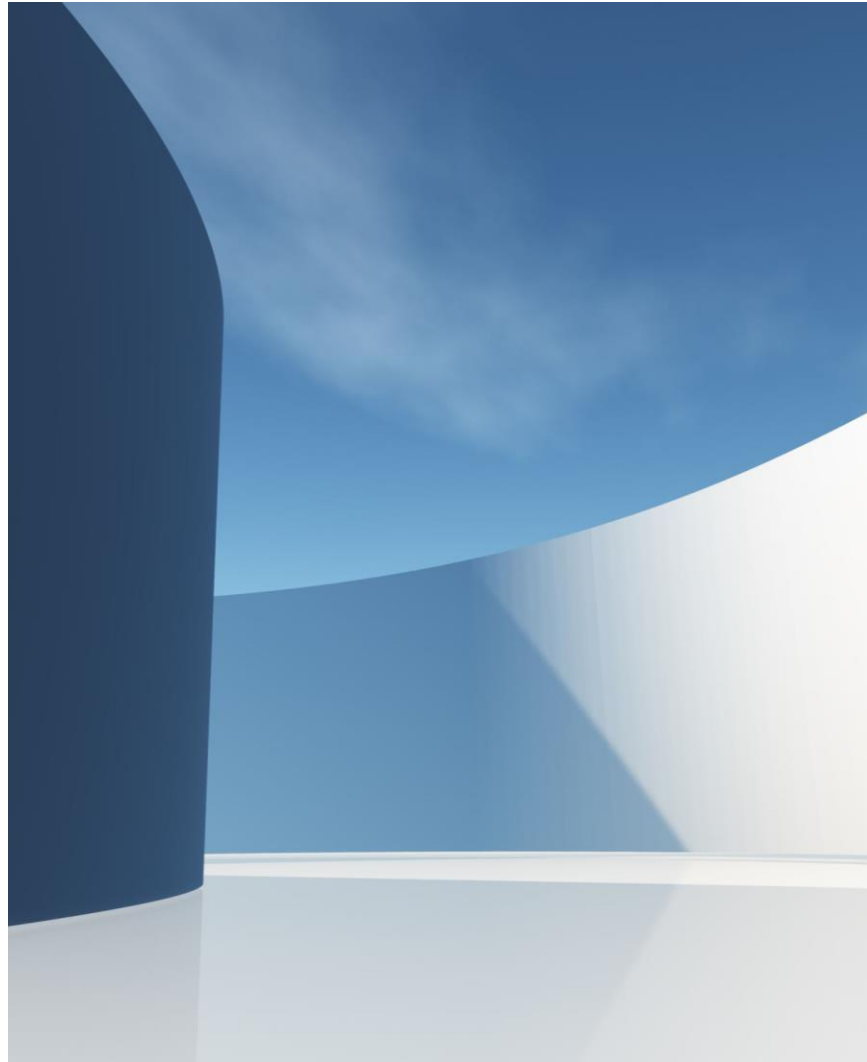
SAMPLE IDEAS

- Wi-Fi or Technology Support for Nonprofit Partners
- Build out a Community-Wide Nonprofit Support Center
- Establish programs to help local nonprofits research and find credible community data
- Facilitation and hosting strategic community-wide planning
- Hosting Nonprofit Resource Workshops

NONPROFIT SUPPORT AND INNOVATION

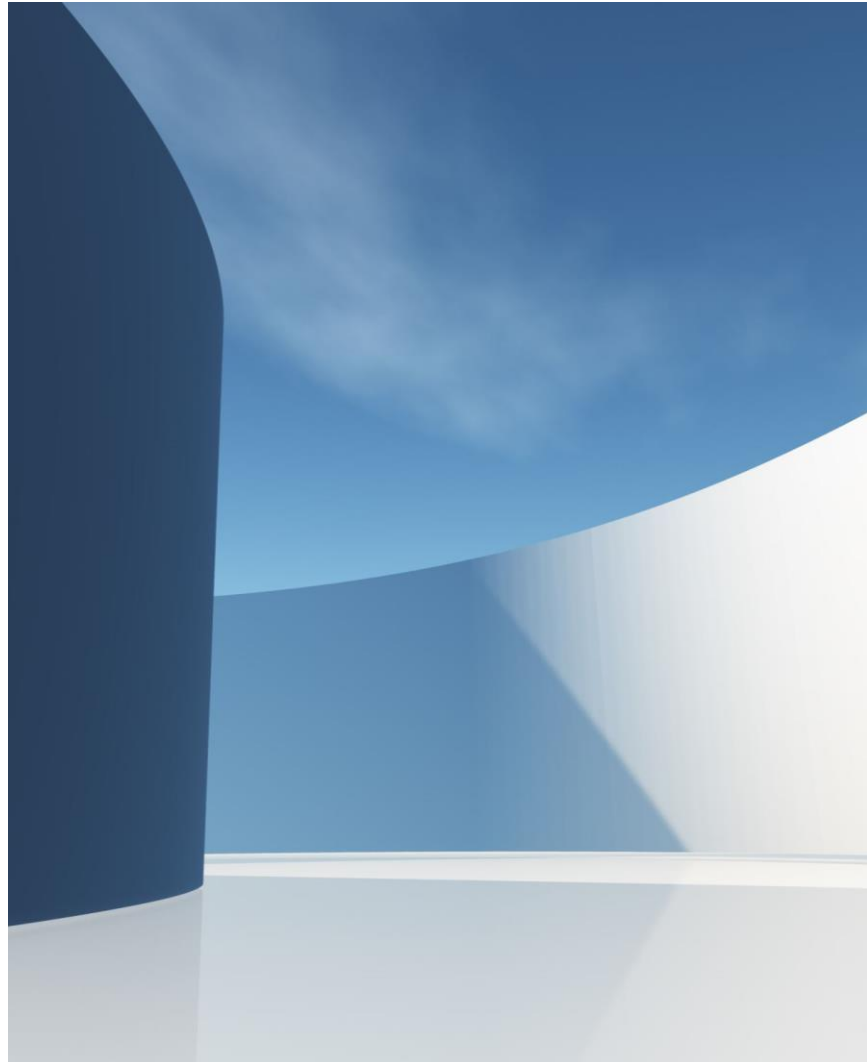


How can our rural libraries support and strengthen the nonprofit sector to have the resources and tools needed to realize their missions – including increased access to data, technology and more



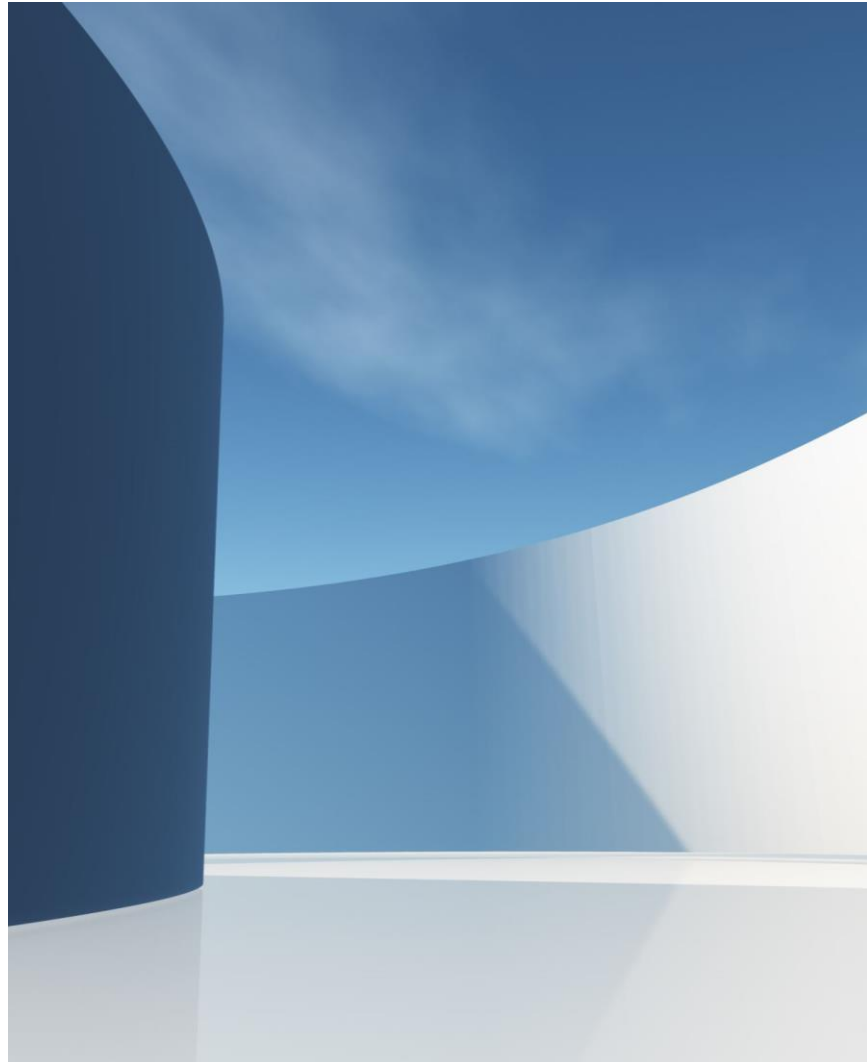
**HOW DOES YOUR LIBRARY
CONNECT TO THESE AREAS OF
INTEREST?**

**WHAT SERVICES, PROGRAMS,
OR IDEAS HAVE YOU WANTED
TO PURSUE BUT HAVEN'T HAD
THE TIME, RESOURCES, OR
CAPACITY FOR?**

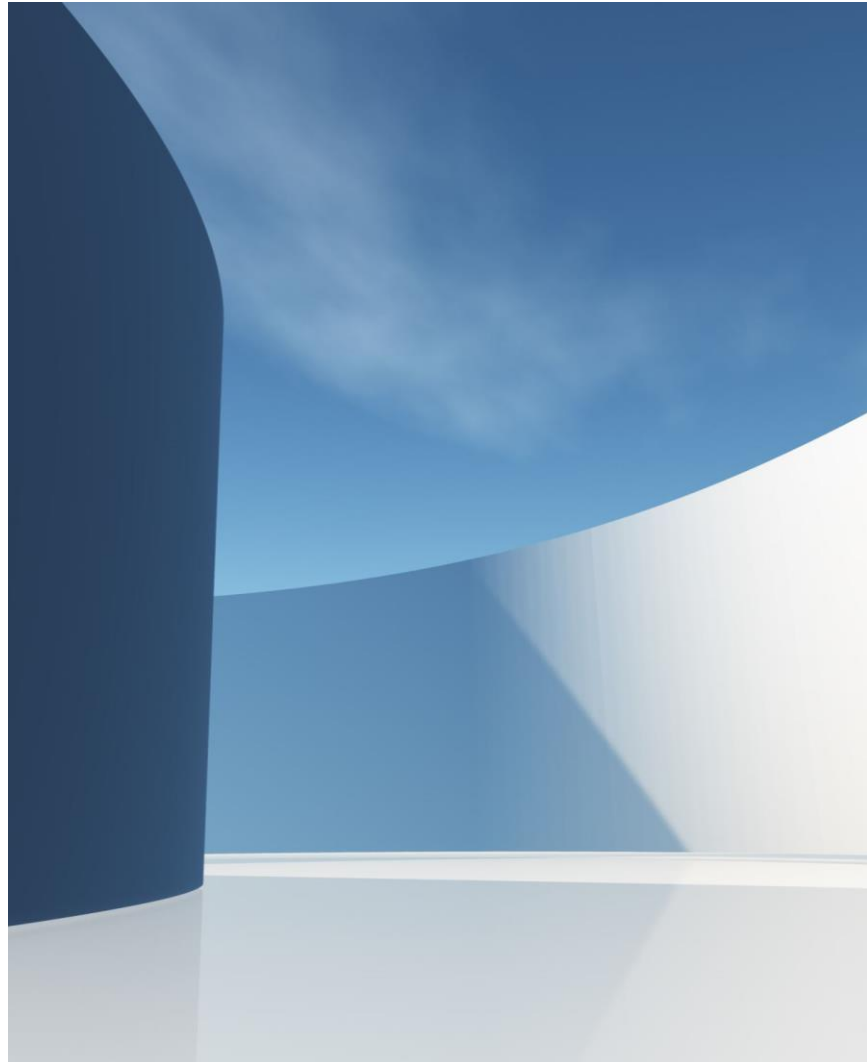


IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Resource & Skill Amplification
 - Deeper Local Understanding
 - Increased Reach & Engagement
 - Enhanced Credibility & Funding
 - Innovation & Problem-Solving
 - Improved Sustainability
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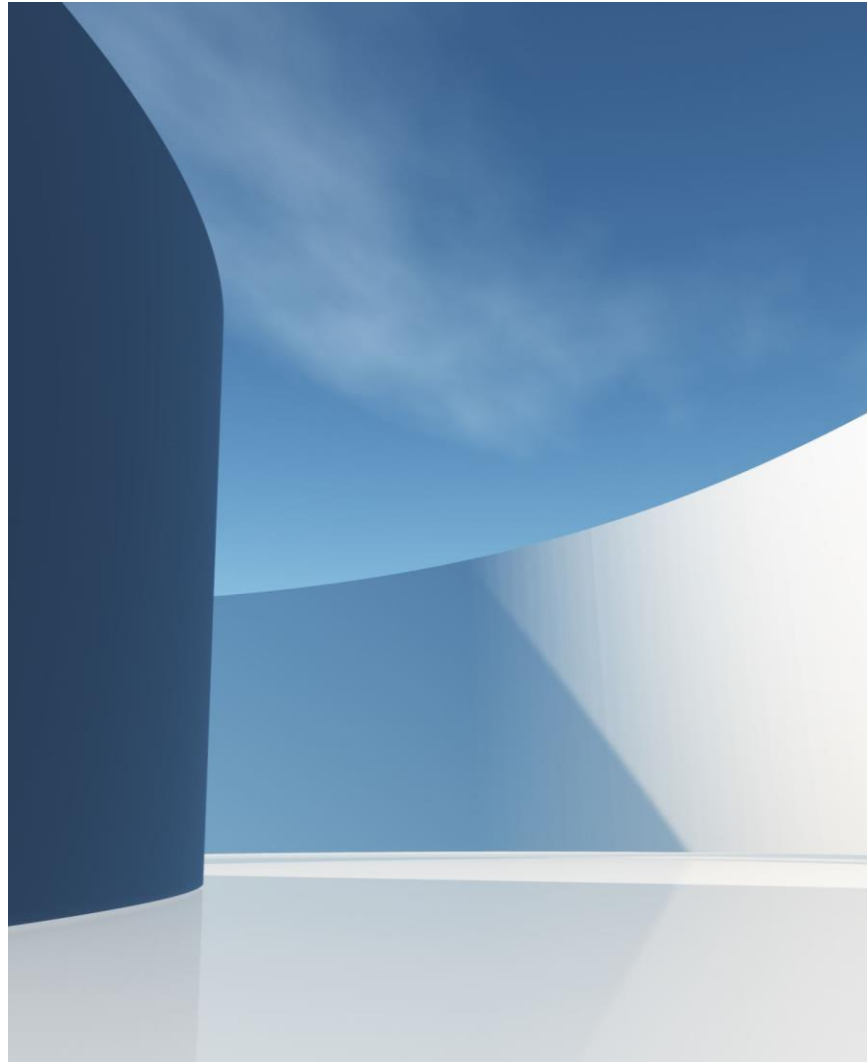


**WHAT PARTNERSHIPS
(EXISTING OR POTENTIAL)
COULD SUPPORT NEW OR
EXPANDED SERVICES?**



GRANT RANGES AND MAXIMUM AWARDS

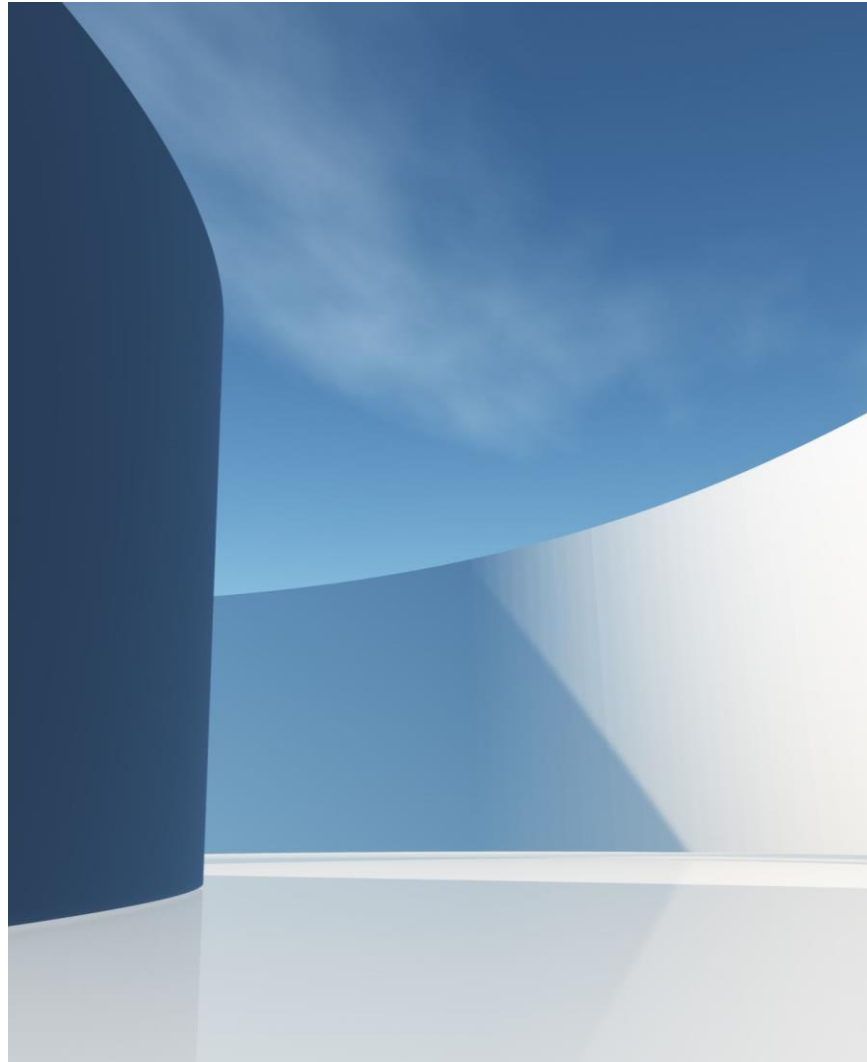
- The Rural Library Grant Program will entertain applications ranging from \$10,000 to \$250,000 (they can be multi-year projects)
 - Based on review and approval, a maximum of \$250,000 can be secured for eligible rural libraries. You may submit multiple applications, over multiple years (up to the maximum). However, only one application/rural library can be submitted each year.
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REVIEW PROCESS*

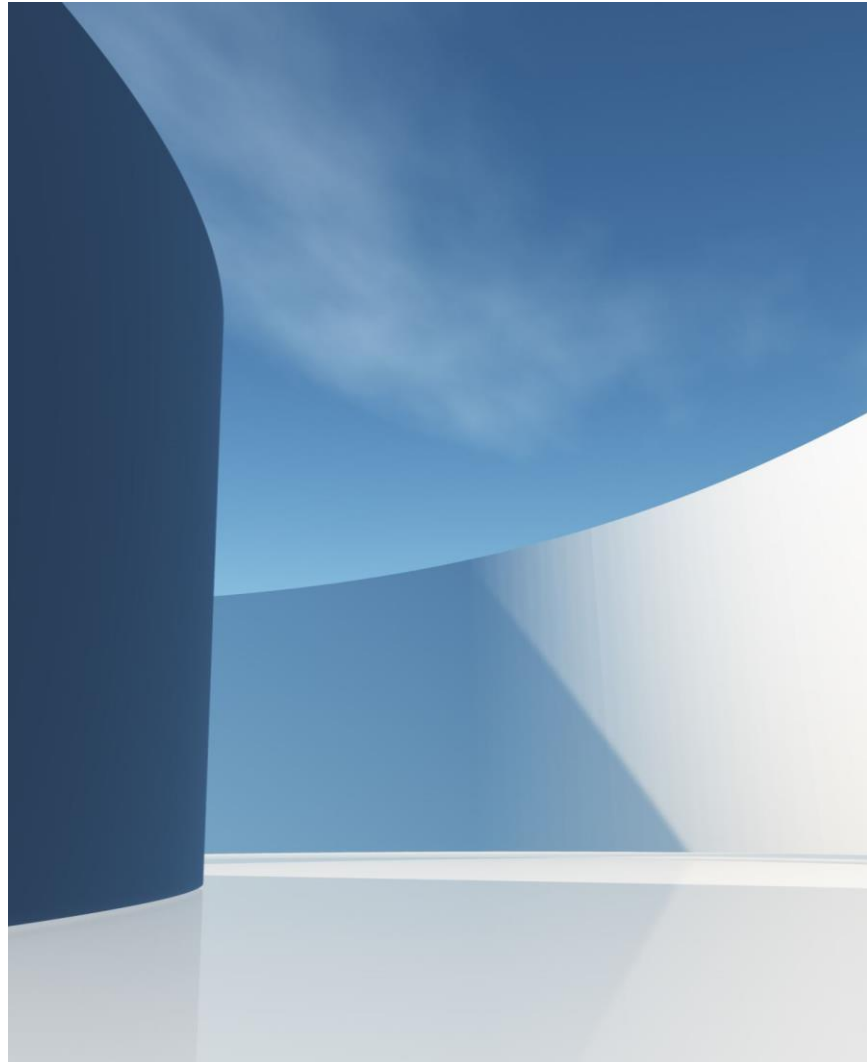
- TLN and its partners will adhere to a grant application review process
- TLN and its partners will facilitate this process, adhering to program guidelines and policy to ensure a fair and equitable review of all grant applications (still being developed)

*Guidelines, evaluation criteria and application questions are yet to be developed



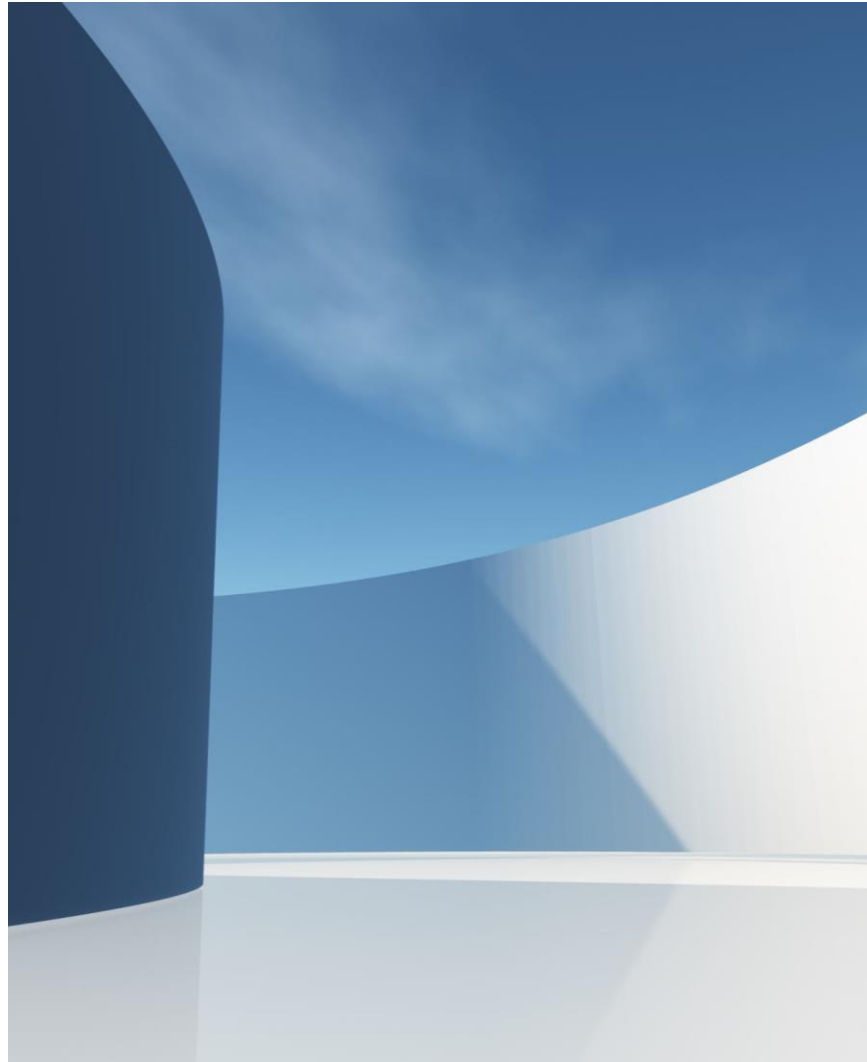
GRANT ASSISTANCE

- We are committed to providing technical assistance, consultation and guidance to those interested in applying for the Rural Library Grant Program funds
 - We will incorporate “ideation” sessions via zoom, as well as hosting virtual office hours in preparation for first-round applications
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TENTATIVE TIMELINE

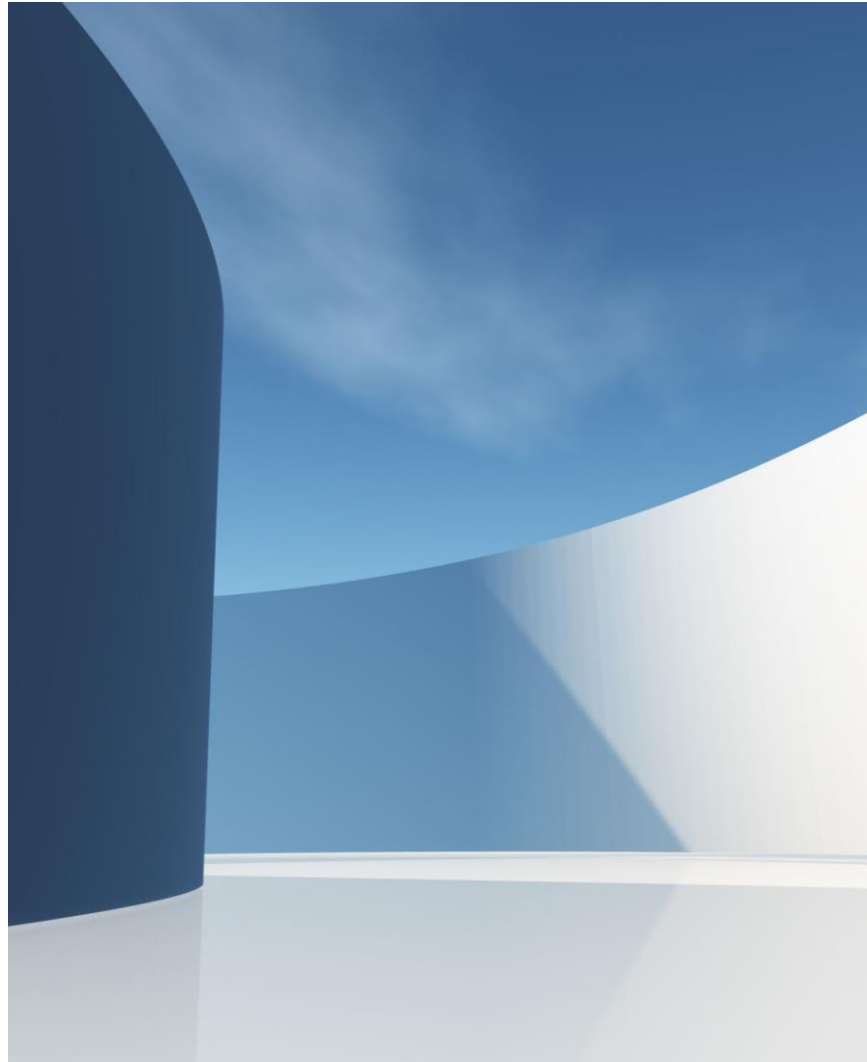
- February – develop grant application and guidelines
 - March 2 – application and guidelines available for advance viewing on TLN website: <https://TLN.org/Wilson>
 - March 9 – applications open (9 weeks until deadline)
 - Mid-March – “Ideation” sessions
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TENTATIVE TIMELINE

- **Application Deadline:**
May 8, 2026, 5pm EST
- Funded programs cannot begin earlier than July 1, 2026

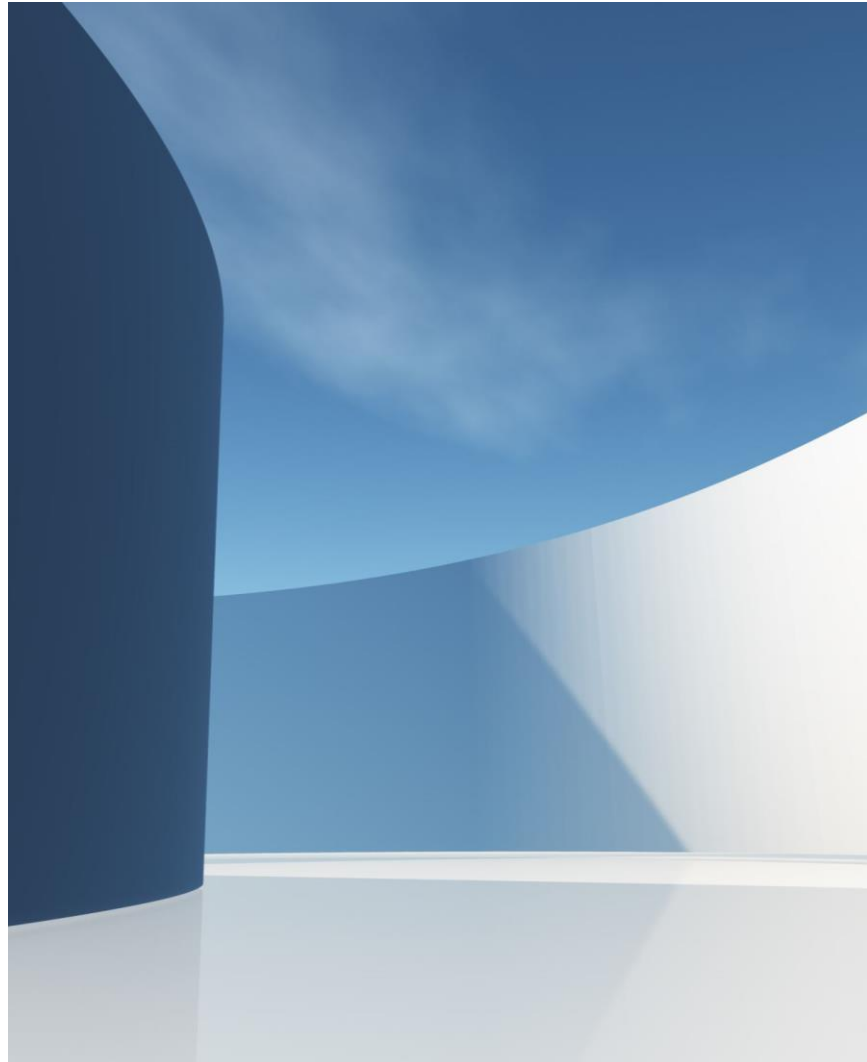




OTHER IDEAS TLN AND PARTNERS MAY ENTERTAIN OVER THE LIFE OF THE 3-6 YEARS GRANT CYCLE*

- Collaborative projects between multiple libraries
- Projects that would support library systems for all their libraries (Monroe and St. Clair)
- Intermediary-led projects that would be beneficial to many rural libraries

*With your input and guidance - to be developed over the next year



OTHER FUNDING SUPPORT

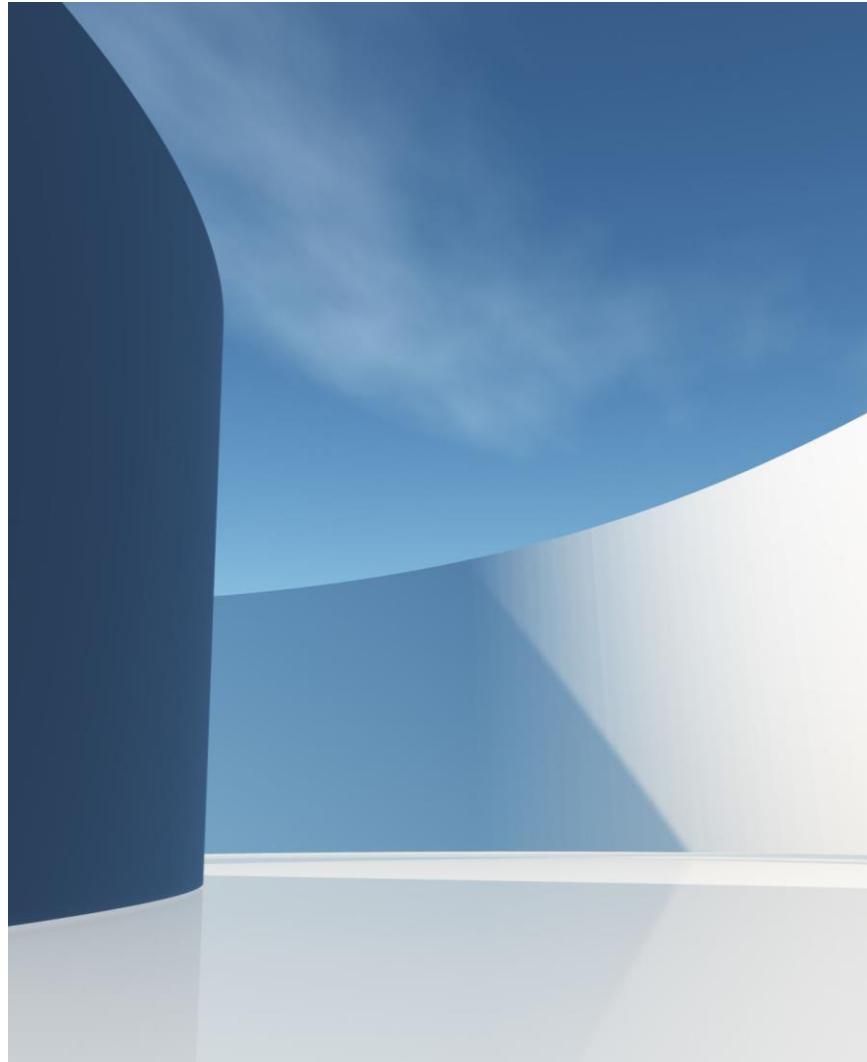
Additional resources for libraries who need funds for projects that don't align with the Rural Library Grant Program:

Community Foundation of SE Michigan Legacy Funds

<https://cfsem.org/special-opportunities/ralph-c-wilson-jr-legacy-funds/>

Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities

<https://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/libraries-transforming-communities/access>



**AS WE DESIGN GUIDELINES,
THE APPLICATION PROCESS
AND EVALUATION CRITERIA,
WHAT WOULD BE
IMPORTANT TO YOU TO EASE
THE PROCESS?**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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<https://TLN.org/wilson>



QUESTIONS?