



Incubator Project Proposal Guide

Developed by the FY2008 INFOLINK Planning Committee, December 2007

The INFOLINK Regional Library Cooperative, as stated in section B of its Strategic Plan, *funds incubator projects that encourage libraries to develop or increase library services*. The purpose of this document is to guide the ways member libraries can propose an incubator project and the process for INFOLINK's response to a proposal.

Definition: an incubator project is a testing ground for ideas, a new service, or an experiment in one member library or a set of member libraries. The results of an incubator are documented during the project timeframe, evaluated, and shared across the INFOLINK membership and the New Jersey Library Network for potential replication.

Project Examples: Senior Spaces; Welcoming Library Spaces for the Autism Community & Their Families; School Library Website project (FY07); Library Website project (FY08).

Proposing a Project to INFOLINK

Who may propose a project:

- a. INFOLINK member library or libraries. [Note: Libraries currently under contract with INFOLINK may not apply for an additional contract award in the same fiscal year. However, INFOLINK is open to a proposal for potential funding in the following fiscal year.]
- b. INFOLINK Executive Board member, Committee members and INFOLINK staff.
- c. INFOLINK member library in collaboration with other local /community organizations.

Eligible projects:

- a. A proposal must be linked to the INFOLINK Strategic Plan. INFOLINK's FY2008 – 2010 strategic goals are to:
 - Increase the resources available to members to maximize people's access to information and technology
 - Identify and foster innovation, with an emphasis on integrating technology into library services.
 - Increase members' abilities to advocate for funding and for the library.
 - Help staff anticipate and find their place in the changing library environment
 - Enable libraries to serve the full diversity of their communities.
 - Increase member participation in cooperative activities and services.
- b. A proposal should have defined goals, objectives, scope, a projected budget, and potential for replication.
- c. INFOLINK is flexible regarding the scope of a project within the parameters of the incubator budget.

Submission and Response procedures:

- a. A project proposal may be submitted any time throughout the fiscal year. From proposal to contract award, the process may take approximately three months.
- b. Email a two-three page proposal to Cheryl O'Connor, *INFOLINK* Executive Director (coconnor@infolink.org).
- c. The Executive Director may request clarification on the project before moving it forward.
- d. The *INFOLINK* Planning Committee is responsible for reviewing proposals.
- e. The Executive Director will work with the Planning Committee and other relevant committees in making or rejecting a funding recommendation to the Executive Board.
- f. The *INFOLINK* Executive Board has final approval on a contract award.

Implementing an Incubator Project

The contract library is responsible to:

- a. Assign a contract manager to the project who will work with *INFOLINK* to complete the project within the contract period.
- b. Document the project in collaboration with *INFOLINK* for potential replication by other member libraries.
- c. Provide appropriate support and consultation with member libraries if *INFOLINK* offers contract opportunities for replication.

Incubator Project Replication

- a. The Executive Director in conjunction with the Planning Committee will review completed incubator projects.
- b. Funded replication of an incubator project may be proposed to the membership in forthcoming strategic plan(s). This does not preclude any member library from doing so on its own.

<p><i>INFOLINK</i> Regional Library Cooperative and its services are funded by the New Jersey State Library, which is responsible for the coordination, promotion and funding of the New Jersey Library Network.</p>
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