

# Graduate School Tuition Reimbursement Grant Guidelines

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*October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022*

This grant is made possible by KDLA's funding from the Grants to States program administered by the Institute of Museum and Libraries Services (IMLS).



Kentucky Department for  
Libraries and Archives  
300 Coffee Tree Road  
P.O. Box 537  
Frankfort, KY 40602-0537  
Telephone: (502) 564-8300  
<https://kdla.ky.gov>



## **I. KDLA OVERVIEW**

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) has developed a long-range plan for the development, enrichment, and improvement of library service in the Commonwealth. One implementation strategy of the plan is strengthening and supporting Kentucky's libraries through a renewed focus on advisory support, information resources, and continuing education programs. To achieve this goal, KDLA provides and supports training and professional development to enhance the skills of the current library workforce and leadership. KDLA encourages the pursuit of graduate library science degrees by offering tuition reimbursement for the successful completion of classes from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited master's program in library and information studies, as defined in Appendix A.

## **II. GRANT ELIGIBILITY**

The Student must:

- be a full-time employee at a Kentucky public library working a minimum of 100 hours a month
- be enrolled in an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies
- complete the application process by the set deadlines
- agree to the terms and conditions of this grant

## **III. REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM**

The Student will:

- sign the Statement of Agreement for the grant
- provide proof of enrollment in an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies
- provide a bill or invoice showing the tuition for the academic term for which they are requesting reimbursement
- provide transcripts for all previous college coursework
- miss no more than one (1) academic term (excluding summer terms) for the duration of the grant period
- provide proof of the final grade for each course, which must be an A or B to qualify for reimbursement
- participate in surveys for grant program evaluations
- be available for follow-up interviews and speaking engagements promoting continuing education and the Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) degree (or equivalent, as established in Appendix A)
- notify KDLA in the event of a change in contact information
- maintain full-time employment in a Kentucky public library in a library position for the duration of the program
- work for at least twelve (12) months in a Kentucky public library in a library position upon obtainment of degree

The Library will:

- provide a letter of support for the Student

- participate in surveys for grant program evaluations
- be available for follow-up interviews

KDLA will:

- remit payment directly to the Student
- maintain confidential files adhering to the Open Records Law
- evaluate the program and disseminate the results in state and federal annual reports
- comply with all grant expectations set forth by the Institute of Museum and Library Services

#### **IV. AWARD INFORMATION**

The award amount per recipient will be up to \$2000 per academic term (contingent on availability of federal funds) for no more than three (3) academic terms, excluding summer terms. Grant funds may only be applied toward tuition costs.

#### **V. APPLICATION REVIEW**

A committee composed of KDLA staff will review applications.

Basis of award:

- complete application submitted by set deadlines
- Letter of Purpose
- Letter of Support
- level of academic achievement as recorded on transcripts
- signed Statement of Agreement as to the terms and conditions of the grant
- number of MLIS degreed librarians currently employed at the applicant's library

#### **VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives will administer the funds.

At the start of each academic term, the grant recipient will provide KDLA with information on course enrollment and a copy of their tuition bill. When the academic term ends and KDLA receives the satisfactory final course grade, funds will be disbursed directly to the grant recipient.

#### **VII. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Submit the materials listed below:

##### **1. Application**

- You, the Student, will provide contact information and proof of enrollment status during the application process.

## 2. Letter of Purpose

- You, the Student, will provide a letter describing a planned path of your studies, your motivation for pursuing an education/career in library science, and how you intend to use what you learn in your degree program. The letter should be addressed to the Grant Committee and be no longer than two (2) pages.

## 3. Letter of Support

- Request your library director, or if you are the director, a library board member, to write a letter on library letterhead (addressed to the Grant Committee) in support of your application. In the Letter of Support, the director or library board member must address the following questions: (1) How important is it for your library that the applicant earns his/her MLIS degree? (2) What is the library's level of commitment to see that the applicant succeeds in earning his/her degree?

## 4. Transcripts

- You, the Student, will submit transcripts showing all previous college course work by the application postmark deadline. Official and/or unofficial transcripts will be accepted.

## 5. Statement of Agreement

- You, the Student, will review, sign, and date the Statement of Agreement. A witness must verify your signature and sign the Agreement.

The applicant must submit the completed application and required materials and original signatures to:

Graduate School Tuition Reimbursement Grant Committee  
Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives  
300 Coffee Tree Road  
P.O. Box 537  
Frankfort, KY 40602-0537

Applications must be postmarked by December 7, 2020. The applicant will receive a confirmation e-mail upon receipt of the application.

**Only complete applications will be considered.** All applications are confidential. Information will not be shared with any other organizations or individuals except as required by state or federal laws. All application materials will be kept on file at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives.

## APPENDIX A: Definitions

For the purpose of this grant the following terms shall mean:

**ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies** – A program meeting ALA's standards for accreditation. ALA-accredited master's programs can be found at colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. These programs offer degrees with names such as Master of Library Science (MLS), Master of Arts, Master of Librarianship, Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS), and Master of Science. More information can be found here: <http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/accreditedprograms/guidelines-choosing-masters-program-library-and-information-studies>

**Employed** - Employment in a library that includes administration, collection development, technical services, public services, or support for public service areas, and excludes secretarial, custodial, grounds keeping, security, food service, driver (other than bookmobile/outreach vehicle), and messenger duties.

**Library** – Employing library of Student.

**Public Library** - A legally established public library in Kentucky as defined by KDLA's Public Library Determination definition:

<https://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/funding/Documents/eligible%20library%20II%20-%202015.pdf>

**Student** – Individual applying for and receiving grant award.

## APPENDIX B: Application



### Graduate School Tuition Reimbursement Grant Application

#### Applicant Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last First M.I.*

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Street Address Apartment/Unit #*

\_\_\_\_\_

*City State ZIP Code*

Library Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Library Name*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Street Address PO Box*

\_\_\_\_\_

*City State ZIP Code*

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a full-time employee working at least 100 hours per month? YES  NO

Have you started your degree program?

YES  
 Start date:

NO  
 Estimated start date:

Name of University: \_\_\_\_\_

University Address: \_\_\_\_\_

When do you plan to complete your degree program? \_\_\_\_\_

**Items of Inclusion**

Letter of Purpose	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Letter of Support	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
College Transcripts	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

**Disclaimer and Signature**

*I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C: Statement of Agreement

### The Student hereby agrees:

A material breach of this Agreement shall occur and any amount awarded shall become immediately repayable if:

- the Student fails to earn a final grade of at least a “B” during each academic term in which the Student is enrolled and receiving the grant,
- the Student fails to enroll in more than one academic term (excluding summers) while receiving the grant,
- the Student fails to complete more than one academic term (excluding summers) while receiving the grant,
- the Student is convicted of any criminal activity directly related to employment at the library or the Student is dismissed from library employment due to a criminal conviction while receiving the grant,
- the Student fails to work in a Kentucky public library for at least 12 consecutive months after receiving a Master of Library and Information Studies (or equivalent), unless such failure to retain employment is through absolutely no fault of the Student.

In cases of extreme hardship and for good cause, the State Librarian may waive full or partial repayment of the grant. Such waiver shall be granted at the sole discretion of the State Librarian and shall be made on an individual basis at the written request of the Student.

If a material breach of this Agreement occurs during the grant cycle set forth in the guidelines, the Student shall be ineligible to receive a Graduate School Tuition Reimbursement Grant in the future.

The Student’s application and the associated Grant Guidelines shall constitute the sole Agreement between the Student and the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives in the execution of this grant.

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Furthermore, the parties hereto agree that any legal action which is brought on the basis of this Agreement shall be filed in the Franklin County Circuit Court of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

If any provision of this Agreement is held to be in conflict with any applicable statute or rule of law, or is otherwise held to be unenforceable, the invalidity of such portion shall not affect any or all of the remaining portions of this Agreement.

I agree that if I am awarded the grant and should fail to fulfill the obligations agreed to under the contract for the grant the entire amount of grant benefits received shall become immediately due and payable to the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. Repayment of benefits received under this program shall be due in a lump sum or through a payment schedule determined by the State Librarian. Upon recommendation of the State Librarian, the Attorney General shall institute proceedings for the purpose of recovering any amount due the Commonwealth under the provisions of this Agreement.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_