

WPLC Pandemic Funding Request to DPI

March 2020

To address the need for online access to library materials during this unprecedented time, the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) is asking the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to contribute up to \$250,000 immediately, as well as ongoing support for the next three years, for content for Wisconsin's Digital Library.

Background

The use of Wisconsin's Digital Collection has been immense from its inception. In 2018, 98% of the titles in the collection circulated at least once. This is higher than any of the collections similar in size. Usage has remained high and demand continues to grow.

The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) has struggled over the past years to keep up with demand and has been working to increase the buying pool budget that funds Wisconsin's Digital Collection. This has been difficult for Wisconsin systems and libraries who have seen stagnant budgets year over year. In 2018, for the first time since the buying pool was established in 2012, the WPLC increased its buying pool budget. In 2019 the consortium agreed to a 5% increase. The 5% increase was a start, but nowhere near the amount needed to meet demand. This year, the WPLC's Collection Development Committee is proposing a 5% increase for the next five years. While committee members unanimously agree that this increase is needed, there are many concerns as to how systems and libraries will be able to fund this. The potential economic changes from the COVID-19 pandemic adds to this concern.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, user demand is expected to increase as users turn from physical to online resources. The WPLC needs help in meeting this demand.

Immediate Need

The WPLC use is substantial and for the past several years, the consortium has been working hard to meet demand. The focus has been on reducing wait times for holds. Because the consortium does not have the collection to meet the demand, users turn to placing holds. Right now, to fulfill all holds, we would need to spend \$7,310,362.84 on content to satisfy the demand. That amount of spend is not feasible.

Option A: With an additional \$100,000 we propose the following three-part approach to purchasing:

1. Simultaneous Use Titles: Allocating up to \$30,000 for ebook and audio titles that will be available with unlimited use for one year from the date of purchase.
Ex. Blackstone and Tantor Audio Package of 150 books will fill 11,280 holds instantly for a cost of \$26,250. That is an initial cost of \$2.32 per use.
2. Cost Per Circ Titles: Allocating up to \$45,000 for ebook and audio titles using the cost-per-circ or pay per use model. This amount would fulfill 8,182 holds *immediately* for patrons, all of which are high demand titles.
3. New Titles: Allocating up to \$25,000 for new ebook and audio book titles in the collection.
Wisconsin's Digital Library's use is immense. With 98% of the collection circulating, adding new

content for users is essential. This amount would allow for an additional 417* titles to be added to the collection. **Based on the ebook/audio average price of \$60.*

While the above scenario would have an impact on the collection, its users, and the WPLC, we realize with the high use and number of holds, a larger amount of funds right now would have a more beneficial, long-term impact.

Option B: With an additional \$250,000 we propose the following three-part approach to purchasing:

1. Simultaneous Use Titles: Allocating up to \$30,000 for ebook and audio titles that will be available with unlimited use for one year from the date of purchase.
2. Cost Per Circ Titles: Allocating up to \$100,000 for ebook and audio titles using the cost-per-circ or pay per use model. This amount would fulfill 18,182 holds *immediately* for patrons.
3. New Titles: Allocating up to \$120,000 for new ebook and audio book titles in the collection. This amount would allow for an additional 2000* titles to be added to the collection. **Based on the ebook/audio average price of \$60.*

Ongoing Support

The WPLC Collection Development Committee is currently looking at recommending a 5% increase to the buying pool budget for the next five years. To make it easier for the systems and libraries, a fixed rate of increase has been proposed. In order to apply a fixed rate for each year, an average amount of the increase for the next five years would be used. That average is \$66,722 per year.

The WPLC uses a formula based on percentage of usage and percentage of population to determine each systems' portion of the buying pool. Below is a chart with each systems' approximate portion of the buying pool for this and the next five years using the 5% increase average of \$66,722.

WPLC Buying Pool with potential 5% increase each year, by system*

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Arrowhead Library System	\$29,222	\$30,836	\$32,451	\$34,066	\$35,680	\$37,295
Bridges Library System	\$117,448	\$123,938	\$130,427	\$136,917	\$143,407	\$149,897
Indianhead Federated	\$106,995	\$112,908	\$118,820	\$124,732	\$130,644	\$136,556
Kenosha County Library System	\$29,093	\$30,700	\$32,308	\$33,915	\$35,523	\$37,131
Lakeshores Library System	\$47,566	\$50,194	\$52,822	\$55,451	\$58,079	\$60,707
Manitowoc-Calumet Library System	\$18,332	\$19,345	\$20,358	\$21,371	\$22,384	\$23,396
Milwaukee Co. Fed. Library System	\$134,908	\$142,362	\$149,817	\$157,271	\$164,726	\$172,180
Monarch Library System	\$86,520	\$91,300	\$96,081	\$100,862	\$105,643	\$110,424

Nicolet Federated Library System	\$82,433	\$86,988	\$91,543	\$96,098	\$100,653	\$105,208
Northern Waters Library Service	\$36,039	\$38,030	\$40,021	\$42,013	\$44,004	\$45,995
Outagamie Waupaca Library System	\$49,283	\$52,006	\$54,729	\$57,452	\$60,175	\$62,898
South Central Library System	\$257,867	\$272,116	\$286,364	\$300,613	\$314,862	\$329,111
Southwest Wisconsin Library System	\$26,074	\$27,515	\$28,955	\$30,396	\$31,837	\$33,278
Winding Rivers Library System	\$60,504	\$63,847	\$67,190	\$70,534	\$73,877	\$77,220
Winnefox Library System	\$65,175	\$68,776	\$72,377	\$75,979	\$79,580	\$83,181
Wisconsin Valley Library Service	\$60,043	\$63,361	\$66,679	\$69,997	\$73,315	\$76,632
Total Buying Pool Amount	\$1,207,500	\$1,274,222	\$1,340,944	\$1,407,666	\$1,474,388	\$1,541,110

*Note these amounts are approximations. The actual buying pool amounts for each system are calculated each year based on a percentage of previous year's circulation and population.

While this proposed increase is still worrisome to many who are concerned about having the funds for this increase, there are many in the consortium that feel a 5% increase is not nearly enough and would like to see the budget double in size.

The ongoing help of the Department of Public Instruction could greatly alleviate some of the concerns over the increase of the budget. An annual amount of \$75,000 for the next three years, in tandem with an increase from the systems and libraries, could greatly impact the service provided to users. If the libraries and systems are unable to fund an increase because of the current crisis, the help from DPI would be even more critical to keep the collection growing.

If the consortium approves the 5% fixed increase and the DPI is able to provide \$75,000 for the next three years, this would increase the buying pool amount from \$1,207,000 to \$1,348,722 for 2021 and to \$1,482,666 for 2023.